



Fire Prevention Strategy

The NSW Police Force, NSW Fire Brigades and the NSW Rural Fire Service have identified a need to develop preventative measures to reduce the risk of fire and arson to the community. Fires put lives and homes at risk and have financial implications to our community. The NSW Police Force, NSW Fire Brigades and the NSW Rural Fire Service by working together have developed a fire prevention strategy to help make the community safer.

When a fire is deliberately lit, it is known as arson. There are many different motives for arson. A structure may be set on fire by persons to cover criminal activity or for other reasons. Arson does have devastating financial and emotional effects on a business, school and the community at large.

Arson attacks usually occur at nights or on weekends when schools, businesses and buildings are empty. The occurrence of arson can be reduced and its effects controlled if you identify potential threats and take action to reduce the risks. You can carry out an arson risk assessment on your business, school or place of work. We strongly encourage you to consider arson as part of your business risk assessment program, and to integrate arson risk reduction strategies with your risk management plan.

This fire prevention strategy toolkit is designed to help all those involved in fire prevention and community safety to work as effectively as possible. This toolkit brings together information on fire prevention and reducing the risks of arson. It includes tools for identifying problems, developing responses and implementing treatments to ensure the community is a safer place.

HOW TO CONDUCT A RISK ASSESSMENT

The NSW Police Force, NSW Fire Brigades and NSW Rural Fire Service have developed a basic risk assessment tool that will help you assess the risk of arson and implement strategies to reduce that risk. Of course, you can always seek advice and assistance from your local Crime Prevention Officer or from the NSW Fire Brigades and the NSW Rural Fire Service. However, if you work through this checklist you will be taking some important first steps towards helping to make the community safer.

Treatment Options

Many of the same precautions taken to discourage burglars may also discourage arsonists and vandals. By taking a few preventative steps, you can help curb these crimes against businesses and schools. The NSW Police Force and Fire Services have developed fact sheets for each category listed below.

Categories:

1. Schools
2. Commercial premises
3. Derelict buildings
4. Residential communities
5. Bush Fires





Fire Prevention Strategy

Tackling arson

There are a number of educational and informational programs in existence to assist in the reduction of arson related incidents. These programs involve a collaborative approach by the NSW Fire Brigades, NSW Police Force, NSW Rural Fire Service, the Department of Education & Training, Independent & Catholic Schools, the local council and local media to name a few. Such initiatives include the following:

- Identifying target areas through intelligence & increased reporting
- Identifying community involvement
- Empowering the local community to take ownership of the problem
- Liaising with local council for support
- Liaising with local media such as the newspaper or radio station
- Holding education programs through the local schools and utilizing the services of the NSW Police Force Youth Liaison Officer and the Educational Officer of the NSW Fire Brigades or NSW Rural Fire Service.
- Identifying juvenile fire setters within local schools and intervene using local counselling/support and/or networks.
- Liaise with the NSW Rural Fire Service to have them establish a 'Fire Investigation Working Party' as part of the local District Bush fire Management Committee to focus on dealing with deliberately lit bushfires in your area.

To assist interested parties the following Arson Prevention Plan has been developed.

Fire Prevention

The Fire Prevention Strategy is a program about prevention and awareness in identifying high risk locations and putting in place treatment options to reduce the risk of fire from occurring. There are four main strategies that can be implemented either as a stand alone or in combination with each other, depending upon the issue.

This Prevention Plan provides a broad outline and basis for the implementation of strategies, but should incorporate the fire assessment and safety checklists as these provide the detail to the strategy.

1. Reducing arson vulnerability - this strategy involves community education for residents, business owners/managers and educational facilities. It encourages the community to take some ownership of the problem.
 - School visits combining local resources such as NSW Police Force, and/or the NSW Fire Brigades and/or NSW Rural Fire Service
 - Shopping centre displays again combining local resources such as NSW Police Force and/or NSW Fire Brigades and/or NSW Rural Fire Service
 - A door knock of the target area by local police and/or fire representative where a survey/interview can be carried out.
 - Programs already in existence, which could also be utilised include NRMA Bizsafe program; Community FireWise Groups and the Police Citizens Youth Club (PCYC).





Fire Prevention Strategy

2. Removing the opportunity – this strategy involves partnerships between the affected stakeholders such as the local community, businesses and local government to address issues such as:-
- abandoned vehicles;
 - abandoned/derelect buildings;
 - rubbish removal;
 - garbage collection procedures
 - improved lighting
- Support from local government and councils can assist in enforcing their powers under Acts such as the Local Government Act, 1993 and the Environmental Protection Act, 1994.
 - Support from both the NSW Fire Brigades and the NSW Rural Fire Service
 - Support from various units within the NSW Police Force.

The FESA of WA (Fire & Emergency Services Authority of Western Australia) has a similar program.

3. Increasing education on the issue – this strategy can be implemented by liaising with educational institutions, community youth groups and Juvenile Justice and delivering programs that explain the consequences of malicious fire setting
- Implementing an educational program within local schools of target areas and the PCYC.
 - Regular media releases promoting fire prevention strategies
 - Identifying juvenile firesetters within local schools, develop and implement intervention strategies through appropriate counselling and local youth programs to reduce the risk of arson.

Examples of community safety programs that are in existence and can be used include Intervention & Fire Awareness Program (IFAP), Community Fire Unit, Brigade Kids & RescueEd and NSW Police Youth Liaison and School Police Officers.

4. Improving security – this can be implemented by reinforcement through Crime Stoppers, neighbourhood programs, community policing and community fire safety officers.
- Utilising the Fire Prevention Assessment Checklists
 - Implementing the Fire Prevention Treatment Options
 - Incorporating the Fire Prevention Arson ID Checklist
 - Promoting the Crime Stoppers number 1800 333 000

These strategies have been developed and should be reinforced through appropriate services including the NSW Fire Brigades, NSW Rural Fire Service and NSW Police Force.





Fire Prevention Strategy

5. Role of Police

Improving awareness and education within the community is undertaken by specialised police at every Local Area Command: The following police can provide the community with a range of preventative crime prevention advice:

- Crime Prevention Officer (CPO)**
 Crime Prevention Officers are located within the Local Area Command and assist in the implementation and coordination of community based safety and crime prevention strategies and programs within the Command. They play an important role in reducing local crime by coordinating and working with government departments and other agencies to develop strategies and solutions that tackle environmental factors impacting on criminal behaviour.
- Youth Liaison Officer (YLO)**
 The role of the YLO is to coordinate all matters relating to the Young Offenders Act including cautioning and youth justice conferences. They are also responsible for addressing school related issues and providing crime prevention workshops to school. The YLO also plays a quality control role in the policing of young people. Youth Liaison Officers may be used in assisting police develop strategies to engage and respond to the needs of young people.
- School Liaison Police (SLP)**
 School Liaison Police (SLP) are appointed to a LAC and will cover schools within several LAC's within that region. SLP's work within schools to help prevent students from becoming involved in crime. SLP's and YLO's visit every school in their area at least once a year to build comprehensive links with schools. SLP's are also tasked to focus on school areas that are identified as higher risk.





Fire Prevention Strategy

This Prevention Plan allows for NSW Fire Brigades, NSW Rural Fire Service and NSW Police Force to work together with and for the community to address the issue of arson crimes and ultimately minimise risk to fire-related crimes.

Internet addresses

These internet addresses below outline fire prevention programs, reporting mechanisms and fact sheets in the various categories.

■ Schools

www.crimestoppers.com.au
www.aic.gov.au
www.pycnsw.org
www.police.nsw.gov.au
www.fire.nsw.gov.au
www.rfs.nsw.gov.au

■ Commercial

www.nrma.com.au
www.crimestoppers.com.au
www.police.nsw.gov.au
www.fire.nsw.gov.au
www.rfs.nsw.gov.au

■ Derelict buildings

www.crimestoppers.com.au
www.neighbourhoodwatch.com.au
www.police.nsw.gov.au
www.fire.nsw.gov.au
www.rfs.nsw.gov.au

■ Residential communities

www.police.nsw.gov.au
www.crimestoppers.com.au
www.neighbourhoodwatch.com.au
www.fire.nsw.gov.au
www.rfs.nsw.gov.au

■ Bush fires

www.police.nsw.gov.au
www.crimestoppers.com.au
www.rfs.nsw.gov.au
www.fire.nsw.gov.au





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■ Investigation for Police

This page is designed to assist anyone who is an investigator of arson at a local or State Crime Command level. Please refer to the intranet address below.

Useful Internet Websites

Organisation	Website / URL
Arson Prevention Bureau. (UK)	www.arsonpreventionbureau.org.uk
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives (USA)	www.atf.gov
International Association of Arson Investigators	www.firearson.com
National Association of State Fire Marshals (USA)	www.firemarshals.org
Neighbourhood Safety. (USA)	www.neighborhoodsafety.org
Australia Institute of Criminology (AIC)	www.aic.gov.au





Vulnerability Assessment Checklist for commercial premises

What is this checklist for?

This checklist has been prepared for local businesses to conduct a fire vulnerability assessment at their location. It provides prompts for you to investigate and assess the preparedness of your business to minimize the likelihood of arson and conduct a safe and orderly evacuation.

RISK		YES	NO
1.	Are the fire hydrants in good working order and are they clear of obstructions?		
2.	Secure storage of waste bins after hours (eg are they locked and away from buildings?)		
3.	The location of any fire extinguishers. Are they in good condition and are they accessible?		
4.	Are there accumulations of rubbish or debris in a position that may present a fire risk? (eg under buildings)		
5.	Is there an evacuation plan that is practiced on a regular basis?		
6.	Are all fire protection devices up to date and working?		
7.	Are flammable liquids locked away in an appropriate area?		
8.	Are the gutters clean? (especially in bush fire prone areas)		
9.	Is tree foliage over or near buildings?		
10.	Does your business have external lighting in vulnerable places?(eg. loading docks)		
11.	Does the external area of your business allow for hiding places?		
12.	Is your business security fenced, does the fire station have keys?		
13.	Is there a site plan displayed in a prominent position?		
14.	Are your premises clear of fuel sources such as landscape trimmings, newspapers, leftover paint, old rags and other rubbish?		

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Should your business require any further information in relation to any of the above, they should be referred to the local police Crime Prevention Officer or the local fire brigades for a risk assessment to be conducted.



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Treatment Options Commercial Premises

What is this checklist for?

This checklist has been prepared for commercial premises that have been requested to conduct a fire vulnerability assessment. It provides recommended treatment options for you to implement, to minimize the likelihood of arson within your business.

TREATMENT OPTIONS		YES
1.	Maintain perimeter fencing, hedges and external lighting should be in good order.	
2.	Remove graffiti without delay. If left, arsonist may see the business as a legitimate target.	
3.	Don't allow landscaping to provide camouflage or hiding places.	
4.	Train all employees to secure doors, windows and skylights.	
5.	Maintain an effective intruder alarm.	
6.	A nominated person should be responsible for securing all windows and doors prior to leaving the business.	
7.	Intruder alarms, connected to a call monitoring centre should be installed.	
8.	All combustible storage sites should be secure and emptied on a regular basis. Dispose of all flammable waste materials as quickly as possible.	
9.	Keep your property well lit at night.	
10.	Waste bins should not be fixed to walls, but kept in a secure compound with padlock and chain.	
11.	Secure high valued equipment out of sight in a locked room.	
12.	Keep all internal and means of escape doors closed - (Do not lock these doors).	
13.	Install an Automatic Fire Detection System.	
14.	Maintain and practice an efficient emergency plan.	
15.	Encourage employees to report any suspicious activity or persons in or around the area to the local police.	
16.	Educate employees about arson prevention.	
17.	Install a smoke detector and check regularly.	

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Should your business require any further information in relation to any of the above, contact the local police Crime Prevention Officer or the local fire brigades.



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Vulnerability Assessment Checklist for Residential Communities

What is this checklist for?

This checklist has been prepared for residents to conduct a fire vulnerability assessment at their home and within their community. It provides prompts for you to investigate and assess the preparedness of your home to minimize the likelihood of a fire.

RISK		YES	NO
1.	Are the fire extinguishers in good working order, are they clear of obstructions and are they accessible?		
2.	Are all electrical items turned off when not in use? (particularly electric blankets)		
3.	Are there accumulations of rubbish or debris in a position that may present a fire risk? (eg under house)		
4.	Are all external doors, windows and roof lights secure?		
5.	Are all fire protection devices such as smoke detectors up to date and working?		
6.	Are flammable liquids locked away in an appropriate area? (such as a nearby garage)		
7.	Are the gutters clean? (especially in bushfire prone areas)		
8.	Is tree foliage over or near your home?		
9.	Is the grass kept short?		
10.	Are the boundary fences in good order?		
11.	Do you have an earth leakage electrical switch? (Safety Switch)		

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Should you require any further information in relation to any of the above, contact your local police Crime Prevention Officer or local fire brigades.



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Fire safety recommendations for residential communities

What is this checklist for?

This checklist has been prepared for residents to conduct a fire vulnerability assessment. It provides recommended treatment options for you to implement to minimize the likelihood of a fire within your home.

TREATMENT OPTIONS		YES
1.	Maintain perimeter fencing, hedges and external lighting should be in good order.	
2.	Don't allow rubbish to accumulate and keep all garbage bins away from the house.	
3.	Do not leave lit cigarettes lying around near beds, clothing or lounges.	
4.	Keep doors and windows locked when the home is unoccupied.	
5.	Maintain an effective intruder and smoke alarms.	
6.	Keep leaves, firewood, overgrown trees away from your home.	
7.	Keep matches, candles and lighters out of reach and sight of children.	
8.	Never leave candles unattended	
9.	All combustible storage sites should be secure and emptied on a regular basis. Dispose of all flammable waste materials as quickly as possible.	
10.	Store all flammable liquids away from the house in a locked garage or carport.	
11.	If storing flammable chemicals and liquids ensure they are separated from each other.	
12.	Ensure home address signs are clearly visible from the street.	
13.	Develop and practice fire escape and evacuation plans with your family.	
14.	Ensure clothing and other types of material are NOT placed on or near heaters.	
15.	Report any suspicious activity or persons in or around the area to the local police.	
16.	Install an appropriate number of smoke detectors in your home.	
17.	Regularly check or at least annually and replace batteries on smoke detectors.	
18.	Ensure all electrical items are turned off when not in use (particularly electric blankets).	

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Should your business require any further information in relation to any of the above, contact the local police Crime Prevention Officer or the local fire brigades.



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Vulnerability Assessment Checklist for Schools

What is this checklist for?

This checklist has been prepared for schools to conduct a fire vulnerability assessment at a school. It provides prompts for you to investigate and assess the preparedness of the school to minimize the likelihood of arson and conduct a safe and orderly evacuation.

RISK		YES	NO
1.	Are the fire extinguishers in good working order, are they clear of obstructions and are they accessible?		
2.	Are waste bins secured after hours in such a way that they cannot be placed near buildings?		
3.	Are there accumulations of rubbish or debris in a position that may present a fire risk? (eg under buildings)		
4.	Is there a school evacuation plan that is practiced on a regular basis?		
5.	Are all fire protection devices up to date and working?		
6.	Are flammable liquids locked away in an appropriate area?		
7.	Are the gutters clean? (especially in bush fire prone areas)		
8.	Is tree foliage over or near buildings?		
9.	Is the grass kept short?		
10.	Is there a means of securing the premises at the end of the day?		
11.	If the school is security fenced, does the fire station have keys?		
12.	Is there a site plan displayed in a prominent position?		
13.	Is there any identified students who have a fire setting history or background?		
14.	Is there an intruder alarm installed?		
15.	Is there appropriate lighting in vulnerable areas?		
16.	Is there a closing regime in place at the end of each day?		
17.	Is there a history of fire or arson at the school or in the nearby locality?		

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Should the school require any further information in relation to any of the above, they should be referred to the Department of Education and Training School Security Unit on **1300 880 021**, the local police Crime Prevention Officer or the local fire brigades.



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Fire Safety Checklist for Schools

What is this checklist for?

This checklist has been prepared for schools that have been requested to conduct a fire vulnerability assessment. It provides recommended treatment options for you to implement to minimize the likelihood of arson within your school.

TREATMENT OPTIONS		YES
1.	Maintain perimeter fencing, hedges and external lighting should be in good order. Fences and hedges should not obstruct the vision of neighbouring properties.	
2.	Remove graffiti without delay. If left, arsonist will see the school as a legitimate target.	
3.	Consideration should be given to random patrols by security guards over holiday periods.	
4.	Ensure that doors, windows and skylights are secure.	
5.	Maintain an effective burglar alarm.	
6.	A nominated person should be responsible for securing all windows and doors prior to leaving the school.	
7.	Intruder alarms, connected to a call monitoring centre should be installed.	
8.	All combustible storage sites should be secure and emptied at the end of each day.	
9.	Skirts should be fitted to all mobile classrooms to prevent the accumulation of rubbish, and to limit building access.	
10.	Waste bins should not be fixed to walls, but kept in a secure compound with padlock and chain.	
11.	Secure high valued equipment out of sight in a locked room.	
12.	Keep all internal and means of escape doors closed.	
13.	Install an Automatic Fire Detection System.	
14.	Ensure a close down procedure is in place within the school.	
15.	Report any suspicious activity or persons in or around the school to the local police	
16.	Invite your local fire station to the school for a familiarisation visit.	

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Should the school require any further information in relation to any of the above, they should be referred to the Department of Education and Training School Security Unit on **1300 880 021**, the local police Crime Prevention Officer or the local fire brigades.



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Vulnerability Assessment Checklist for vacant and/or derelict buildings

What is this checklist for?

This checklist has been prepared for those people who want to protect their empty buildings from fire. It provides prompts for you to investigate and assess the preparedness of your building to minimize the likelihood of arson.

RISK		YES	NO
1.	Are all doors and windows secured appropriately to reduce illegal entry?		
2.	Are all combustibles such as furniture, rubbish, shrubbery removed from the building?		
3.	Are the utilities disconnected from the building? (such as power and water)		
4.	Are there accumulations of rubbish or debris in a position that may present a fire risk? (eg under buildings)		
5.	Do you regularly check the building for damage or vandalism?		
6.	Are all litter bins kept away from the building?		
7.	Are there any structural features that could lead to the spread of fire?		
8.	Are the gutters clean? (especially in bush fire prone areas)		
9.	Is tree foliage over or near buildings?		
10.	Is the grass kept short?		
11.	Is the exterior of your building illuminated at night?		
12.	Have you been reporting any vandalism to your building to police?		

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Should you require any further information in relation to any of the above, contact your local police Crime Prevention Officer or the local fire brigades.



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Fire safety recommendations for vacant and/or derelict buildings.

What is this checklist for?

This checklist has been prepared for those people who want to protect their empty buildings from fire. It provides recommended treatment options for you to implement to minimize the likelihood of a fire within the building.

TREATMENT OPTIONS		YES
1.	Maintain perimeter fencing, hedges and external lighting should be in good order. Fences and hedges should not obstruct the vision of neighbouring properties.	
2.	Don't allow rubbish to accumulate and keep all rubbish bins away from the building.	
3.	Don't allow landscaping to provide camouflage or hiding places.	
4.	Keep doors and windows locked.	
5.	Remove all combustible materials from the building such as furniture and flammable materials.	
6.	Keep leaves, firewood, overgrown trees away from the building.	
7.	Ensure all doors and windows are barricaded with non combustible materials.	
8.	Dispose of all flammable waste materials as quickly as possible.	
9.	Remove graffiti if and when it appears.	
10.	Disconnect all utilities at the street.	
11.	Even after securing your building, it is important to periodically check the exterior for vandalism.	
12.	Report any attempt break and enter of your building to police.	
13.	Report any suspicious activity or persons in or around the area to the local police.	

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Should your business require any further information in relation to any of the above, contact the local police Crime Prevention Officer or the local fire brigades.



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Arsonist identification Checklist for Residential Communities relating to Bushfires

What is this checklist for?

This checklist has been prepared for residents to assist in the identification of persons who may be responsible for deliberately lighting bushfires.

ISSUE	YES	NO
1. Has there been a repeated number of bushfires in your local area recently?		
2. Did you note the description of people entering or leaving the fire scene prior to these fires?		
3. Did you record the description of vehicles entering or leaving the fire scene prior to the fire?		
4. Have you noted any activity in the area prior to the fire e.g. camping, firewood collecting, bushwalkers etc.?		
5. Did you note the times and locations where you first observed each fire?		
6. Have you assessed if your property is at risk from bush fire by seeking information from the Fire Services?		
7. Have you sought property preparation information from the Fire Services to protect your property from the impact of a bush fire?		
8. Have you passed fire information onto the Police, Fire Services or anonymously to CRIMESTOPPERS via 1 800 333000.		

DETAILS:

Date: Time: Type of Fire / Incident:

Description of person or vehicle:

Nature of concern:

Detailed Information:

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Who reported to: Agency: Police, NSW Fire Brigades, Rural Fire Service.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Should you require any further information in relation to any of the above, contact your local Police or Fire Service.



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Bush fire Arson Reporting

FACT

Bush fire Arson

Up to 70% of bush and grass fires in NSW are considered to be deliberately lit. Deliberately lit bushfires cost the Community money, have the potential to destroy property; injure and even kill people.

HOW CAN I HELP?

If a fire affects your neighbourhood try to:

- Note the description of people entering or leaving the fire scene prior to the fire.
- Record the description of vehicles entering or leaving the fire scene prior to the fire.
- Note any activity in the area prior to the fire e.g. camping, firewood collecting, bushwalkers etc.
- Remember the time and location where you first observed the fire.

Pass this information onto the Police or Fire Services or anonymously to CRIMESTOPPERS via 1 800 333 000.

A collaboration of the

NSW Fire Brigades, NSW Rural Fire Service, NSW Police Force

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT YOUR LOCAL FIRE STATION OR FIRE CONTROL CENTRE
or visit www.fire.nsw.gov.au or www.rfs.nsw.gov.au or www.police.nsw.gov.au

Immediately ring **'000'** to report a bush fire



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