

Pyrotechnic articles in shops

Retailers' risk assessment checklist

This checklist accompanies the leaflet *Storing and selling pyrotechnics articles safely* which is available online at www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg476.htm. It has been written for people who sell pyrotechnic articles, to help them carry out a risk assessment and plan what actions they need to take to protect the safety of staff and customers.

How could a fire start?				
Danger	Action	Your actions and notes (record here any specific actions you need to take)	Action taken (✓)	Comments
Cigarettes and other naked lights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Restrict access to store rooms and other places where pyrotechnic articles are stored. ■ Prohibit smoking anywhere near the items. ■ Keep in a locked store, locked cage or, where it won't aggravate an explosive event, a locked storage cabinet or cupboard. ■ Ensure that pyrotechnic articles are not left unattended when they are out of locked storage. 	(eg ensure all staff are aware of no smoking areas and check <i>no smoking</i> signs are displayed in prominent locations)		Taking positive action to prevent a fire is the most important of all the control measures you must take.
Sparks from electrical sockets and fittings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In storerooms, remove electrical equipment (other than light fittings and fire detection equipment) and blank off plugs. 			

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Heat causing boxes to catch fire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remove space heaters or position them well away from the pyrotechnic articles. ■ In storerooms, leave a clear space between the light fitting(s) and the pyrotechnic articles. 			
Fire involving other goods spreads to the pyrotechnic articles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Keep in a dedicated storeroom if possible, otherwise in a cage or, where it won't aggravate an explosive event, a locked storage cabinet or cupboard. ■ Keep well away from flammable or combustible articles. 			<p>Flammable substances include white spirit and solvent-based paints. Combustible articles include clothing, cardboard, paper and wood (eg pallets).</p> <p>Confinement can increase the explosive effects of some pyrotechnic articles. Your supplier should be able to tell you whether storing your pyrotechnic articles in a cabinet or cupboard could make an explosive event worse.</p>
Arson or criminal action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Keep in a secure goods yard. ■ Keep under supervision. ■ Review location of the store and security arrangements. 			A fire might be started deliberately or by thieves using cutting equipment to gain access to the store.
How could a fire spread and get worse?				
Heat from burning pyrotechnic articles causes nearby flammable or combustible articles to catch fire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Locate pyrotechnic articles well away from flammable substances to reduce risk of fire spreading. ■ Wherever possible, do not store flammable or combustible articles with pyrotechnic articles. ■ If pyrotechnic articles are stored in a container outside the building, ensure it is located well away from parked vehicles, pallets etc. 			

How could a fire spread and get worse?				
Danger	Action	Your actions and notes (record here any specific actions you need to take)	Action taken (✓)	Comments
Burning pyrotechnic articles or fragments are thrown into flammable or combustible articles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Keep the pyrotechnic articles in their transport boxes. ■ Close transport boxes after use. ■ Keep pyrotechnic articles in a separate storeroom. If this is not possible, keep them in a cage or, where it won't aggravate an explosive event, a storage cabinet or cupboard. ■ If pyrotechnic articles are stocked in a warehouse or other multi-use storage area, ensure there is a barrier between pyrotechnic articles and flammable items (eg a wall, or a wire screen), or enclose items in a wire cage, or keep them in an ISO transport container or other suitable construction that will contain the fragment throw. ■ Control the amount of pyrotechnic articles in the shop area. ■ Ensure the premises are suitable for the quantity of pyrotechnic articles (and keep the stocks of pyrotechnic articles within the limits permitted by your licence). 			<p>Anyone storing large quantities of flammable substances should seek specialist advice.</p> <p>Make sure you have identified the hazard type of the pyrotechnic articles. Even small pyrotechnic articles can present a high explosives hazard.</p>
Pyrotechnic articles are contaminated by other chemicals or by water and become unstable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Keep away from corrosive and caustic substances such as drain cleaners, paint strippers and wood preservatives. ■ Keep away from fertilisers and products containing peroxides (eg fibreglass hardeners). ■ Keep in a dry place. 			

How can people be protected in the event of a fire?				
Danger	Action	Your actions and notes (record here any specific actions you need to take)	Action taken (✓)	Comments
Staff or customers are unable to escape because of heat and/or smoke.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Control the amount of pyrotechnic articles in the shop area. ■ Ensure the pyrotechnic articles are located so that escape routes are not affected by smoke and flames in the event of a fire. ■ Ensure escape routes are not blocked by other goods. ■ Ensure all staff are clear on what action must be taken if there is fire. 			<p>Priority must be for staff and customers to evacuate the shop.</p> <p>Fires should only be fought if people are in danger.</p> <p>You have a legal duty under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 to ensure that any person present in your shop can escape to safety should there be an outbreak of fire.</p>
Fire or explosion spreads to neighbouring or adjoining premises.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Locate containers away from neighbouring premises/properties. ■ If there are flats or residential accommodation in the same building, ensure that there is a separate escape route for residents. ■ Install fire detection and alarm system. ■ Ensure that suitable fire doors are fitted etc. 			<p>Make sure that the quantities and hazard types of the pyrotechnic articles you are storing are suitable for the separation distances between your storage areas and neighbouring or adjoining residential premises. Your supplier should be able to help you identify hazard types.</p>