

DORSET & WILTSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE

NEWSLETTER

Issue 2 - June 2026

WELCOME

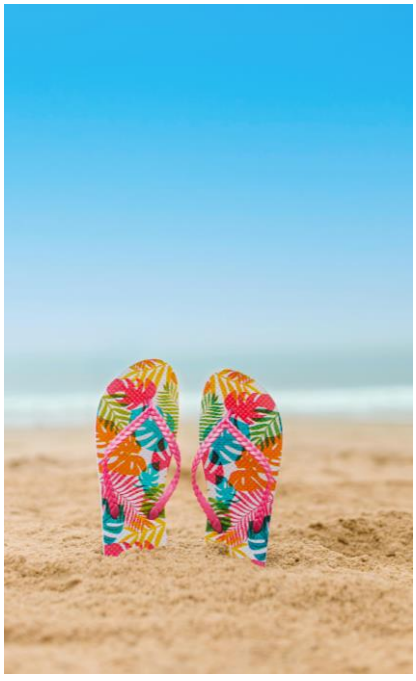
Through our newsletters we will keep you up to date on new legislation, as well as provide guidance on how to reduce the risk of fire in your business

As Summer approaches and businesses prepare for warmer weather and increased activity, it's important not to overlook the need to maintain effective fire safety management and up-to-date business continuity plans. See our summer fire safety checklist below to help protect your workplace:

- Review and update your fire risk assessment.
- Keep combustible materials and waste under control.
- Ensure fire exits are unlocked, clear, and well signed.
- Test alarms, extinguishers, and emergency lighting regularly.
- Avoid fire risks such as overloaded sockets & portable fans.
- Make sure staff understand fire evacuation procedures.

Did you know? We run free fire safety webinars!
Click here to sign up.





SUMMER SUMMARY

In this issue, we will cover the following topics:

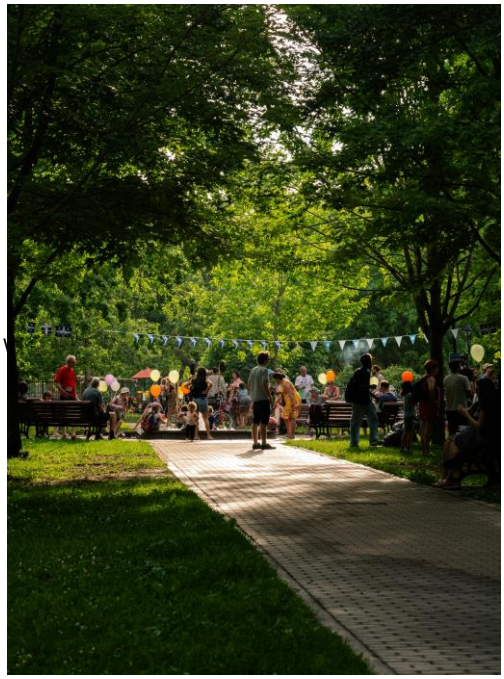
- Lithium-ion batteries (Page 2)
- Events & celebrations – open-air events (Page 2)
- Preventing and reducing false alarms (Page 2)
- Occupancy levels in licensed premises (Page 3)
- Care home seminars (Page 3)

LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES, WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Lithium-ion batteries power everyday devices such as phones, laptops, cameras and mobility equipment, and are used safely by millions of people worldwide. However, batteries that are damaged, poorly manufactured or incorrectly charged can pose serious fire risks. A key hazard is “thermal runaway”, where excessive heat causes the battery to ignite or explode. Risks can also increase through overcharging, deep discharging, physical damage, exposure to heat, or improper storage. The batteries contain flammable electrolytes, meaning fires can spread rapidly and be difficult to extinguish. Safe charging, handling and storage are essential to reduce the risk of fire incidents.

Take a look at our further guidance here.





EVENTS & CELEBRATIONS – OPEN AIR EVENTS

Safe delivery of outdoor events, festivals and mass gatherings depends on thorough pre-planning and a comprehensive Event Management Plan. Event organisers are legally responsible for carrying out a fire safety risk assessment to protect staff, contractors, volunteers, attendees and all authorised persons on site.

Key considerations include waste management, catering, hazardous substances, generators, fuel and LPG storage, electrical safety, smoking controls, vehicle movements, camping, fireworks, and accessibility for people with additional needs. Organisers should also address fire prevention measures such as restricting smoke spread, managing construction works and reducing arson risks. The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) has produced guidance documents and templates to support consistent planning, risk assessment and record-keeping. For more information, click here.

PREVENTING OR REDUCING UNWANTED FIRE ALARM SIGNALS

Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) systems can activate for reasons other than fire, resulting in unwanted fire signals or false alarms.

Common causes include faulty detectors or control panels, poor maintenance, and environmental factors such as dust, humidity, or extreme temperatures. Cooking smoke or steam, accidental activation of manual call points, and electrical interference can also trigger alarms. Construction work, insects, wildlife, vandalism, and poor system design may further increase false alarm risks. Most false alarms can be reduced through careful planning, regular maintenance, and proper system management. Investigating alarm activations helps identify trends and improve system reliability. Further guidance is available from the National Fire Chiefs Council.



SUPPORT THE THREE LIONS SAFELY THIS WORLD CUP – IT'S COMING HOME

With increased footfall expected during the men's football World Cup, licensed premises should review their maximum occupancy limits and ensure they remain compliant with licence conditions and fire safety requirements.

- Do not exceed the safe capacity of the venue, including external seating or standing areas used for screenings and events.
- Ensure all escape routes, exits and gangways remain clear and unobstructed throughout trading hours.
- Consider additional stewarding or door supervision during peak fixtures to assist with crowd management and prevent overcrowding.
- Review furniture layouts and temporary screen installations to ensure they do not reduce safe circulation space.
- Staff should be briefed on occupancy monitoring procedures and actions to take where numbers approach capacity limits.
- Premises operating special promotions or extended hours should assess whether additional controls or staffing are necessary.
- Queue management outside the premises should also be considered to minimise risks to public safety and neighbouring businesses.
- Regular checks of toilets, outdoor areas and high-density zones can help maintain safe occupancy levels during busy match periods.
- Planning ahead and maintaining clear communication with staff and customers will help ensure a safe and enjoyable tournament experience for all.

FIRE SAFETY IN CARE HOMES

We are excited to announce we will be hosting care home seminars later this year. We have limited spaces available, so please sign-up soon to avoid missing out. See available dates below:

- 15 September– 9am to 1.30pm – DWFRS Support Offices, Peverell Avenue West, Dorchester
- 22 September– 9am to 1.30pm – DWFRS HQ, Five Rivers Leisure Centre, Hulse Road, Salisbury.



NEW WEBINAR COMING SOON - Preserving the Past, Protecting Lives – For Heritage and Historic Buildings. Find out more in the next issue.

USEFUL LINKS

Risk assessment guidance
Fire safety and the law
Building regulations
Events and celebrations

Check out our socials below:

If you do not wish to be contacted with this newsletter in the future, please email businessfiresafety@dwfire.org.uk.

www.dwfire.org.uk