

## Legislation

### The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

1. This requires the responsible person to undertake a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment. This should review any history of false alarms and ensure action is taken to prevent them.
2. The responsible person is required to ensure that any fire safety equipment provided must be maintained in good working order and tested appropriately.
3. The responsible person must ensure that the British Standard for fire alarms is complied with - BS5839. This standard states that all alarm activations should be recorded in a Logbook. This will help the responsible person to manage false alarms.

If you require further information on fire risk assessment and your responsibilities then contact Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service.

**We are here to help and can offer advice and guidance on where the best sources of help are available.**

### See our website:

[www.leicestershire-fire.gov.uk/safety/business/responsible-persons/ufs](http://www.leicestershire-fire.gov.uk/safety/business/responsible-persons/ufs)

### Or contact:

Leicestershire Fire and Rescue  
Service Headquarters,  
12 Geoff Monk Way, Birstall,  
Leicester, LE4 3BU

**Telephone:** 0116 287 2241 (24hrs)

**Fax:** 0116 227 1330

**Email:** [info@lfrs.org](mailto:info@lfrs.org)

If you would like assistance in reading or understanding this document in another language, please write to the above address.

**LEICESTERSHIRE**  
FIRE and RESCUE SERVICE

**YOUR  
FALSE ALARM  
IS YOUR  
RESPONSIBILITY**



**LEICESTERSHIRE**  
FIRE and RESCUE SERVICE

*safer communities*

## Facts and Causes

**98% of all fire alarm calls received by Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service are false alarms, not requiring any emergency response.**

Dealing with false alarms not only wastes our time, it can also have a major impact on business. It is estimated that false alarms cost UK businesses £1 billion a year.

False alarms take up valuable time, cause interruptions in work and can indicate poor fire safety management. When people have experienced a number of false alarms, they may become complacent and may not react appropriately in the event of a **real fire**.

The causes of false alarms often relate to management of the premises rather than a fault with the alarm system. These can include:

- Testing a system without first informing your call centre.
- Contractors working below the detector head.
- Steam, aerosols and other fumes activating the detector.
- Build up of dust due to poor housekeeping.
- Changing the use of an area which can affect the detector.
- Human error such as burning toast.

## Responsible Person

A 'responsible' or 'competent' person at your premises should have a good understanding of the fire alarm system. They should be confident in their ability to carry out an investigation when the alarm sounds, without placing themselves at risk.

Prompt investigation, prior to calling the Fire Service, will help you discover any fire in its early stages. This will allow properly qualified staff to tackle the fire safely **whilst the Fire Service is being called** (dial 999).

By investigating the cause of the alarm the moment it happens, your staff can also quickly identify false alarms, reset the system and return the premises to normal, therefore minimising disruption.

Where premises are monitored by a fire alarm monitoring company the responsible person must ensure that:

- They know which company provides their call handling service.
- The company knows when the premises are **open** (occupied) and **closed** (empty).
- The company holds up-to-date key holder details for at least 3 people.
- The company notifies the key holder to respond within the 20 minute recommended response time.

## Call Challenging

**If Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service receives a fire alarm call:**

1. A competent person on your premises should investigate the cause of the alarm, without putting themselves at risk.
2. Fire alarm calls from certain low to medium risk premises (which include the majority of industrial, commercial and education premises) may be '**call challenged**'. This means that Fire Control will ask additional questions as to the reason for the call.
3. A competent person (key holder) should attend the premises within **20 minutes** of being called, and be available at all times.

If your premises have had repeated false alarms you can expect a Fire Protection Advisor to contact the responsible person, to help prevent any more false alarms. Further false alarms may result in follow up action being taken.

**Do not worry about making an emergency 999 call if you genuinely believe there is a fire.**