

# FIRE SAFETY FOR SMALL BUSINESSES



**FIRE EXTINGUISHERS:** Every business location is required to have at least one extinguisher. Required extinguishers must be serviced yearly, or immediately after use, by a person having a valid certificate. Extinguishers must be installed on approved brackets or set in a fire department approved cabinet. They must be conspicuously located or have signs, which identify the location. Please contact your local fire station if you have any questions regarding the size, type, or placement of extinguishers.

**WATER HEATERS:** The burner flame can easily start a fire if flammable items are placed too close. Maintain at least three feet of clearance around your hot water heater. **Electrical Panels:** In the event of a fire, three feet of clearance around the electrical panel is necessary to access circuit breakers. **Exit Aisles:** Must be clear of storage at all times. **Fire Control Valves:** Often located in obscure areas of buildings, fire control valves can get blocked by storage. Maintain a three-foot access aisle and make sure that the valves are well marked.

**ELECTRICAL HAZARDS:** Extension cords are often misused and can be very hazardous. They should be used only for temporary wiring, not permanent use. They should not be run through ceilings, walls, doors or windows. Also, beware of the extension cord "octopus." Using multiple outlet adapters to run numerous items off a single outlet can be dangerous. It is much safer to install additional outlets rather than to use adapters and extension cords.

**EXIT DOORS:** For security purposes many business owners lock rear exit doors. Even in a small shop, a fire can trap someone and need to rely on the rear door to escape. All required exit doors must be unlocked during business hours or have escape hardware, which allows them to be opened from the inside without a key. This is a crucial issue to life safety. Installing escape hardware or a door alarm can accommodate both security and fire safety

**ADDRESS NUMBERS:** Make sure that your address is clearly visible from the street. If you have a fire or medical emergency, we want to find you fast. It is also very helpful if someone can wait for us out on the street and flag us in.

These few simple precautions can go a long way toward preventing a hostile fire from destroying your business.