



A MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR

An Owners Corporation has a strict duty of care!

Spring is a great time for checking and maintaining the fire safety facilities in commercial properties. It is important to remember however that when engaging any type of service contractors, Owners Corporation and Property Managers must be acutely aware of their obligation to ensure work is conducted in a safe and compliant manner. This is often referred to as "General Duty of Care" and is closely linked to responsibilities imposed in the Workplace and Safety Act 2004.

Key safety factors that need to be established well before any building or maintenance work commences include: Suitable qualifications and competency in conducting the assigned task; Adequate insurance (public liability, work cover and professional indemnity); Assurance that appropriate fire and work place safety practices are in place to safeguard employees, tenants and visitors.

We hope you enjoy our Spring Newsletter and encourage you to call us for free personal advice on any areas of fire safety that you need to discuss.

David Hassett, MD AESI

Protecting your investment

Next to your home, owning a Commercial Property, be it for your own use or for rental purposes can be your greatest asset. An understanding of the laws and regulations that govern the property's safety and that of its occupants can prove invaluable in protecting this asset.

The building regulations of 2006 require that nearly all buildings other than a house or outbuilding state that the owner is responsible for maintaining safety fittings and essential safety measures (ESMs) over the life of the building. The essential safety measures cover traditional fire services such as alarms, sprinklers, fire extinguishers



Did You Know?

False MFB call-outs can cost tax payers millions, waste thousands of dollars and carry heavy penalties.

A false fire alarm occurs when the MFB is called to attend an incident only to find there is no emergency and there is no need for their fire-fighting skills or other expertise. It is essential the automatic fire alarm systems operate efficiently at all times firstly because it is a legal requirement and secondly and most importantly the alarms have been installed to save lives. False alarms have an enormous negative impact on emergency service delivery and business resources and false MFB call-outs carry heavy fines when there is no reasonable excuse. In order to avoid being charged for false alarm call-outs, two key activities can be undertaken by AESI to reduce false call-outs.

- Professional evaluation of your fire safety system
- Appropriate checking and maintenance of your fire alarms



and hydrants. They also include passive fire safety features like fire doors, exit signs, emergency lighting, discharge from exits and clear paths of travel. Owners are required by law to prepare an ESM report outlining this responsibility.

The building surveyor or the chief fire officer is responsible for the enforcement of these regulations and non-compliance can result in substantial fines and insurance issues.



PLANNING FOR A WORKPLACE EMERGENCY

A workplace emergency is an unforeseen situation that threatens your employees, customers, or the public; disrupts or shuts down your operations; or causes physical or environmental damage.

Emergencies may be natural or manmade and include the following:

- Floods
- Fires
- Toxic gas releases
- Chemical spills
- Explosions
- Civil disturbances
- Workplace violence resulting in bodily harm and trauma

The best approach is to prepare to respond to an emergency before it happens. Few people can think clearly and logically in a crisis, so it is important to do so in advance, when you have time to be thorough.

At a minimum, your emergency action plan must include the following:

- A preferred method for reporting fires and other emergencies
- An evacuation policy and procedure
- Emergency escape procedures and route assignments, such as floor plans, workplace maps, and safe or refuge areas

AESI have expert resources readily available to help with Evacuation and Emergency Management Planning.

SPRING MAINTENANCE TIP

Easy Tips for a fire-free entrance into our long hot Summer.

- Smoke detector batteries should be checked and replaced.
- Fire extinguishers should be checked, and recharged if necessary.
- Electric outlets and extension cords should not be overloaded.
- Air Conditioning units and electrical cords should be checked.
- Windows should be checked to make sure they open properly, in case they are needed as exits.
- The Fire Escape Plan should be reviewed and staff made aware of safety plans.



NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Maintaining the safety of your property is paramount to protecting your investment.

AESI Services can help

- Asbestos Property Reports
- Essential Safety Measures inspections/audits
- Evacuation Plans and Training
- Occupational Health & Safety Issues
- Repairs and Maintenance

For confidential advice and assistance call AESI

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