



# Prevention of False Alarms

## How well are you managing your Fire Alarm System?

### Work through the check list to act and plan to prevent false alarms

Action complete  
(Occupiers/Managers)

- Train staff/occupiers to respond to investigate the alarm properly
- **Do not** reset the alarm before proper investigation   
**Each activation if properly investigated will help you pin point your system fault.**
- Fill in alarm log book accurately recording all false activations. Record Date, time, zone activated and where possible device number   
**A history of problems will assist your alarm engineer with fault finding.**
- React to system problems you trace due to the above actions   
**Actively seek to make the changes to your system to overcome the problems found.**
- Consider a delay/pre- alarm or taking your system off alarm receiving centre (ARC) monitoring when the building is occupied to allow you time for investigation before alerting the Emergency Services
- Always contact your ARC during weekly testing and system maintenance   
**A simple way to prevent unwanted alarm signals is to make a formal agreement with your ARC around scheduled testing times and actions to be taken by your staff and the ARC.**
- Control contractors including welders, builders and cleaning contractors   
**Strict control of any hot work processes or work involving dust will prevent false alarms. Permit to work systems will ensure affected zones are isolated.**
- Following removal of dust covers, after building works, ensure your ARC is informed and prevent false signals reaching the emergency services whilst the system settles
- Strictly enforce smoking policy
- Control your staffs use of cooking/food reheating in unsuitable areas   
**Significant numbers of false alarms are caused by toasters kettles and microwaves being used in office areas with smoke detection. Remove items or change detection type subject to your risk assessment**
- In rest areas where cooking/heating facilities are provided ensure the fire door is shut.
- Consider auto ventilation fan start on use of cooking facilities
- If convector heaters are used during colder periods ensure good ventilation on initial use
- In **non-sleeping risks** consider under your risk assessment **short term** temporary isolation of problem heads to allow system maintenance/repair. Ensure safety is not compromised
- If the use of a room has changed or a security smoke cloak system is installed the most suitable alternative detection should be provided.

Figures below taken from 2014 British Research Establishment

Systems Modifications and Management Procedures to Prevent False Alarms	Improvement Gain
Replacement of detector with Multi sensor	70%
Use of location appropriate detectors	40%
Use of protective covers on call points and bump guards in high traffic areas with adequate signage and CCTV where required	17%
Upgrade to approved analogue addressable panel	10%
Better control of contractors	10%
More rigorous maintenance	6%

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