Find Fire Before Fire Finds You

A pile of oily rags; an old power strip; a cigarette discarded in the wrong spot — fire risks can be anywhere. That’s why it’s important to be on the lookout for the hazards that can injure your employees and make your business go up in smoke. During 2020 Fire Prevention Week, October 4–10, review and revamp your business’s fire-safety measures to help increase the chances that you’ll find fire before fire finds you.

An ongoing concern
While a spotlight shines on fire prevention around this time every year, your efforts to curb devastating blazes before they start should last all year long. There is no one-size-fits-all fire-prevention strategy. It’s important to understand the basics, then use that knowledge to create a plan that fits your business’s unique needs.

While every business presents unique fire hazards, some dangers are nearly universal. The following considerations are a great place to start when creating or strengthening your fire-prevention plan:

Are your electrical systems current? Faulty wiring, improper use of power strips and extension cords, and system overloads are leading causes of business fires. Regularly evaluate your electrical system and policies that govern its use.

Is your equipment in good repair? Continuing to use outdated equipment or trying to save some money by skipping maintenance could prove costly. Update or maintain your equipment according to recommendations from manufacturers or service professionals.

Fires need fuel. Starve fire of the materials it needs to get started and spread through your business. Make sure your work areas are tidy, your walkways are clear, and your storage spaces are orderly. Get rid of unnecessary clutter and combustibles throughout your building to help minimize the fire load.

Comfort could come at a cost. Space heaters can be just what you need to warm up a chilly spot, but these handy little devices are a significant cause of business fires. Remind employees to turn them off before they leave for the evening — or consider banning them from the business altogether.

A team effort
Effective fire prevention takes the whole team. Cooperation from employees is essential, so involve them in every step of the process. Most importantly, let them know that they are the business’s most important line of defense against devastating fires. Hold training sessions throughout the year, focusing on seasonal risks, best practices, and reinforcement of emergency procedures.

While completely removing all fire risks is impossible, creating a prevention plan that focuses on key hazards and employs a persistent, team-based strategy can help you find fire before fire finds you. Federated Insurance clients can access a variety of fire prevention risk management resources, including employee training posters, sample industry-specific fire hazard checklists, and more by logging in to mySHIELD™.