



## Don't Let Your Business Go Up In Smoke

Fires that hit businesses come in all sizes. They can occur anytime, anywhere, and from a variety of causes. They don't discriminate. Spontaneous combustion, heating and electrical systems, smoking, poor housekeeping, the storage of flammables, and mechanical equipment failure continue to be the most frequent fire causes across all industries, and are often the result of missed opportunities to recognize and remove the hazard. But sometimes, hazards can be easy to miss:

- A company employee was doing some cleaning with a mop and cleaning chemicals. Those two things in combination spontaneously combusted.

The point is, business owners need to be ready for almost anything. There's no doubt that fires are devastating and have implications far beyond property damage.

### **Fires create chaos**

Businesses are vital to a community's well-being and survival. A fire at a business leaves the community wondering if the company will survive.

### **Fires create uncertainty**

Employees are a business's most valuable asset, and a fire can leave them with a lot of questions: Do I still have a job or do I need to move on? Will I get a paycheck—even for the short-term? What can I do to help? If the company shuts down, then what?

### **Fires create stress**

Customers rely on businesses to be operational to fulfill their needs. When customers see a business destroyed, they can't help but wonder how it will affect them. How will their needs be met? Today's just-in-time business transactions may require customers to go elsewhere to get the products and services previously provided them by the damaged supplier. Will that be short- or long-term?

Fire prevention is an important enough topic to take the proper time and effort to put into action. It's not just a "one and done" risk management activity; it should be done at least daily. Investigations reveal that most fires can be prevented if businesses consciously pay attention to a few, very specific hazards. Federated provides an industry- and business-specific, customizable fire risk evaluation checklist to use during facility inspections.

The sample checklists are intended to help employees, supervisors, or managers recognize potential fire hazards so they can fix the problem. However, checklists can do only so much. Employee training and proper fire prevention safeguards, procedures, and equipment may help prevent a fire from taking over control of your company.

For more information on the checklist and employee training, visit <https://www.federatedinsurance.com/ws/fi/InsuranceResources/FIRE-PREVENTION>

*This article is intended to provide general information and recommendations regarding risk prevention only. There is no guarantee that following these guidelines will result in reduced losses or eliminate any risks. This information may be subject to regulations and restrictions in your state and should not be considered legal advice. Qualified counsel should be sought regarding questions specific to your circumstances and applicable state laws. All rights reserved.*