

RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME FOR COMMERCIAL GROWERS

The potential for serious losses by commercial growers can be reduced by implementing a risk management programme to minimise potential hazards. A designated person should oversee the programme to ensure all aspects are properly managed and any required corrective action is implemented without delay.

The following information is provided for guidance purposes only

1) GLASSHOUSE MAINTENANCE

Glasshouses to be subject to regular maintenance under the control of a 'competent person':

- a) Ongoing:
 - i) damaged glass to be replaced without delay
 - ii) chimney stacks and artificial windbreaks to be maintained in good condition
 - iii) the area in and around glasshouses to be kept clear of loose or flammable materials
- b) Annually:
 - i) glazing systems, (glass, glazing bars, storm clips and capping) to be checked and maintained
 - ii) gutters to be cleared of debris and vegetation and moss removed
 - iii) ventilators to be checked to ensure they 'seat' securely. Any ventilator rack and pinion mechanisms to be checked and adjusted and racks, pinions and bearings to be greased, with high temperature grease, and limit switches checked. Storm cords and pulleys to be checked and maintained
 - iv) thermal screens and their motors and limiting devices to be checked for efficiency and to ensure no uneven movement or undue wear and tear to screens. Mechanisms to be greased
 - v) working parts of door rollers to be greased to ensure easy operation and secure closing
 - vi) concrete dolly foundations to be checked and maintained
 - vii) any damaged galvanizing to be made good
 - viii) any rotten woodwork to be replaced and bare wood painted or treated with preservative
 - ix) storm clips, rods and cables to be secured
- c) Every two years:
 - i) timber gutters to be bitumized
 - ii) steel gutters to be cleaned down

- iii) galvanizing to be checked to ensure in sound condition (particularly where downwind of boiler chimneys) and, if necessary, treated with bitumastic solution after a thorough wire brushing
- iv) gutter joints and bolts to be checked to ensure they are sealed and watertight
- v) rainwater dispersal to be checked, collection pipes cleared of debris and soakaways checked to ensure they are not overflowing
- d) Every three years:
 - i) ventilator and thermal screen motor gearbox oil levels to be checked and motors overhauled and greased
 - ii) glass to be washed externally with approved solvents
 - iii) woodwork to be painted or treated with preservative
 - iv) perimeter walls to be checked and re-pointed as necessary. Sills to be made secure.

2) HOUSEKEEPING & WASTE CONTROL

- a) Smoking to be prohibited within the buildings, or a designated detached building provided with ash trays and fire extinguishers, and suitable notices prominently displayed
- b) External storage of combustible or waste materials to be at least 7m (but wherever possible 10m) from the fabric of the building, preferably within fenced or enclosed areas
- c) Internal storage of combustible or waste materials, to be kept to a minimum and within designated areas
- d) Vegetation growing in the immediate vicinity of buildings to be cut back regularly.



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3) FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

A fire risk assessment must be undertaken to identify the construction and evaluate the potential for serious fire in the light of working practices, inception hazards and likely fire spread. Areas to be classified as high, medium or low. The results of the assessment should be documented, together with action points, and reviewed regularly. Completion of a fire risk assessment is required in accordance with current legislation.

4) HEATING

To be subject to a risk assessment and suitable for use within the environment intended:

- a) portable heaters not to be used unless acceptably controlled
- b) heaters or boilers to be within a non-combustible area or enclosed fire compartmented area providing at least 60 minutes fire resistance. Where not possible heaters or boilers to be at least 3m from combustible panels or the panels boarded over with non-combustible material
- c) flues used to extract hot gases not to pass through, or be close to, combustible panels. Where this is not possible the immediate panels to be replaced with non-combustible (rock wool or mineral wool) panels or the flue outlet or hot trunking passing through the panel set within a non-combustible insulating sleeve with a minimum 60 minutes fire resistance. Any gap between the sleeve and panel to be filled with mineral fibre or other suitable non-combustible material
- d) Heaters should be subject to routine maintenance in accordance with manufacturer's instructions
- e) Fixed pressure systems to be inspected in accordance with current legislative requirements.

5) ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS & AFTERCARE

- a) Installation and electrical testing of the fixed installation to be undertaken in accordance with the current edition of Institute of Engineering and Technology (IET) Wiring Regulations: BS7671:2008. by a member of National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting (NICEIC), Electrical Contractors Association (ECA) or similar approved UKAS accredited body who are regulated for commercial installations:
 - i) the frequency of wiring inspection of the premises with IET certification is every 3-5 years in accordance with the recommendations of BS 7671:2008 or Electricity at Work Regulations 1989, or more frequently if advised by your electrician

- ii) a full 100% inspection of the installation is to be undertaken unless a previous full inspection has been completed, in which case a partial inspection on a rolling programme may be permitted. In such instances previous documentation must be available and the partial inspection does not revealing abnormal incident of failures
- iii) thermographic imaging, using heat-sensitive camera equipment, is increasingly undertaken to identify any "hot spots" and provide early warning of potential problems. This is particularly beneficial for high fire hazard risks
- iv) electrical wiring/switch panels and controls directly attached to or passing through, combustible panels should be inspected annually with IET certification or be subject to at least annual thermographic inspection to detect hidden hot spots and any corrective action taken as necessary
- b) Other recommended checks include the condition and electrical resistance of insulation, earth continuity and resistance to earth
- c) Portable Appliance Testing is the periodic inspection of portable apparatus connected to a fixed installation ranging from kettles to vending machines. This must be undertaken in accordance with the relevant Code of Practice published by the IET and whilst this is recommended at intervals between three months and four years, depending upon the risk, annual testing would be usual
- d) High temperature electrical fittings are not to be fitted directly on to or near combustible panels
- e) Access to isolator switches to be kept clear in case of emergency
- f) Overload protection devices protect the installation from excessive currents arising from faults or other causes and reduce the risk of fire. These include traditional fuses which, if "blown", are only be replaced after tracing and rectifying the fault. Replacement fuses to be of the correct rating for the circuit. It is recommended that fuses be replaced with Miniature Circuit Breakers which are more precise and rapid in operation thereby offering better protection.

6) PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

Adequate extinguishers to be located and correctly mounted throughout the premises with regular inspections and maintenance undertaken by an approved supplier and recorded.

7) HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY/RISK ASSESSMENT

- a) There should be a safety policy providing a clear statement of intent and commitment to safe working by both own personnel and any contractors
- b) Tasks to be risk assessed and method statements provided to staff and any contractors involved
- c) Specific risk assessments are required for work at height including any glass cleaning or replacement.

8) FORK LIFT TRUCK CHARGING & VEHICLES

- a) Fork Lift Truck charging to be undertaken in an area of non-combustible construction or outside the buildings. Where this is not possible charging not to be undertaken within 3m of combustible panels unless they are protected by non-combustible materials
- b) Vehicle parking areas to be at least 7m (but wherever possible 10m) from the fabric of the building
- c) Areas prone to vehicle impact to be protected by suitable guard rails or barriers.

9) SECURITY

- a) The sheds and any access gates to be secured by a close shackle padlock, with a minimum of five levers with proprietary locking bar conforming to EN12320 and achieving security classification 5 or above
- b) It is recommended that security lighting, operational from dawn till dusk, be installed and located:
 - i) to avoid the production of shadowed areas where intruders can operate unseen
 - ii) out of reach of vandals and fitted with protective coverings.



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IMPORTANT NOTE

The information contained herein is designed for guidance only and NFU Mutual cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions arising from its use.

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