



CHURCH FIRE SAFETY AND PROTECTION

Keeping churches safe.

The average length of time to rebuild after a fire is 18 months with some cases going much longer than that. The impact to the church goes far beyond the physical damage and loss of property, so emphasis needs to be placed on keeping our churches safe.

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

A commitment to good housekeeping and maintenance will help reduce a church's risk of fire. Some examples of this include:

- Hazard reduction through the removal or trimming of trees close to the building and working bees to clear gutters and surrounds of leaves and other flammable material.
- Have an electrical contractor regularly inspect the premises as well as test and tag all electrical equipment and appliances.
- Remove all portable bar heaters and electric fan heaters as they are a common cause of property fires.
- Store loose property away from heat sources and ensure all flammables are marked and locked away in metal cabinets also away from heat sources.

POLICIES AND PRACTICES

- Practice and insist on all appliances being unplugged or turned off when the building is vacated, and ban the use of double adaptors on power outlets.
- Have a strict no open flames policy (eg, candles) and supervise the use of gas and electrical appliances in the kitchen.
- Have a system in place where members can report fire hazards.

Plan ahead.

If budget allows, it is worthwhile installing hard wired smoke detectors remotely monitored throughout the facility. Talk to RMS about risk and safety co-funding.

Ensure you have an effective evacuation plan (including nominated fire wardens and assembly points), emergency lighting (regularly tested), working fire extinguishers and fire blankets.



MAINTENANCE

The church's housekeeping and maintenance is in good order so that fire hazards are reduced.



ELECTRICAL TESTING

All electrical equipment is regularly tested by a licensed electrician. (Eg. fridges and baptismal font heaters)



STANDARD PROCEDURES

There are policies in place for the use of electrical appliances and kitchen equipment.



PREPARATION

The church is prepared in the event of fire with wardens, evacuation plan and working fire fighting equipment.

READY TO HELP

Risk Management Service is a dedicated service department of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific.

rms.org.au

