Fire Safety Checklist for Churches

BEACON INSURANCE AGENCY

In the event a fire happens, every second counts. You may have less than 3-minutes for a safe escape. To protect everyone inside, it's crucial to consider your church's fire safety and be sure to have a fire exit plan that is well-rehearsed with your staff.

☑ Print this document and place a checkmark next to the items completed

Fires are one of the most prevalent and devastating threats to churches today. While some fires are intentional others happen by mere accident. But, with preparation and routine maintenance, your church can reduce the risk. With this in mind, we have developed a printable church fire safety checklist to help you keep track of the details. Remember, if a fire does occur, be sure to **GET OUT**, **STAY OUT**, and **CALL 911**.

Church Fire Safety Checklist

DATE: _____

Smoke Alarms

	YES	NO	N/A
Are low battery warning sounds (chirping) heeded and then batteries replaced promptly?	☐	☐	☐
Do all smoke alarms get tested monthly by pressing the test button to ensure they make a load sound?	☐	☐	☐
Are all smoke alarms vacuumed or dusted regularly to remove debris that may clog the vents?	☐	☐	☐
Do batteries in all smoke alarms get replaced annually, even if they seem to be working properly?	☐	☐	☐
Are all smoke alarms reviewed and replaced if more than 10-years after its manufactured date?	☐	☐	☐

Fire Alarm System

FIRE ALARMS

	YES	NO	N/A
Does the fire alarm system get tested once a month to ensure it alerts the entire building?	☐	☐	☐
Do batteries in fire alarms get replaced at least once a year or as recommended by the manufacturer?	☐	☐	☐
Is the chamber on all smoke detectors cleaned with compressed air or vacuumed to remove debris?	☐	☐	☐
Are tests, inspections, and maintenance completed based on local NFPA guidelines?	☐	☐	☐
Are all state, city, and municipal health, building and fire codes being followed?	☐	☐	☐
Is there a maintenance and service contract that is up-to-date for the fire alarms?	☐	☐	☐

SPRINKLER SYSTEM

	YES	NO	N/A
Are sprinkler heads clear of obstructions with no objects closer than 18-inches?	☐	☐	☐
Has the sprinkler system been inspected by a licensed fire sprinkler system company?	☐	☐	☐
Have the sprinklers been checked by fire department or certified fire protection professional?	☐	☐	☐
Is there a maintenance and service contract that is up-to-date on the sprinkler system?	☐	☐	☐

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Fire Extinguishers

	YES	NO	N/A
Is there at least one fire extinguisher within 75-feet of anywhere in the church?	☐	☐	☐
Are the paths to fire extinguishers clear of obstacles and quickly accessible?	☐	☐	☐
Are all fire extinguishers visibly mounted to save confusion in an emergency?	☐	☐	☐
Is the fire extinguisher near an exit so the person can leave fast in case they decide not to fight the fire?	☐	☐	☐
If your church has a commercial kitchen, is the fire extinguisher K-Rated and inspected annually?	☐	☐	☐
Have all fire extinguishers undergone an annual inspection by a fire extinguisher company?	☐	☐	☐

Electrical Hazards

CIRCUIT BREAKERS OR FUSES

	YES	NO	N/A
Has an annual inspection by a licensed electrician been done?	☐	☐	☐
Are all concerns addressed with the same licensed electrician?	☐	☐	☐
For modern churches, has the breaker box been reviewed for tripped circuit breakers?	☐	☐	☐
On older churches, has the fuse box been inspected for blown-out fuses?	☐	☐	☐
Do all fuses have the proper amperage rating for the circuit they protect?	☐	☐	☐

LIGHTS & LIGHTING

	YES	NO	N/A
Are only light bulbs with the proper wattage that matches the fixture being used?	☐	☐	☐
Is there a constant lookout for lights that flicker or blink on and off?	☐	☐	☐
Is immediate action taken when a rubbery or burning odor comes from a device such as a lamp?	☐	☐	☐

ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

	YES	NO	N/A
Is the electrical outlet being used have no more than one item plugged into it?	☐	☐	☐
Is only one electrical adapter being used on the same outlet?	☐	☐	☐
Have all electrical outlets been evaluated to ensure none are being overloaded by drawing more power than it can handle?	☐	☐	☐
Have all electrical outlets been reviewed to ensure none are discolored or feel warm to the touch?	☐	☐	☐
Is your church using child safety covers on outlets if there are children in attendance or a daycare?	☐	☐	☐
Is attention paid to the replacement of old outlets with accompanying ground wire?	☐	☐	☐
Have all plugs been reviewed to ensure none are altered in any way to fit an outdated electrical outlet?	☐	☐	☐

ELECTRICAL CORDS / EXTENSION CORDS

	YES	NO	N/A
Are cracked, broken, or frayed electrical cords disposed of and replaced immediately?	☐	☐	☐
Are the extension cords of good quality and only used temporarily (max 90-days)?	☐	☐	☐
Does staff know to never run electrical/extension cords under furniture, rugs, or across doorways?	☐	☐	☐
Is everyone informed to never use electrical cords or extension cords in or near water?	☐	☐	☐

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POWER STRIPS

	YES	NO	N/A
Does staff know to never overload power strips with too many plugs because they can overheat?	☐	☐	☐
Is everyone informed to never use power strips in or near water?	☐	☐	☐

ELECTRIC TOOLS

	YES	NO	N/A
Are cords on electrical tools in good condition and free of fraying or other damage?	☐	☐	☐

Kitchen Fires

GENERAL

	YES	NO	N/A
Are curtains, towels, and paper towel racks hung safely and not over appliances that produces heat?	☐	☐	☐
Are flammable materials kept at least 3-feet away from heat-producing devices of any size?	☐	☐	☐
Does staff know to never use or store aerosol cans or cleaning products near a heat source?	☐	☐	☐
Is everyone informed that more than one person must stay in the kitchen when food is boiling, broiling, frying, or grilling?	☐	☐	☐
Are all generators, camp stoves, grills, or any other device that burns gas, propane, or charcoal only used outdoors?	☐	☐	☐

STOVES & OVENS

	YES	NO	N/A
Is everyone informed to keep items like pot holders, paper plates, towels, and plastics away from the stove?	☐	☐	☐
Does staff know to always point the handle on pots and pans toward the back of the stovetop away from people?	☐	☐	☐
Are ovens and stovetops cleaned regularly or after use to avoid a grease fire?	☐	☐	☐

MICROWAVES

	YES	NO	N/A
Does staff know to only use microwave-safe dishware in a microwave?	☐	☐	☐
Is everyone informed to never use metallic objects like silverware or tinfoil (aluminum foil) in a microwave?	☐	☐	☐
Does staff know to remove hot items from a microwave with extreme care?	☐	☐	☐
Is everyone informed that more than one person must stay in the kitchen when food is being microwaved?	☐	☐	☐
Are microwaves cleaned regularly to avoid a grease fire?	☐	☐	☐

APPLIANCES

	YES	NO	N/A
Does staff know to never plug in more than one large appliance or many smaller appliances into the same outlet at the same time?	☐	☐	☐
Does staff know to always run an appliance cord away from the sink where it could get wet?	☐	☐	☐
Is everyone informed to never use appliances when they are in or near water?	☐	☐	☐
Are appliances being unplugged when not in use or when done or leaving the kitchen?	☐	☐	☐
Do all appliances have an independent testing lab label (UL/FM)? This verifies its quality, safety, and compliance with specific standards.	☐	☐	☐

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COMMERCIAL KITCHEN

	YES	NO	N/A
Is the fire extinguisher K-Rated and inspected annually by a fire extinguisher company?	☐	☐	☐
If your church kitchen has an exhaust hood, has a certified contractor done an annual cleaning?	☐	☐	☐
Has exhaust hoods with a fire suppression system been serviced in the past 6-months by a licensed company?	☐	☐	☐

Candles

	YES	NO	N/A
Are candle holders sturdy, non-flammable, and have a large well to collect wax?	☐	☐	☐
Is the wick on all candles trimmed to ¼ inch and always kept that way?	☐	☐	☐
Are candles placed on uncluttered surfaces where they won't be easily tipped over?	☐	☐	☐
Is everyone informed to keep candles away from hair, clothing, artificial flowers, and decorations?	☐	☐	☐
Does staff know to never use candles around unattended children because they get curious about fire?	☐	☐	☐
Are all matches and lighters kept away from children at all times?	☐	☐	☐
Are all lit candles fully extinguished where the glow of the wick is completely out?	☐	☐	☐
After wicks are out, is there a person remaining for 30-minutes to ensure they don't reignite?	☐	☐	☐

Occasional Lighting

	YES	NO	N/A
Are all occasion lighting, like holiday lights, up-to-date and working properly?	☐	☐	☐
Is all lighting in compliance with the outlet or surge protector's capacity?	☐	☐	☐
Does staff know to never string lights under rugs, furniture, or across doorways?	☐	☐	☐
Is everyone informed to always turn off occasion lights upon leaving the room?	☐	☐	☐

Lightning Hazards

	YES	NO	N/A
Is everyone informed to seek shelter at the first sign of thunder? Lightening and thunder happen together and will not be far behind.	☐	☐	☐
Are lightning rods being used to minimize hazardous lightning strikes and possible fires?	☐	☐	☐
Has the church considered investing in a lightning kit especially if near the coast?	☐	☐	☐

Fire Escape Plan

	YES	NO	N/A
Has a fire escape plan with at least 2-ways out of the church been put into place?	☐	☐	☐
Does staff know to never open doors that are warm to the touch and to find a different way out?	☐	☐	☐
Is everyone informed to crawl low under smoke and not to walk through it or breath the smoke?	☐	☐	☐
Does everyone know if smoke, heat, or flames are blocking the exit, to close the door and call for help?	☐	☐	☐
Does staff know to not leave anyone behind and call 911 once everybody is outside?	☐	☐	☐

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Does staff know where the safe meeting place is outside the church?	☐	☐	☐
Are children taught what a smoke alarm sounds like and what to do when one is heard?	☐	☐	☐
Has everyone been informed to **STOP**, **DROP**, and **ROLL** if their clothes catch on fire?	☐	☐	☐
Have staff members been assigned to assist with the evacuation of the congregation?	☐	☐	☐
Is the fire escape plan being practiced by all staff members twice a year?	☐	☐	☐

Other Fire Safety Items

EXITS

	YES	NO	N/A
Do all exit signs direct occupants and are they illuminated at all times?	☐	☐	☐
Are paths to the exit doors clear and unobstructed at all times?	☐	☐	☐
Is emergency lighting checked monthly to ensure it is working properly?	☐	☐	☐

STORAGE

	YES	NO	N/A
Are stored materials stacked with at least 2-feet of clearance from ceiling?	☐	☐	☐
Are garbage containers at least 5-feet away from combustible walls, roofs, and doors?	☐	☐	☐

DRYERS

	YES	NO	N/A
Are all dryers vented to the outside and the area kept clear?	☐	☐	☐
Is the dryer plugged into its own separate outlet?	☐	☐	☐
Is lint being cleaned from the dryer screen before each use?	☐	☐	☐
Are manufacturer's recommended time being followed for drying synthetics, rubber, plastics, and foam?	☐	☐	☐

FURNACES & HEATERS

	YES	NO	N/A
Has the furnace been inspected before cold season to ensure it is in proper working order?	☐	☐	☐
Is the furnace filter checked often and changed frequently if needed?	☐	☐	☐
Are the areas near a furnace and water heater clear of combustible materials?	☐	☐	☐

PORTABLE HEATERS

	YES	NO	N/A
Do all portable space heaters have an automatic shut-off safety feature?	☐	☐	☐
Do space heaters have an independent testing lab label (UL/FM) to verify quality, safety, and compliance?	☐	☐	☐
Are all portable heaters kept clean and away from furniture, drapes, clothes, and walls?	☐	☐	☐

NOTES:

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Church Fire Safety Article

For more information on fire safety for your church, see our article Church Fire Safety Checklist: Is Your Church Fire Safe?

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