

# LOSS PREVENTION

Western Financial Group Insurance Solutions



## Create a Fire Safe Workplace

In Canada, general building fires can be easily prevented and injury or loss minimized if employees follow simple fire-safety practices.

**Smoking** – Careless use of smoking materials is a major cause of fires. Smoke only in designated areas, don't flick ashes into wastebaskets, use large non-tip ashtrays, and empty all ashtrays into a metal container.

**Electricity** – Keep yourself and your workplace safe from electrical fires by understanding and respecting electricity. Keep office equipment properly cleaned and maintained. Don't use extension cords as permanent wiring, always use the proper size circuit breakers and fuses, and don't overload electrical outlets. Discard or properly repair damaged electrical cords, and when using or installing new office equipment, always follow the manufacturer's instructions. Also, ensure equipment is CSA or ULC approved, don't use with extension cords, and discard if damaged.

**Appliances** – Ensure that any appliances brought to the workplace are in good working order. Leave space for air to circulate around heaters and other heat-producing equipment such as photocopiers, printers, computers, etc. Keep combustibles away from heat-producing equipment and designate an employee to turn off all nonessential appliances (coffee machines, copiers, lights, space heaters, etc.) at the end of each working day.

**Housekeeping** – Good housekeeping in your workplace will eliminate material hazards, the fuel that allows fire to start and grow. Keep storage and work areas clear of trash, keep exits clear at all times, keep access to emergency equipment clear at all times, and keep service rooms free of all storage.

**Employers** – Employers must be familiar with local fire regulations. Develop and discuss fire emergency plans and evacuation procedures with employees. Include disabled employees in the planning process, and conduct semi-annual fire drills. Review and update all evacuation plans annually, and post all emergency numbers on or near all telephones. Be sure that someone in authority knows about any disabled persons whose escape could be delayed and make plans for their safe evacuation.

**Employees** – Know the nearest exit and the location of alternate exits from all work areas. Know the location of the nearest fire alarm pull station and know how to use it. Know the sound of the fire alarm. Know the location of the fire extinguishers and know how to use them.

**If fire strikes** – Sound the alarm immediately and leave the area quickly, closing doors as you go to contain heat and smoke. If you must escape through an area with smoke, crawl low to avoid heat and smoke. Check for smoke by slowly opening doors. Always know two ways out of your area. Once outside, call the fire department. Follow the direction of security personnel and stay outside of the building.

**Fire prevention is job protection! If you have any questions about fire prevention, please contact your local fire department or the Office of the Fire Commissioner.**

### Plan Administrator

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