

DEFEAT INCENDIARIES



BE VIGILANT
SEARCH OFTEN



Northern Ireland
CRIMESTOPPERS

0800 555 111

Uniting against crime



INCENDIARIES – ADVICE TO RETAILERS

There have been a number of incendiary attacks on business premises in Northern Ireland. Are you prepared? Take a moment and ask yourself these questions:-

1. HAVE I A STRATEGY?

You should have. The aim of incendiaries is to cause maximum damage to 'commercial targets'. Don't let them put you out of business!

2. HAVE I A SEARCH PLAN?

This should include a systematic search at the end of the day's trading and discreet searches during business hours and at times of high risk. Larger premises should allocate areas to staff members familiar with the stock and likely to notice something out of place.

3. ARE ALL MY STAFF VIGILANT?

Vigilance means checking on customers and stock (including returns), promoting customer care, i.e. making eye contact/offering assistance and watching for suspicious behaviour. Alert and motivated staff are a good deterrent.

4. DO MY STAFF KNOW WHAT TO LOOK FOR?

Incendiaries are time-controlled firelighters. They are designed to ignite rather than explode. They are usually about half the size of a video cassette box and will have wires and batteries attached.

5. ARE ALL MY STAFF TRAINED TO SEARCH EFFECTIVELY?

Devices will be carefully but not elaborately concealed, and will be placed in areas that will ignite. They will be placed inside or near flammable stock. Staff should be aware of risk areas and what they are looking for.

6. IS MY SECURITY EQUIPMENT EFFECTIVE?

Any CCTV cameras must be of good quality, working properly and should cover blind spots.

7. HAVE I A CALL-OUT PROCEDURE?

Incendiary devices are usually timed to activate outside business hours in order to cause maximum damage. Police should have an up-to-date list of your key-holders. You should have a call-out plan for staff.

8. HAVE I CARRIED OUT A RISK ASSESSMENT?

Anything that is flammable is vulnerable. The most common hiding places are around clothing, furnishing, seating and stationery. These will usually be at waist level or lower and may be close to exits or stairways.

9. WHAT SHOULD I DO IF A DEVICE IS FOUND?

Do not touch or handle any suspicious item. If possible, remove stock from around the object. Clear people from the area and call the police using '999'. The person finding the object should remain available to talk to police.

10. WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I RECEIVE A PHONE WARNING DIRECTLY TO MY PREMISES?

The person taking the call should remain calm and courteous and listen carefully, not interrupting the caller. The call should be recorded and another employee alerted to listen in, if possible. The time and exact wording of the call should be written down as soon as possible, as well as the characteristics of the caller's voice.

Free and impartial advice is available from the PSNI Crime Prevention Officers.
Telephone 0845 600 8000.