



PRESS RELEASE

“36 OUT OF 37 BUSINESSES IGNORANT OF NEW FIRE SAFETY REGS!”

Middlesex, January 2007 – Many businesses will start the New Year unaware that they are putting both their employees and themselves at risk by infringing the fire regulations. At a recent business meeting fire safety specialist fire-/ec was amazed to find that 36 out of 37 bosses present knew nothing about the new fire regulations and how they will impact on the day to day running of their businesses.

The new fire safety rules – the Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order – affect all non-domestic premises in England and Wales. They move the emphasis away from fire certificates and put the responsibility on the employer to provide a written risk assessment.

“But amazingly, most businesses still don’t realise this,” says John Davidson, managing director of gas-elec Safety Systems, whose new fire-/ec division provides businesses with independent advice on the new regulations.

“We were giving a short talk to business owners and asked who had heard of the new fire safety rules and only one person put their hand up! There is a frightening lack of awareness of the new regulations and the fact that businesses need to be proactive to comply with them,” says Davidson.

“Many are just waiting for the fire brigade to pop round and advise them as usual but this simply isn’t going to happen any more. The next time you’ll see the fire brigade will be when they come to make an official inspection of your premises and perhaps penalise you for non-compliance. But what they won’t be there for is to proffer advice. Risk assessment is your responsibility now – not theirs.”

As safety inspection specialists throughout the UK for the past ten years, gas-*elec* launched fire-*lec* as a service that ensures companies comply with the RRFSO, providing everything from advice to inspection and written assessment.

“For many businesses, especially smaller ones unused to or unprepared for such requirements,” says Davidson “we are able to guide them through the intricacies of the new regulations.

“Businesses need to act now to ensure they have a suitable and sufficient risk assessment in place. fire-*lec* inspections have already found that many premises are hopelessly out of date. For example, one company we visited hadn’t checked their fire extinguishers for over five years! We recommend that businesses use a reputable company experienced in safety inspections to bring their premises up to requirements as soon as possible.”

For further information on fire-*lec* call 0845 868 6050 or visit www.fire-lec.co.uk.

Further information on the fire regulations: www.firesafety.communities.gov.uk.

What you don’t know about the new fire safety laws!

Are you in the know? fire-*lec* has drawn up a list of the most common points that they have found businesses are not aware of:

What’s changed?

fire-*lec* says businesses need to take a much more proactive stance to make sure they comply with the new fire safety regulations. Key points in the new regulations include:

- Fire certificates are no longer valid
- A written fire safety risk assessment is required for every business with 5 or more employees
- A “responsible person” must be appointed for each set of premises
- An emergency plan must be drawn up

Does this apply to your business?

Don't think this won't affect you: says fire-*lec*, the RRFSO applies to virtually all premises and covers nearly every type of building, structure and open space, except for purely domestic premises occupied by a single family. For example, it now includes:

- Offices and shops
- Factories and warehouses
- Community premises such as village and church halls
- Common areas of houses in multiple occupation
- Pubs, clubs and restaurants
- Schools
- Tents and marquees, and outdoor events
- Hotels and hostels
- Premises that provide care

Who is responsible?

You are, says fire-*lec*! Under the terms of the RRFSO the legislation makes you responsible and liable if you are;

- responsible for business premises,
- an employer or self-employed with business premises
- responsible for a part of a dwelling where that part is solely used for business purposes
- a charity or voluntary organisation
- a contractor with a degree of control over any premises

Businesses requiring further information on fire-*lec* can call 0845 868 6050 or visit www.fire-lec.co.uk. For further information on the fire regulations visit www.firesafety.communities.gov.uk.

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Editor's Notes

Founded in 1996, **gas-*elec*** carries out impartial safety inspections and light remedial works. Its unique inspection service provides the residential lettings market with multiple inspections of the gas and electrics in just one visit. **gas-*elec*** has over 126

franchisees operating from 18 regional offices, who this year will carry out more than 120,000 safety inspections in domestic properties throughout the UK. For more information visit www.gas-elec.co.uk.

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