

What is the Fire Marshal (or Fire Warden)

In brief a fire marshal (sometimes called a fire warden) is a responsible person, trained by the employer to assist the Fire Safety Manager with keeping the risk of fire in the workplace to a minimum and with ensuring the health and safety of everyone on the premises if fire breaks out

Why are fire marshals provided?

Fire Marshals can be linked back to the Health and safety at Work act 1974 Sec 2, these sections are about the employers general duties of care. The Fire Safety Order 2005 has formally recognised the Fire Warden and suggests that there roles in the organisation are:

- *helping those on the premises to leave*
- *checking the premises to ensure everyone has left*
- *using firefighting equipment if safe to do so*
- *liaising with the fire and rescue service on arrival*
- *shutting down vital or dangerous equipment*
- *performing a supervisory/managing role in any fire situation*

With this role being so important in the overall fire strategy of any company it is vital that the training provided to these individuals is to the highest standards and refreshed regularly. Examples of what should be included in such training are:

- detailed knowledge of the fire safety strategy of the premises
- awareness of human behaviour in fires
- how to encourage others to use the most appropriate escape route
- how to search safely and recognise areas that are unsafe to enter
- the difficulties that some people, particularly if disabled, may have in escaping
- special evacuation arrangements that have been pre-planned
- additional training in the use of firefighting equipment
- an understanding of the purpose of any fixed firefighting equipment such as sprinklers or gas flooding systems
- reporting of faults, incidents and 'near misses'.