

Fire Facts – The Hidden Story

Fire Facts..... The Hidden Story



FETA - 2002 Survey into Portable Fire Extinguishers

FETA (Fire Extinguishing Trade Association) & IFEDA (Independent Fire Equipment Distributors Association) conducted a national survey into the use of fire extinguishers on ACTUAL fires between April and July 2002. 2,173 questionnaires were completed, the key findings include:

- Accidents were responsible for 84% of all workplace fires
- In 75% of cases the Fire Service were not called to work place fires
- In 80% of incidents the extinguisher put the fire out

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Chubb Fire – Customer Survey 2003 (ongoing)

Chubb want to become the industry expert in understanding workplace fires. To build on FETA's good work and its 2002 survey, Chubb is carrying out a similar survey every time a customer contacts Customer Services requesting their extinguisher to be refilled following its use on an ACTUAL fire.

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Key findings for the period 1st March – 31st December 2003 are:

Time of the fire

With 58% of workplace fires occurring during the working day (8am 6pm) employers can respond to small fires with a fire extinguisher to avoid it developing into a major disaster.

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Were the fire service called?

In 70% of cases the fire service were not called to workplace fires as the extinguisher dealt with the fire. Government fire statistics only record fires which the fire service has attended, the surveys suggest government statistics significantly underestimate the total number of workplace fires, which for 2002 stated that there were

- 40,500 non dwelling fires (commercial premises, schools, hospitals etc).
- According to our research an additional 90,000 could have gone unreported due to the fact that extinguishers successfully put them out without the fire service attending the incident.

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Cause of fire

- The survey results differ strongly from Government statistics which in 2001 stated that Accident and Arson accounted for 55% and 45% of total fires respectively, as these Government figures exclude fires put out by fire extinguishers.

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Fire Risk Assessment.

- Only 48% of respondents said that the site had a fire risk assessment conducted in the last 12 months, whilst a survey conducted by the government in order to understand the impact of the Fire Safety Order found that just over 46% of small businesses were aware of their legal requirements to carry out regular risk assessments under existing Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations.

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Did the extinguisher put the fire out?

- In both surveys the extinguisher put the vast majority of fires out, proving how effective it is. Even when the fire was not completely extinguished, in most cases the extinguisher contained the fire until the fire service arrived.

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In the Chubb Fire Survey the greatest number incidents of fire occurred in...

- Hospitality & Leisure (24.7% of total fires) – 79% of fires were started accidentally, 15% were Unknown, and 6% were due to Arson
- Manufacturing (18.4% of total fires) – 83% of fires were started accidentally, and 17% due to Unknown
- Retail (15.3% of total fires) - 83% of fires were started accidentally, 14% were Unknown, and 3% were due to Arson
- Transport / Distribution (13.2% of total fires) - 80% of fires were started accidentally, 20% were Unknown

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ODPM – Fire Statistics Monitor, 12 months up to December 2002

Fire Figures for period 1st January 2002 – 31st December 2002

- 40,500 Commercial and Public Sector fires

Deaths & Injuries for the 12 months up to June 2002*

- Dwelling fires 481 deaths and 13,751 injuries
- Commercial / Non dwelling building fires 39 deaths and 1,944 injuries
- Road vehicle fires 75 deaths and 620 injuries
- Other outdoor fires (non vehicle fires) 33 deaths and 678 injuries
- Total fires 628 deaths and 17,000 injuries

*(Latest data available due to disruption caused by Fire Fighter industrial action.)

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ODPM – Fire Statistics Monitor, 12 months up to December 2002
Fire Figures for period 1st January 2002 – 31st December 2002

False Alarms

- 471,700 false alarms
- 80% public sector
- 20% commercial and other sites

Fire Facts..... The Costs



ODPM – The Economic Cost of Fire, June 2003

- There were 26,000 Commercial and Public Sector fires during 2000
- The consequences of fire (property loss, fatality, injury and lost business) cost the Commercial and Public Sectors £740m in 2000
- This equates to an average cost of £28,462 per Commercial & Public Sector fire
- Fatality costs (cost of deaths in monetary terms) for the Commercial and Public Sectors are much lower than for Domestic (residential) - £30m vs £410m (7% of "All Building Fires vs 93%). This is even though workplaces are potentially far more dangerous.

Why Choose Chubb

For fire extinguisher maintenance



ODPM – The Economic Cost of Fire, June 2003 (cont)

- Injury costs (cost of injuries in monetary terms) for the Commercial & Public Sectors are much lower than for Domestic (residential) - £60m vs £330m (15% of “*All Building Fires*” vs 85%). This is even though workplaces are potentially far more dangerous
- Why are Death and Injury costs so low for the Commercial & Public Sectors?
 - Workplace fire legislation, regulations and fire protection & detection systems play a very important role in protecting life and ensuring workplace safety.
 - Newspapers and the media provide many examples of domestic fires where deaths and injuries could have been avoided if a working smoke alarm had been fitted.