

Temporary Heating on Construction Sites

Temporary heaters introduce fire risks to construction sites and require careful management.

This Loss Prevention Standard provides practical guidance to help reduce the potential for damage or loss events associated with temporary heating.

Temporary Heating on Construction Sites

Introduction

Temporary heating is typically provided in site offices, drying rooms and canteens, and in the work areas to maintain productivity during cold weather and support temperature-sensitive activities.

Common applications include:

- Frost protection.
- Concrete curing.
- Drying-out processes.
- Decorating works.
- Floor covering installation.
- Protection of liquid and gas systems from freezing.



Temporary heating presents a significant fire risk if not properly controlled. Careful planning, appropriate equipment selection, safe installation, regular maintenance and effective supervision are essential to minimise the risk of fire and associated damage.

Managing the Risks

Risk Assessment and Planning

- Works should be planned and sequenced to avoid or minimise the need for temporary heating, e.g., by scheduling temperature-sensitive activities outside periods of expected cold weather.
- Suitable cold weather Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and clothing should be provided where appropriate to reduce reliance on temporary heating.
- Temporary heating should be included within the site's fire risk assessment.
 - ✓ Consider the risks associated with the heating requirement, fuel type, location, stage of construction, building construction and occupancy.

Heater Selection

- Electrically powered heaters should be used wherever possible.
- Indirect-fired heaters are generally preferred to direct-fired fuel-burning heaters, as they can reduce the risk of ignition.
- Open-flame and radiant heaters **must** be prohibited.
- Where hot water heating systems are used for temporary heating purposes, the associated escape of water risks should be assessed and managed appropriately.
- Heaters should be suitable for the location and weather conditions.

Refer to the Aviva Loss Prevention Standard **Escape of Water on Construction Sites** for further guidance.

Location and Separation

- Ensure combustible materials, temporary partitions, coverings, scaffold sheeting, insulation, waste and stored materials are located at least 10 metres from heaters.
 - ✓ Manufacturer-specified separation distances and clearances should be maintained where these exceed 10 metres.
- Fuel-fired heaters should be located outside and at least 10 metres from buildings, with heated air ducted into the work area.
- Heaters should not obstruct escape routes; emergency exits or access for firefighting.

Fuel Storage and Supply

- Prohibit fuel storage within buildings or on the roof.
- Store LPG cylinders, diesel tanks and other fuel supplies externally in secure, protected locations, and implement controls for refuelling in accordance with **The Joint Code of Practice on the Protection from Fire of Construction Sites and Buildings Undergoing Renovation**.

Installation Standards

- Only use heating equipment that is designed and suitable for use on construction sites and approved or certified in accordance with applicable local regulations and recognised standards.
- Install equipment in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Ensure heaters are securely positioned, stable and protected against overturning, impact or accidental damage.
- Temporary electrical supplies should be properly designed, protected and inspected at a minimum of three-monthly intervals or after significant changes.

Fire Prevention

- Unauthorised heaters brought onto site by subcontractors, operatives or other third parties should be prohibited and removed.
- Clothing, PPE, and other items should not be dried directly on or near heaters.
- Suitable exclusion zones should be maintained around heating equipment.
 - ✓ A minimum clearance of 10 metres is recommended.
- Good housekeeping standards **must** be maintained, with waste removed regularly.
- Appropriate portable fire extinguishers should be provided and readily accessible.
- Temporary heaters should not be left operating unattended.
- Heaters should be inspected daily for damage, fuel leaks, overheating, defective controls and unsafe positioning.
 - ✓ Thermal imaging cameras should be used to identify any unusual heat patterns.
- The operation, inspection and monitoring of temporary heating equipment should be undertaken by site management.
- Temporary heaters should be isolated and shut down outside working hours unless justified by a documented business need and supported by additional risk controls.
- A process should be established for personnel to request temporary heating where required, reducing the likelihood of unauthorised equipment being used.
- The risks associated with temporary heating should be communicated through site inductions and toolbox talks.

Refer to the Aviva Loss Prevention Standard **Use of Thermographic Cameras - General Considerations** and **Checklist** for further guidance.

Fire Detection and Emergency Response

- Provide temporary automatic fire detection and fire extinguishers in all areas where heaters are present.
- Ensure temporary heating arrangements do not compromise existing fire detection or suppression systems.
- Provide clear emergency shutdown procedures for heaters and fuel supplies.
- Update the location of temporary heating regularly within the emergency information pack for use by fire and emergency services.

Higher-Risk Construction Activities

Additional controls should be implemented where temporary heating is used:

- Within timber-frame construction.
- Within buildings containing combustible insulation.
- Adjacent to hot work activities.
- In enclosed areas with a significant combustible fire load.
- During drying-out operations requiring prolonged use of temporary heating.

Important: Discuss the use of temporary heating in the above, and other high-risk instances with your insurer or broker.

Contact Information

United Kingdom

Please visit [Aviva Risk Management Solutions](#) or email us at riskadvice@aviva.com. To speak to one of our advisors, call 0345 366 6666.*

*The cost of calls to 03 prefixed numbers are charged at national call rates (charges may vary dependent on your network provider) and are usually included in inclusive minute plans from landlines and mobiles. For our joint protection telephone calls may be recorded and/or monitored.

Canada

Please visit [Aviva Risk Management Solutions | Aviva Canada](#) or email us at arms.canada@aviva.com

Ireland

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For more information please visit: [Insurance Risk Management | Business Risk Management Insurance - Aviva Ireland](#)

United Kingdom

- Thermal Imaging Cameras and PAT Testing Equipment - [Pass](#)

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Ireland

- Use only CE marked (or equivalent approved) heating equipment that is suitable for construction-site use.

United Kingdom

- Heating arrangements should take account of the requirements and recommendations of [The Joint Code of Practice on the Protection from Fire of Construction Sites and Buildings Undergoing Renovation](#).
- Escape of water risks should take account of the requirements and recommendations in the [Joint Code of Practice \(JCoP\) for Escape of Water Prevention and Management on Construction Sites](#)
- Use only CE/UKCA-marked (or equivalent approved) heating equipment that is suitable for construction-site use.

Loss Prevention Standards

These documents set out best practice recommendations to help reduce the likelihood and impact of losses.

Relevant Aviva Loss Prevention Standards include:

- **Escape of Water on Construction Sites**
- **Self-Inspections**
- **Use of Thermographic Cameras - General Considerations and Checklist**
- **Delivering Successful Construction Projects**

Please visit [Loss Prevention Standards](#) to view the full library.

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