

# News Release



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For Immediate Release

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## **COVID-19 – Protect your business property while closed**

Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service is advising business owners to protect their premises if they are temporarily closed due to the Coronavirus epidemic.

Craig Drinkald, Area Manager at Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service, said: “Many shops, businesses and venues in Cumbria are temporarily closed to reduce social contact, prevent the spread of Covid-19 and save lives. We are advising businesses to take some simple steps to protect their premises from fire.”

Businesses can protect their property by taking the following action to help keep their property safe:

### **1 Turn off and unplug electrical equipment**

If your premises are unoccupied, electrical equipment should be turned off and plugs removed from sockets, and electrical systems isolated at the main fuse board, with the exception of critical business infrastructure required to support the organisation's operations and support temporary home working arrangements. These include intruder alarms, fire alarms, sprinkler installations and other fire risk suppression security.

### **2 Guard against escape of water losses**

Turn off water supplies at the mains (and where reasonable to do so drain down water systems) during the period of temporary closure. We recognise it may not always be appropriate to turn off or drain down water systems. Where this is the case a minimum temperature of 7°C (45°F) should be maintained within the property.

### **3 Protect against arson**

Ensure all fire doors are securely closed. Safely remove internal waste and position external bins as far from the property as possible, ideally securing bins in places to prevent them being relocated against the building.

### **4 Inspect weekly**

Unoccupied property should be inspected weekly, provided travel required to carry out inspections is in line with the [latest government advice](#).

Where this is not possible at the present time the inspections should be reinstated once travel restrictions are lifted.

Any damage to the building or fitted security devices identified at the time of inspection should be fixed as soon as is reasonably possible.

You should also remove any piles of mail from any letterbox during each inspection, along with any other action considered appropriate to minimise the risk the property can be easily identified as being temporarily closed.

### **5 Update risk assessments**

Review and update risk assessments for the property to reflect the temporary closure. Think about how any reduced maintenance provision for your premises could cause a fire risk.

**For further information contact Cumbria County Council's communications team on 01228 221008 or 226601.**

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