

Every year in the UK, farm buildings, crops, grassland and hedges are destroyed by fire. Some occur deliberately by an act of mindless vandalism, or occasionally a fraudulent insurance claim, but a large number are caused by accident or careless behaviour.

A serious fire on a farm can affect the financial stability of even the most well run business and can cause enormous damage to the environment.

**Access**

It is really important to ensure that the emergency services can quickly find and access your property and key areas. Ensure the property name is clearly shown at the entrance from the road from both directions.

**Arson Prevention**

Farms are particularly vulnerable to arson. Their isolated location, open boundaries and readily ignitable hay and straw make them an easy target. While arson attacks on farms and small holdings may be difficult to eliminate, a number of simple precautions can substantially reduce the risk of attack.

Tips to consider:

* Hay and straw should be removed from fields as soon as possible.
* Hay and straw should be stored separately from other buildings, particularly those housing fuels, agrochemicals and machinery. Proximity to housed livestock should also be considered.
* Petrol, diesel and other fuels should be stored in secure areas and storage tank outlets padlocked and alarmed.
* Fertilisers and pesticides should be kept under lock and key. The Health & Safety Executive can provide further advice on the storage and transportation of fertilisers, particularly ammonium nitrate.
* Rubbish should be disposed of safely and on a regular basis.
* Ensure you have fire extinguishers and an easily accessible water supply for key areas.
* Assess the risk, do a quick and simple survey around the farm to identify vulnerable areas and how you can improve them. If you are unsure on any areas speak to your local fire officer who will be happy to help.

**Fire Prevention**

Ensure there are good access routes to all areas, including fields for the emergency services and make sure all staff know where the nearest water supply is. Invite your local fire officer to visit the farm to check these and be aware of the layout of the farm and make any suggestions that could improve fire safety.