

# Fire Prevention

## for Public Buildings

*This brochure was developed to assist in implementing proper fire prevention practices.*



# Fire Prevention for Public Buildings

## Background

Each year the Government of the Northwest Territories and its boards, agencies and communities suffer major building damage or loss due to fire. While some of these fires are not preventable, a number are caused by a lack of attention to fire safety and prevention.

This is not a small problem – in the 7 years from 1992 to 1999, total fire losses to the GNWT were **\$37 million**.

## Objective

Public Works and Services (PW&S) has developed this brochure to assist building owners, operators and users to recognize and to correct fire hazards, specifically to:

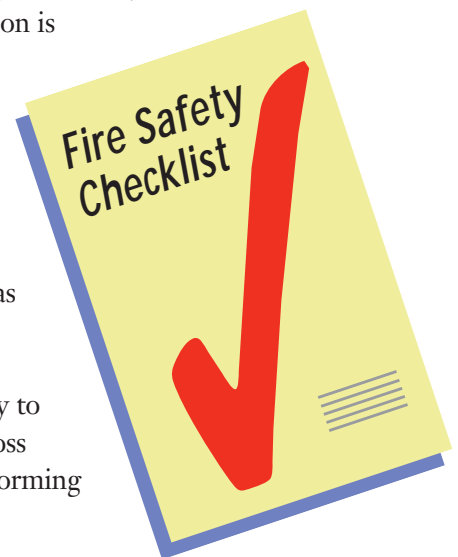
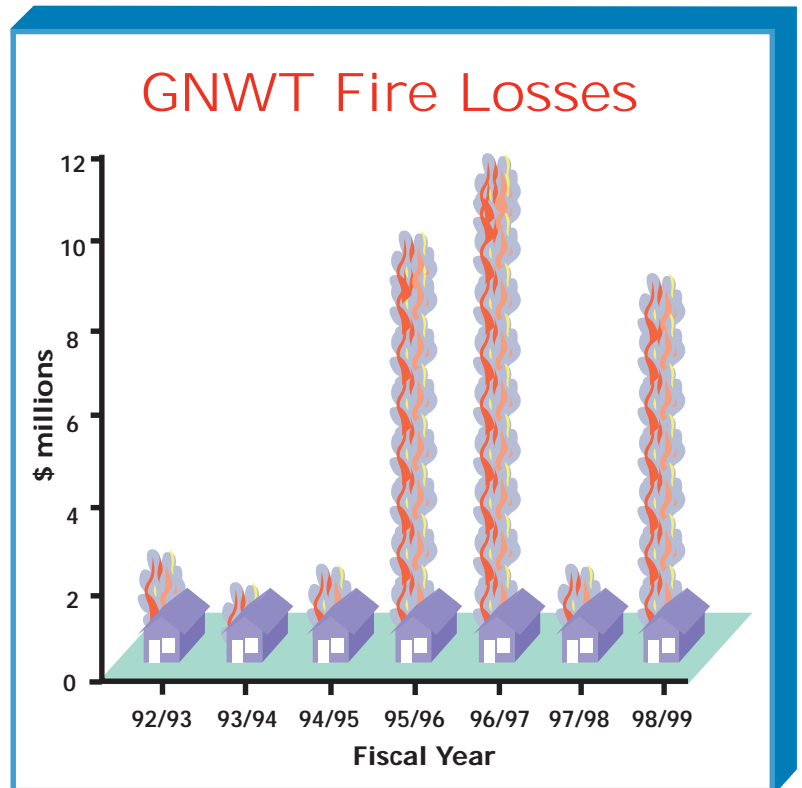
- 1 Make all front line supervisors and staff, and facility managers aware of the importance of proper fire prevention and safety procedures.
- 2 Provide tools to identify deficiencies, and to document follow-up and corrective actions to ensure sound fire safety practices.

## Fire Prevention Checklist and Visual Guide

The *Fire Prevention Checklist* is intended to help you protect yourself, your school, hospital, arena and other buildings from fire. Remember, fire prevention is everyone's personal responsibility. Fire stops with you.

The *Visual Guide* in this brochure provides a wide range of fire safety and prevention information to help communicate fire safety and prevention suggestions.

Building occupants and staff, who are routinely in and around buildings, are the first line of defence in making buildings as fire safe as possible. It is critical that unsafe conditions and practices are noted, documented and reported immediately to the appropriate agency for corrective action. All employees should be aware of their responsibility to demonstrate that they have exercised "due diligence" in areas where loss could occur, or where liability could be incurred. This is done by performing and recording inspections and follow-up actions.



The *Checklist and Visual Guide* are not intended to replace formal inspections by qualified fire prevention professionals or regulatory agencies such as the Office of the Fire Marshal, but rather to supplement such inspections.

To help identify deficiencies and to initiate corrective actions required, PW&S has developed procedures (see the checklist) for its staff to use when performing Fire Prevention Inspections in GNWT owned and leased facilities operated by PW&S. You may also want to use these procedures.

***Schools, recreation facilities, community halls, gyms, offices, hospitals and wellness centres are just a few of the public buildings that will benefit from frequent fire prevention building inspections.***



# Fire Prevention Checklist

**BUILDING** \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMUNITY** \_\_\_\_\_

EXTERIOR ITEMS	CHECK ONE			RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTION TAKEN & DATE
	YES	NO	N/A		
Is the fire lane posted and clear?					
Is there clear egress from all exits?					
Are steps and ramps clear of ice and snow?					
Are handrails in place and secure?					
Are hydrants clear of obstruction and capped?					
Are standpipes/sprinkler connections capped and clear?					
Is the varmint barrier intact and secured; gate locked?					
Is the skirting intact and secured; gate locked?					
Are any combustible materials stored adjacent to/ under building?					
Are all electrical cover plates in place?					
Is the garbage container at least 3 metres from building?					
Is the mechanical room combustion air intake clear?					
Is there any evidence of leaks from or around fuel tank(s)?					
Is there any damage to fuel/gas lines or meters?					
LOG BOOK ITEMS	CHECK ONE			RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTION TAKEN & DATE
	YES	NO	N/A		
Fire Alarms Testing					
Sprinkler Testing and Maintenance					
Fire Pump Testing					
Generator Testing					
INTERIOR ITEMS	CHECK ONE			RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTION TAKEN & DATE
	YES	NO	N/A		
Are Fire Emergency Procedures current and posted in each floor area?					
Are fire exits posted and clear?					
Are exit signs illuminated?					
Are exit doors chained at any time?					
Are hallways clear of obstructions?					
Are stairwells clear of obstructions?					
Are doors blocked/wedged open?					
Are fire doors properly labeled?					
Are stairwell doors automatic closers in operating condition?					
Are handrails on stairs in place and secured?					
Is the Fire Panel ON and ARMED?					
Are any trouble indicators showing on the Fire Panel?					
Are smoke detectors operational?					
Are extinguishers in place, serviceable and clear of obstruction?					
Are extinguisher tags current?					
Is there .5 metres clear space below all sprinklers heads?					
Is the hose in cabinet properly racked and in good condition?					
Is the fire water storage tank to proper level?					
Is the electrical room secured?					
Is the electrical room clear of combustible material?					
Is there a metre clear space around all electrical panels?					
Is the mechanical room secured?					
Is the mechanical room combustion air intake clear?					
Is the mechanical room clear of combustible material?					



# Fire prevention is everyone's responsibility

INTERIOR ITEMS (CONTINUED)	CHECK ONE			RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTION TAKEN & DATE
	YES	NO	N/A		
Are there any fuel spills/leaks in the mechanical room?					
Are attic fire separations intact?					
Is the attic clear of combustible material?					
Is the attic access secured?					
Are crawl space fire separators intact?					
Is the crawl space clear of combustible material?					
Is the crawl space access secured?					
Are the storage areas secured?					
Are the custodial rooms secured?					
Are emergency lights operational?					
Is flammable material properly stored?					
Is any gas-powered equipment stored in the building? (quads, snow machine, etc.)					
Are non-smoking rules enforced?					
Is the workshop area properly vented?					
Is the dust collection equipment connected to all dust producing equipment?					
Are there holes in walls, ceilings or floors?					
Are all ceiling tiles in place?					
Are there broken windows or doors?					
Are all electrical cover plates in place?					
Are kitchen exhaust fans operational and clean?					
Is kitchen fire suppression system maintained to schedule?					
Is kitchen fire suppression system charged?					

CODE VIOLATIONS OBSERVED	ACTION TAKEN AND DATE

INSPECTED BY \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## PW&S PROCEDURES

The PW&S Regional facilities manager or their staff conducts an inspection and completes the checklist at least once every fiscal year during the building's fully occupied period. *(An inspection is also done after any alteration to the facility or change in program function.)* Building occupants are asked to participate in this joint inspection.

The completed checklist is reviewed and recommendations, code violations, discrepancies, system deficiencies, and unsafe building conditions are noted for action as follows.

- 1 Follow-up activity is assigned to:  
1) maintainer, 2) owner, 3) occupant
- 2 A copy of the report and follow-up summary is sent to the Office of the Fire Marshal, Risk Management, and the building file.
- 3 An interim report on completed action is sent to the Office of the Fire Marshal, Risk Management, and the building file.

THIS FIRE PREVENTION CHECKLIST IS AVAILABLE FROM THE:

- Asset Management Division of Public Works and Services in Yellowknife
- Regional Superintendent of Public Works and Services
- Internet: <http://www.gov.nt.ca/publications/index.htm>  
Under Publications, select Other Publications.



# Fire Prevention Visual Guide

*This visual guide is intended to assist fire inspections*

Keep chimney(s) clear of ice and obstruction

Keep all acids, paints and flammable liquids stored in approved and locked storage cabinets

Keep access to all electrical panels clear

Store combustible materials in proper areas

Check fuel tank and piping for leaks and keep access clear

Locate garbage bin at least 3 metres from building

Keep combustion air intake clear at all times

Remove all gasoline powered equipment from building

Maintain .5 metres of clearance to all sprinkler heads

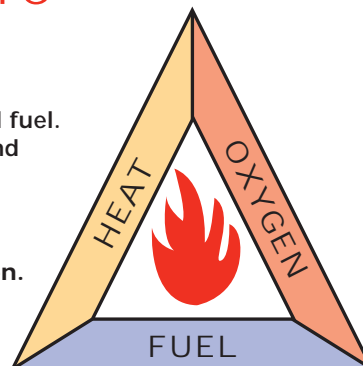
Ensure mechanical/electrical/storage and janitor rooms are locked and secure

Ensure fire water tank is full and fire pump is ready for operation

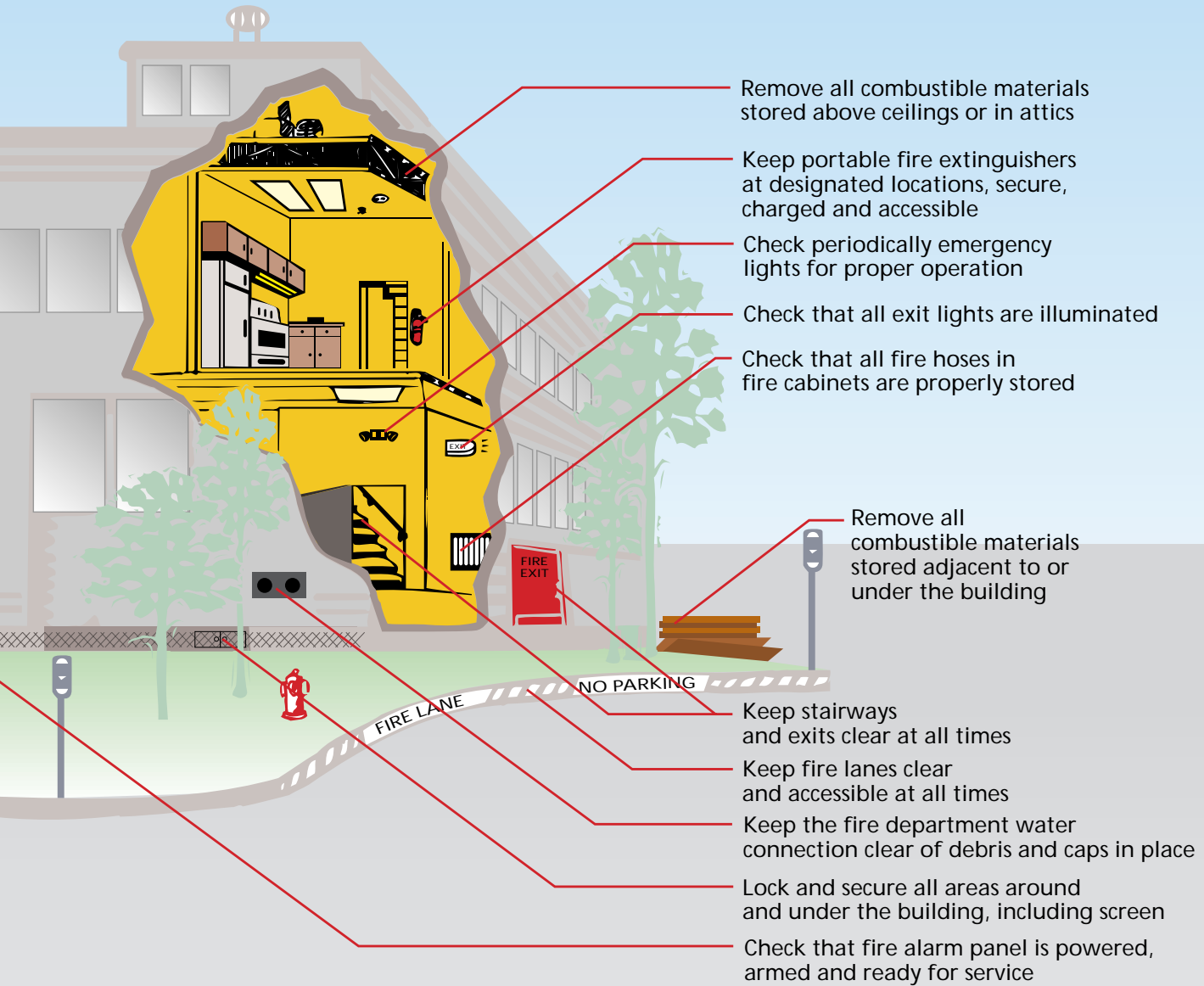
## Break the Fire Triangle

Most fires need heat, oxygen and fuel. Break the triangle at any point and you'll extinguish the fire.

1. **Cooling** removes the heat.
2. **Smothering** removes oxygen.
3. **Relocating combustible material** removes fuel.



# Fire prevention is everyone's responsibility



School - Fort McPherson

## References

- National Fire Code of Canada, National Research Council of Canada (latest edition)
- National Building Code of Canada (latest edition)
- Maintenance Management System Activities, Public Works and Services, GNWT
- Building Log Book, Public Works and Services, GNWT

## For further information please contact

- Technical Services Section, Asset Management Division, Yellowknife (867) 873-7829
- Regional Superintendent of Public Works and Services:
  - Fort Smith (867) 872-7260
  - Inuvik (867) 777-7140
  - North Slave (867) 873-7650
- Office of the Fire Marshal (867) 873-7944

## Produced by

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School - Holman



Health Centre - Wrigley



School - Inuvik



Health Centre - Fort Smith

## Preserve our assets