



Reducing school arsons



Every November the number of school fires doubles.

Schools are four times more likely to be targeted by fire-setters than all other buildings. Most school fires are started by young people using nearby rubbish and combustible items.

All schools can take these simple, low-cost steps to improve fire safety and reduce likelihood of arson.

**It's arson season!
Schools beware...**

1. Keep rubbish bins and skips well away from outside walls

- Lock and secure bins so they can't be moved up against buildings.
- Empty bins and clean up loose rubbish so it can't be used to set fires.
- Lock away all combustibles.



2. Install/increase security lights

- The largest fires are set at night.
- Additional security lights have reduced fires and vandalism in British schools.

3. Watch for an increase in vandalism and graffiti

- Consider increasing night security patrols.
- Be extra vigilant with rubbish clearance.
- Increase visibility around the school buildings by cutting back vegetation to reduce fire risk and hiding places.

4. Take action when you see suspicious behaviour

Educate all children about the consequences of fire.

- Confront the fire-setting behaviour and contact the free New Zealand Fire Service Fire Awareness Intervention Programme (FAIP) on 0800 FIREINFO for further advice. This programme has a 98% success rate* in ending fire-setting behaviour. The intervention can be directed at known fire-setters or to school groups when it is not known who is lighting the fires.
- Record all information about fire-setting incidents for possible use by FAIP/Fire Service.

5. Involve the community

- Ask neighbours and parents to keep an eye on the school and report any fires and serious vandalism to the police immediately.

More information:

New Zealand Fire Service *Fire Awareness and Intervention Programme* (FAIP)
New Zealand Fire Service *Get Firewise* programme for school children

www.fire.org.nz/FAIP
www.getfirewise.co.nz

* An Outcome Evaluation of New Zealand Fire Service *Fire Awareness and Intervention Programme*, October 2009, Auckland University