Shutdown / Reduction of activities

This guidance has been issued to assist premises where a decision has been made to close premises or partially isolate areas of premises due to low occupancy levels.

Security arrangements

If the premises are fully or partially closed, it is essential that you consider and plan security arrangements to include the following:

* Ensure any boundary fencing is intact and gates are locked.
* Ensure any planting does not obstruct sight lines or provide areas of seclusion where intruders may gain easy cover.
* Ensure external lighting is operating correctly.
* Check for and remove any loose materials which could be used for vandalism attacks.
* Check for any building damage, such as broken windows, roof damage, and complete remedial works.
* Ensure all external bins and skips are secure – ideally with lockable lids.
* All windows must be closed and adequately secured.
* Ensure that the intruder alarm is operating correctly.
* The crisis management plan and site plans with essential information such as isolation valves, stopcocks etc. must be kept in the premises in a readily identifiable place and a copy held off site by a manager.

Essential planned preventative maintenance and fire safety systems maintenance

Regardless of whether the premises are fully closed or partially closed, there are areas that must remain in operation in line with policy and legislative requirements. Maintenance programmes must continue although there can be some flexibility where there are difficulties obtaining contractors for servicing and maintenance.

The following areas must continue to be maintained during a temporary closure:

* Fire alarm system.
* Fire sprinkler and suppression systems.
* Lightning protection.
* Fixed electrical installation inspection/ test.
* Gas safety checks for equipment in use.
* Emergency lighting systems must remain operational in all areas.
* Internal monthly emergency lighting checks must continue as normal.
* Internal fire system checks to continue to be completed.
* Legionella prevention must continue to include:
* All unused outlets in bedrooms, laundries, housekeeping areas and kitchens to be flushed through every 3 days, as outlined in “Method Statement – flushing of infrequently used outlets” and recorded.
* Hot water storage vessels must be kept at 60°C or above.
* Water storage tanks to be checked to make sure they are turning over if reduced storage capacity during a closedown as water could stagnate and legionella bacteria multiply. This should be an internal monthly visual check.

**Please refer to the “Servicing and Maintenance Checklist” spreadsheet for guidance on the flexibility of maintenance programmes, implementation of different maintenance regimes and suggested timescales where maintenance can be postponed.**

The following areas may not need to be maintained during a temporary closure:

* Statutory lifting equipment through examinations.
* Lift servicing.
* Statutory pressure vessels and systems examinations.
* Fall protection equipment testing (e.g. ManSafe, eyebolts etc.).
* Emergency lighting duration test.
* Refuge emergency voice communication system.
* Portable fire extinguisher servicing.
* Kitchen extract ductwork cleaning.
* Fixed fire suppression system for kitchen equipment.
* Ventilation systems.
* Laundry extract ductwork cleaning.
* Linen chute inspection.
* Fire risk assessment review.
* Portable appliance testing (PAT).
* Cold water storage tank inspection.
* Domestic water sampling.
* Domestic hot and cold water systems risk assessment.
* Pool balance tank cleaning.
* Spa balance tank cleaning.
* Pool/ spa water chemistry testing.
* Gym equipment servicing.
* Asbestos re-survey.
* Movable wall inspection.
* Electronic barriers, gates, doors etc.

**Please refer to the “Servicing and Maintenance Checklist” spreadsheet for guidance on the flexibility of maintenance programmes, implementation of different maintenance regimes and suggested timescales where maintenance can be postponed.**

Wherever possible, continue to maintain the following during a temporary closure:

* Private fire hydrant servicing.
* Wet/ dry riser servicing.
* Calorifier/ buffer vessel inspection.
* Water softener service.

Further maintenance and operational considerations

**Electrical systems**

Does the electrical system supply emergency lighting? If so, it cannot all be isolated as the emergency batteries will drain and will, therefore, not function in an emergency.

Check whether the electrical system supplies fire control units other than the one in the area of shutdown. These systems are usually distributed across various areas of the site.

Check whether the television signal booster is fed from a local distribution point as the booster may supply a larger area than this.

**Heating systems**

Check how heating systems distribute throughout the premises as this may impact on which area or floors you decide to shut down. Isolating one floor may affect the distribution on other floors depending on whether it distributes horizontally along on floor or vertically through risers.

**Air conditioning systems**

Check how air conditioning systems distribute throughout the premises as this may impact on which area or floors you decide to shut down. Isolating one floor may affect the distribution on other floors depending on whether it distributes horizontally along on floor or vertically through risers.

Older systems may struggle to start again when re-energised as parts may seize over a prolonged period of downtime.

**Lifts**

Check whether your lifts operate in isolation or if isolating one may affect another. Lifts can operate in duplex, triplex or multiplex so isolating one may affect all the other lift controls. Ensure that you do not isolate the master lift if you want to use others in a linked networked system.

**DO NOT** isolate firefighting lifts.

**WiFi**

Make checks when isolating local WiFi areas as this may affect other areas in use if the aerial points are turned off.

**Boilers**

**DO NOT** switch off boilers. Always keep a boiler running to circulate around the closed loop system to prevent storage vessel temperatures falling below 60°C.

**Pumps**

Switch and alternate pumps in line with current procedures.

**Saeker tasks**

Should you require any ongoing tasks to be suspended during a period of shutdown, please contact Saeker via “live chat” to request these changes.

**Lone working**

During partial or full closure, it is more likely that people will have to work alone e.g. a receptionist or maintenance employee completing routine fire system checks. There will always be greater risks for lone workers with no direct supervision or anyone to help them if things go wrong. If contact is poor, workers may feel disconnected, isolated or abandoned. This can affect their mental wellbeing and stress levels.

Refer to the lone working guidance for further detail.

Return to normal business operation

When business is back to normal, isolated systems need to be sequentially energised to prevent the risk of overload.

Turn systems on individually and spread this over a period of time. Follow the manufacturer’s operating instructions.

Initially run all systems at full load until they reach their designed setpoints/ temperatures etc. Testing must be carried out in accordance with the health and safety policy and procedures.

Contact Saeker via “live chat” to resume suspended tasks.