



Hoarding Fire Risk Scale (HFRS)

This scale is only intended to be a guide when assessing a residential property.

Should you have strong concerns about the health and safety of an occupant that aren't reflected in the score, please take appropriate action.

Name of client	
Address of client	
Client contact number	
Date of assessment	

Name of assessor	
Agency / organisation	
Contact number	
Email address	

Fire Safety Risk Score		
A score of six or less, offer suggestions to the client on how to reduce their fire risks and continue to monitor the situation.		20
A score of seven or more indicates the person(s) is living with moderate to high fire risk. Consider and implement actions that will reduce their fire safety risk score.		

Actions	Y/N	Comment
Advice provided to client		
Action Plan created with client		
Notification to Council – community Team / EHO		
Referral to relevant support agency if warranted		
Other (specify)		



A				
Early Warning				
	0	1	3	5
	<p>SMOKE ALARMS Installed in passageway leading to bedrooms. Less than 10 years old Operate correctly when tested.</p>	<p>SMOKE ALARMS Installed in passageway leading to bedrooms. Operate correctly when tested. Note less than 10 years old, or age unknown.</p>	<p>SMOKE ALARMS Are installed but do not operate correctly when tested. Age unknown.</p>	<p>SMOKE ALARMS No smoke alarms installed in the home. or Smoke alarms installed but are clearly damaged.</p>
Notes				
B				
Access and Egress – External				
	0	1	2	3
	<p>Unrestricted and safe access from the street to all external doors. Unrestricted access to main gas and electricity shut-off.</p>	<p>Access to residence partially restricted due to overgrown vegetation or stored items.</p>	<p>Access to residence restricted to one external door only. Access to main gas and/or electricity shut-off is restricted.</p>	<p>Access to residence significantly restricted or impossible. No access to main gas and electricity shut-off.</p>
Notes				
C				
Access and Egress – Doors and Windows				
	0	1	2	3
	<p>Clear access to all external doors and windows. All external doors open fully. No stored items above sill height of windows (internal and external).</p>	<p>Access to external doors partially restricted but possible. Stored items exceed sill height of some windows (internal or external).</p>	<p>Only one external door accessible and usable. Stored items exceed sill height of most windows (internal or external).</p>	<p>Access to all doors severely or totally restricted. External doors cannot be fully opened. Access to most or all windows blocked by stored items (internal or external).</p>
Notes				
D				
Access and Egress – Internal				
	0	1	2	3
	<p>Unrestricted egress throughout the entire home to all doors and windows.</p>	<p>Unrestricted egress along passageways. Restricted access into some rooms. Restricted egress from bedrooms.</p>	<p>Restricted egress along passageways. Restricted egress from all bedrooms. Stored items in passageways.</p>	<p>Severely restricted egress throughout the home. Most or all windows inaccessible.</p>
Notes				



E	Ignition Sources			
	0	1	2	3
	<p>Stove top and adjacent benchtops clear of combustible items.</p> <p>One metre clearance around portable heaters.</p> <p>Electrical appliances appear to be in good working order.</p>	<p>Some combustible items stored close to cooktop.</p> <p>Minimal clearance around heaters / fireplaces.</p>	<p>Moderate amounts of combustible items on cooktop and adjacent benchtops.</p> <p>Candles and/or cigarettes in use.</p> <p>Minimal clearance around heaters / fireplaces.</p> <p>Multiple power-boards in use.</p> <p>Electrical items appear old or in need of repair.</p>	<p>Significant amounts of combustible items on and near cooktop.</p> <p>Candles and/or cigarettes in regular use indoors.</p> <p>Significant amounts of clutter around heaters / fireplaces.</p> <p>Electrical appliances in poor or damaged condition.</p> <p>Multiple power-boards in use or not used safely.</p> <p>Overloading of power outlets.</p>
Notes				
F	Fuel Load			
	0	1	2	3
	<p>Low or moderate quantity of stored items.</p> <p>Most rooms usable and fit for purpose.</p> <p>Standard levels of furniture.</p>	<p>Some rooms have large quantity of stored items.</p> <p>Some restriction to egress.</p> <p>Some rooms unusable.</p>	<p>Most rooms have large quantity of stored items.</p> <p>Egress restricted from most rooms.</p> <p>Egress through passageway restricted.</p>	<p>All rooms contain excessive amount of stored items.</p> <p>Many rooms inaccessible due to stored items.</p> <p>Many rooms not fit for purpose.</p> <p>Pathways to exits severely restricted.</p>
Notes				

Fire Safety Risk Score		20
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MFS suggested process for managing the fire safety risks of clients:

Establish rapport with your client through visits and phone conversations.

Explain to your client the dangers of fire that exist in their home.

If the client doesn't respond to your advice, complete this form and discuss it with your client.

Make an action plan with your client to reduce their fire risk.

If this isn't effective, call the MFS to arrange a combined home visit with yourself and your client.

At the visit, we will have an educational chat with your client.

A Letter of Recommendation will be sent to your client and you will be sent a copy of it.

Make an action plan from our recommendations with your client, to reduce their fire risk.

EXPLANATORY NOTES:

Introduction:

This scale is intended to be a guide when assessing a residential property. Should you have strong concerns about the health and safety of an occupant that aren't reflected in the score, please take appropriate action.

At the centre of our activities is the person who lives amongst clutter. This tool doesn't focus on the volume of clutter but rather on how the clutter impacts on the person's fire risk. A large amount of clutter may not result in a very high fire risk score.

The factors that impact on fire safety, in order of priority, are:

- Early warning through working smoke alarms.
- Access and egress which allow occupants clear pathways of escape during a fire, and easy access to firefighters for firefighting, search and rescue operations.
- Elimination or reduction of possible ignition sources.
- Reduction in overall fuel load.

The six sections of the scale are explained below:

Section A: Early Warning

Investigate the locations of smoke alarms throughout the home. They should be located in passageways just outside of bedrooms. To test the smoke alarms, use the end of a broom handle to push on (and hold) the 'Test' button. The smoke alarm should sound.

All types of smoke alarms should be replaced every 10 years (even hard-wired type).

The third and fourth box is scored higher than the corresponding boxes in other sections because working smoke alarms are so critical to occupant's fire safety.

Section B, C & D: Access and Egress

These sections establish whether a pathway from the curb is clear to all external doors, the mains power board and main gas supply.

Hallways and pathways throughout the home should be clear, so occupants can escape their home quickly and easily in the event of a fire. We recommend that these pathways are 90cm wide.

Section E: Ignition Sources

The number of combustible items in a home is part of the equation of fire safety. Another part are the things that may cause a fire to start, like clothes too close to a heater.

The two most common causes of fires are cooking and heating. When going through a home, ask yourself 'what could start a fire'? You are looking to eliminate or reduce ignition sources.

Section F: Fuel Load

A house with minimal combustible items is classed as having a low fuel load.

A home furnished in a manner consistent with the majority of homes in South Australia would be termed as having an average fuel load. A home with a large number of combustible items would be classed as having a high fuel load.

The fire risk from fuel load isn't solely determined by volume. Its placement in a home is more critical when it is located in pathways or placed in spots where it could be easily ignited. Fuel load adds to a fire's intensity, its temperature, and fire smoke toxicity.

For further information:

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