



The hospitality industry encompasses four main sectors: restaurants, hotels, recreation, and tourism, and has many subsections. But they have something in common. They all use large, often complex buildings and involve hundreds of people. That is the unique challenge about fire protection for the hospitality industry. It is vital to make sure people can evacuate safely with adequate measures in place.

The hospitality industry offers many unique challenges for fire protection. As with most public-accessible business, life safety is the primary concern.

It is essential that all fire protection systems be operating properly and efficiently. Insurance providers often play an important part in driving fire protection standards to satisfy both life safety and property protection needs.

**The hospitality sector faces many challenges when it comes to fire protection and the safety of guests and staff. Venues are required to safely manage a daily rotation of new guests.**

**Additional risks are busy commercial kitchens, casual staff and people with disabilities.**

Commercial kitchens are in constant use - grease and dirt can accumulate on the surfaces of extractor fans and ventilation ducts. Many fires which start in the kitchen are caused by inadequate maintenance and cleaning. A build-up of grease is not only an environmental health hazard, it is a major fire risk.

Just like any structure, hotels are at risk for fires - but there are specific aspects that make their fire prevention systems and plans more complex. First, hotels have a high occupancy load due to the many rooms and numerous guests that could spend any given night. In addition, unlike office spaces or apartment complexes, guests are unfamiliar with the building and viable escape routes.

New hotels are required to have audible alarms loud enough to wake sleeping guests: alarms near the bed head should be around 75dB. It is vital that guests wake up immediately during a fire to provide the maximum amount of time to escape. Consideration should be given to using more than one form of fire alarm system, e.g. visual alarms, to alert people with hearing disabilities.

A hospitality venue can typically have fire sprinklers and pumps, fire alarm, fire extinguishers, emergency lighting, hood suppression and backflow protection. They also include special protection devices such as fire dampers, fire doors and even elevator fire protection systems.

There is a strong need to keep each system functioning properly and to avoid false alarms. There are typically requirements and restrictions on when the audible systems can be activated for testing. Guest inconvenience is not an option nor is any unplanned business interruption.

It is becoming increasingly more common for fire detection systems to be integrated, not only with extinguishing systems but also emergency lighting, voice alarm and mass-notification systems as well as building management systems - to control smoke extraction, fire doors and lifts in the course of any potentially life-threatening event.

Such integrated systems will automatically provide clear, step-by-step instructions for what to do, with whom to make contact, where to seek escape and where to assemble. All relevant alarm or lighting systems will be triggered automatically, so that every party involved knows exactly what to do next.

Fire safety is imperative to protect your guests and staff. It is essential to install the correct fire safety equipment throughout the building. In addition, staff must be knowledgeable and trained with emergency response protocols.