

Fire Policy Practice Guidance Note		
Testing of Fire Alarms and Emergency Lighting in Community Premises V04		
Date Issued Issue 1 – Feb 2021	Planned Review Feb 2024	FP-PGN-12 Part of CNTW(O)41 Fire Policy
Author/Designation	Matthew Lessells, Head of Estates - NTW Solutions Ltd	
Responsible Officer / Designation	Executive Finance Director and Deputy Chief Executive	
Contents		
Section	Description	Page No
1	Introduction	1
2	Scope	1
3	Statement	2
4	Fire Alarm Systems	2
5	Emergency Escape Lighting	3
6	Summary	4

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The fire protection measures in a building are vitally important in the continuing pursuit of safety from fire with Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust Group (CNTW Group) premises.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Practice Guidance Note (PGN) is to set out specific guidelines to enable the CNTW Group to be assured that the testing of fire alarm systems and emergency lighting in community premises occupied by CNTW personnel is clearly understood by CNTW Group employees.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This PGN together with any associated procedures and guidance notes, shall be observed by all employees of the CNTW Group and is applicable to responsible persons and their nominated deputies.

Fire Practice Guidance Notes form part of the CNTW Group's approach to managing health and safety and it is expected that staff will follow the guidance contained within them unless there is a compelling reason to deviate from it. Such reasons should be documented whenever the circumstance occurs and notified to the Head of Estates so that modifications to future editions can be made if necessary

3 Statement

- 3.1 The CNTW Group are committed to effective management and control of fire safety in order to reduce the risks to patients, staff, visitors and members of the public.
- 3.2 The Fire Safety Advisors will actively assist all responsible persons in ensuring the fire risk assessment is carried out satisfactory manner.

4 Fire Alarm systems

- 4.1 Fire alarm systems should be tested in accordance with British Standard 5839, the results of which should be recorded in the Fire Safety Log Book. Any defects identified during testing must be reported to the Fire Safety Advisor or Estates department as soon as possible. **The tests are as follows:**

4.2 Weekly Test

- 4.2.1 Depending on the size of the building, these systems can be tested by operating a single manual call-point or smoke detector (normally for small premises). Alternatively, larger buildings may be divided into fire zones which are usually tested via an end-of-line switch on a zone circuit. All zones or call-points should be identified by their own number and tests carried out in strict rotation, each zone or call-point being tested on a weekly basis in sequence e.g. call-point 1 one week, call-point 2 the following week etc. These tests must be carried out by the occupier of the premises and the results entered in the Fire Safety Log Book. In multi-occupied premises the responsible persons from all departments within the alarmed area must liaise with each other to decide how the weekly test will be carried out. Fire alarm systems can be manual, automatic or a combination of both and testing is achieved by the following methods:

- **Manual** Using a dedicated key inserted into a manual call-point or loosening the glass panel by means of an appropriate tool, thus releasing the control button in the call-point.
Once the alarm is actuated by this method the system alarm can only be silenced and re-set at the main fire alarm panel.
- **Automatic** From a central switch if in a zoned area at the main alarm panel or actuation of a smoke/heat detector.

4.3 Quarterly and annual inspections and tests

- 4.3.1 These tests will be carried out by a competent qualified engineer. All tests must be recorded in the Fire Safety Log Book. If the fire alarm system is monitored (it sends a signal directly to a call receiving centre) the call centre must be informed of the test prior to it being carried out and also when it is

Fire Practice Guidance Notes form part of the CNTW Group's approach to managing health and safety and it is expected that staff will follow the guidance contained within them unless there is a compelling reason to deviate from it. Such reasons should be documented whenever the circumstance occurs and notified to the Head of Estates so that modifications to future editions can be made if necessary

concluded, this also applies to certain CNTW Group areas where the fire alarm will alert switchboard.

- 4.3.2 If the system is not monitored (it only actuates locally) all persons in the premises should be made aware that a test is being carried out and also when the test is concluded.



- 4.3.3 Any door fitted with door-release devices should be checked for operation of the door at the time the fire alarms are tested. At the same time, all doors should be checked to ensure that, when released, they close fully into the door rebates.

5 Emergency escape lighting

- 5.1 Testing of emergency lighting should be carried out in accordance with British Standard 5266. The tests are carried out at the following intervals:

- Monthly
- Annual 3 hour drop test

- 5.2 Because of the risk of lighting failure the tests should be undertaken at times of least risk or disruption. Regular inspections for cleanliness of luminaires and any back-up systems should be carried out in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

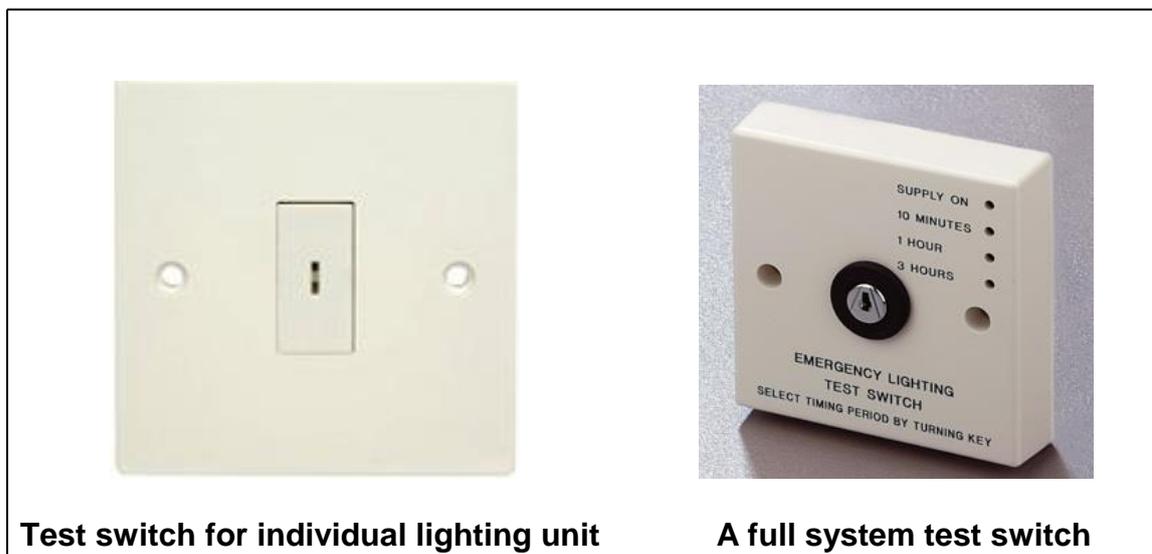
5.3 Monthly test

- 5.3.1 This test should be undertaken by the responsible person (or a nominated deputy). All lighting units are tested by simulation of a failure of the normal lighting supply for sufficient time to allow all lights to be checked for correct function, defective bulbs and the general state of the unit. Depending on the type of system installed, emergency lighting can be tested either by a test switch for each individual unit or a test switch for the whole system. Some lighting units have a key operated test switch located adjacent to the light; others have a centrally located key-operated switch for all lighting units. In

Fire Practice Guidance Notes form part of the CNTW Group's approach to managing health and safety and it is expected that staff will follow the guidance contained within them unless there is a compelling reason to deviate from it. Such reasons should be documented whenever the circumstance occurs and notified to the Head of Estates so that modifications to future editions can be made if necessary

multi-occupied premises, the responsible persons of each department must liaise with each other to decide how these tests will be carried out.

- 5.3.2 Emergency lighting units can be of a decorative nature often used in public places to blend in with the décor of the building. This is often the case in older buildings. They may also be maintained or non-maintained which means they either stay illuminated constantly (maintained) – normally for lighting on escape routes and exits – or remain dormant until the normal power supply fails. Non-maintained lights are normally only in circulation areas and not on escape routes.



5.4 Annual test

- 5.4.1 This test is similar to the monthly test and should be carried out by a contracted company or NTW Solutions Estates department. The test is undertaken in the same way as the monthly test however it remains continuous for a period of 3 hours in order to check not only the lighting units but the battery units supplying the power to the lights. This will include individual light battery units and central battery systems. All lighting units need to be physically checked during this time.

6 Summary

- 6.1 Under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, it is a legal requirement that test results are entered in the Fire Safety Log Book. The results of both the fire alarm and emergency lighting tests and any remedial action taken should be recorded. As this book is a legal document, it can be produced as evidence in a court of law therefore it is essential that it is kept up to date with the appropriate information.
- 6.2 Any defects or problems encountered during testing should be passed on to the Fire Safety Advisor or the NTW Solutions Estates Department as soon as possible.

Fire Practice Guidance Notes form part of the CNTW Group's approach to managing health and safety and it is expected that staff will follow the guidance contained within them unless there is a compelling reason to deviate from it. Such reasons should be documented whenever the circumstance occurs and notified to the Head of Estates so that modifications to future editions can be made if necessary