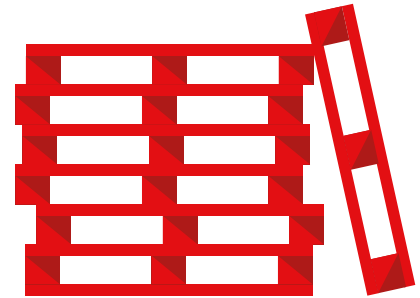


# Don't let the risks stack up



## Pallets, crates, and idle timber

Pallets, crates, and idle timber are a fire hazard when located close to a building. They make it easier for arsonists and can even help intruders gain access to buildings. But by following a few simple steps, you can put a plan in place to manage pallets, crates, and idle timber to help reduce risk.



### What are they made from?

Wood pallets are the most common type, they are generally made of pine. Over time as the wood loses its moisture content, it can become easier to ignite.

Plastic pallets are similarly risky – they burn as hot as wood and for a longer time. When burning, plastic pallets may melt, drip and form pools of liquid plastic on floors. These pools of plastic can flow and spread fire to other areas of a facility and may produce large quantities of smoke.

### Tips for storing indoors

Remove, return, reduce or relocate pallets to reduce risks. When storing pallets and crates indoors, ensure there is no 'hot work' activity near the pallets, and that they're kept well away from electrical boards, lighting and other ignition sources.

If you're stacking your crates and pallets, keep the number of crates and pallets in the stack to a minimum, creating sturdy and stable piles to reduce the risk of toppling. Keep these away from building structural supports. If your building is sprinkler protected, stacking heights should not exceed your sprinkler design points.

Always keep fire exits clear and make sure they comply with FENZ Evacuation procedures. Access to fire equipment should never be compromised.

### What are the dangers?

Storage of pallets, crates, and idle timber outside makes them susceptible to theft and arson-related fires, but other risks whether inside or out to be aware of can include:

- Nearby hot work (welding, cutting, grinding)
- Scrub fires
- Inadequate smoking controls
- Fireworks.

### Outdoors as an option

By keeping combustible material outside and away from buildings and other property exposures, a pallet fire is easier to contain.

When storing crates and pallets outside, make sure there are sufficient gaps or fire breaks (for example 10m), especially between buildings. Safe stacking of idle pallets outside provides less surface area for combustion.

Place your crates and pallets in a secured outdoor area at least 10 metres away from building walls and 2 metres from boundary fencing. Ideally fence heights should be 1.8m high and gates should be padlocked to prevent intruders. If this isn't practical, consider stacking them inside a shipping container.

To deter vandals think about external lighting, CCTV and alarm coverage as additional protection.

## Checklist of points to consider:

Could the quantity of pallets stored on site be removed or reduced?

Does the site allow for pallets to be relocated away from the building?

Are pallets stacked flat and stable?

Can damaged/old pallets be disposed of or repaired?

Are pallets away from areas where hot work takes place?

Are pallets away from Dangerous Goods stores?

Fire exits are clear of any obstructions?

Are staff aware and trained in the safe storage of pallets?

Are pallets stored away from any potential ignition sources?

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