



Your Reference

Our Reference BE/LicensingCampaign23

Contact firesafetyadmin@manchesterfire.gov.uk

**Chief Fire Officer**

Dave Russel, BSc, MIFireE

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[www.manchesterfire.gov.uk](http://www.manchesterfire.gov.uk)

Date

Dear Sir/Madam,

### **Fire Safety Advice: Risks from flammable decorations**

I am writing to you on behalf of Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) to raise awareness of the potential fire risk in relation to decorations used to line walls and ceilings in hospitality premises.

GMFRS is committed to working with businesses and providing advice and support and between September and December 2022 ran a campaign for licensed premises following two significant fires in licensed premises. These fires involved rapid fire spread after decorations lining the walls and ceilings were ignited by indoor sparklers or 'ice fountains'. In both cases the fires led to major damage and business disruption but fortunately did not result in any serious injuries.

You may have seen coverage in the media of a fire in a Madrid restaurant on the 21<sup>st</sup> April. The fire took place at an Italian restaurant in the Salamanca district of the Spanish capital. Reports from the incident indicate the fire was caused when food ignited at a table set fire to decorations spreading to involve wall and ceiling coverings (in this case artificial flowers). Tragically in that fire two people lost their lives and 12 people were injured.

The images below show the Bar prior to the fire and the damage caused despite the fire being extinguished within 10 minutes.



I wanted to raise your awareness of this issue again in the hope that we can avoid further incidents. If you do have decorative wall and ceiling linings including fabrics, artificial flowers

and paper decorations you should ensure that these are fire resistant or have been treated appropriately to make them fire retardant – this may require a specialist contractor to ‘treat’ the materials. GMFRS is aware that there are products marketed on the internet as being capable of making combustible materials flame retardant. I would urge to take caution if treating decorations yourself and ensure you thoroughly research the product capabilities and consider obtaining professional advice.

You should also ensure that the risk from any naked flames or indoor fireworks has been considered as part of your fire risk assessment. If you are using or allowing indoor fireworks, blow torches or igniting drinks that you take steps to ensure that a fire cannot start and make sure all staff are aware of the risks.

The following QR Code and link will take you to our website and an information document which provides advice on your responsibilities under the Fire Safety Order.



[hospitality-venues-safety-info-autumn-2022.pdf \(manchesterfire.gov.uk\)](https://www.manchesterfire.gov.uk/hospitality-venues-safety-info-autumn-2022.pdf)

I hope that this information is helpful. GMFRS will continue to work with our partners including Local Authority Licensing Teams to target inspections based on risk. If we intend to inspect your premises we will normally write to you in advance but we carry out visits at any time if we have concerns about fire safety.

According to GMFRS records your premises is recorded as being a licensed premises. If your premises does not have a licence and is not a hospitality business please email [firesafetyadmin@manchesterfire.gov.uk](mailto:firesafetyadmin@manchesterfire.gov.uk) and provide the reference at the top of this letter, the address and the current use and we will update our records.

If you have any queries or require further information you can contact GMFRS on the email address above – please quote ‘Business Engagement Hospitality’ in the subject line.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jenni Seex". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath.

Jenni Seex

Head of Protection & Building Safety Reform

Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service