



Fire Safety Bulletin

To: Heads of Department/Section, Executive Deans, HSLOs and DHSOs, Faculty Managers.

Storage of substances

This Bulletin is issued as guidance for the safe storage of hazardous substance across all campuses after a recent fire. Although the cause of the fire is unknown, substances with flammable warnings were found in the post fire debris. These had been stored in an office filing cabinet that had paper storage. It is important to note that no one was injured, and the fire was kept to the room of origin due to fire doors being closed.

Below are pictures of the fire (September 2022):



Exploded canister



Burnt cabinet



Fire damaged office

Storage of substances:

As per University procedures, please ensure the following is undertaken in areas under your control:

- Only keep substances if they are needed, older items can degrade and introduce additional risk
- Complete an inventory list of substances under your control.
- As required, suitable and sufficient COSHH assessments are produced by a competent person and are in place for all substances/chemicals. For small amounts of low-risk items this can be covered in a general assessment. If you are unsure or please contact safety@essex.ac.uk for advice.
- Substances/chemicals are handled, stored and disposed of safely. For example, in a COSHH cabinet and away from sources of heat/ ignition and combustible materials.

Thank you for helping to keep the University safe.

06 October 2022

For Action