



Wedging fire doors open poses significant safety risks and legal implications.

It is crucial to keep fire doors closed to ensure they function as intended during a fire emergency. Always prioritise safety and adhere to the fire regulations to protect yourself and others. If you encounter a wedged fire door, it is important to remove the obstruction immediately so that safety is not compromised.

Why You Should Not Wedge Fire Doors Open

- 1. Compromised Safety:** Fire doors are designed to contain fires and prevent the spread of smoke. When wedged open, they lose their effectiveness, allowing fire and toxic smoke to travel freely throughout a building. This can lead to rapid fire spread and increased risk of smoke inhalation for occupants.
- 2. Legal Risks:** It is not illegal to wedge a fire door open, but doing so can make you legally liable for any injuries or damages that occur if a fire spreads as a result. This could lead to fines or even imprisonment if it is determined that your actions put lives at risk.
- 3. Increased Evacuation Time:** Fire doors are designed to provide a minimum of 30 minutes of protection, allowing time for evacuation and for emergency services to respond. Wedging them open can significantly reduce this critical window, putting lives in danger.

When Is It Acceptable to Temporarily Prop Open a Fire Door?

- **Short Duration:** If it is absolutely necessary to prop a fire door open temporarily (for example, while moving equipment), it should only be done for a very short time and must be removed immediately after use. The door should never be left unattended while propped open.
- **Automatic Hold-Open Devices:** Some fire doors are equipped with automatic hold-open devices that allow them to remain open but will close automatically in the event of a fire. These systems are designed to maintain safety while providing convenience.

For further advice or information, please contact the Health and Safety Team healthandsafety@kent.gov.uk 03000 418456

Health and Safety Guidance – Fire Doors Wedging Risks		
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