

It's Time for a Hangar Spring Clean Contributed by Bill Beard

HANGARS are a great place to store not only the aircraft they were built to protect, but also all manner of things that the aircraft owner may want to keep. Actually many owners treat them as a garage and warehouse in addition to an aircraft hangar.

This is not an uncommon practice, but it can lead to hazardous conditions that concern the insurers who provide coverage for the hangar as well as the aircraft within them. Every now and then there are fires started by unsafe storage practices and poor housekeeping that destroy the aeroplanes that the structures were meant to protect.

Aeroplanes seldom, if ever 'self ignite'. It's more likely the loss will be caused by faulty wiring or an appliance that malfunctions. Also living quarters built

into hangars are another source that can contribute to the cause of fires.

Hangar fire prevention is based on using common sense. Ignition sources and combustibles in a hangar are usually in plain view if you take the time to look for them. Here are some items to consider when walking through your hangar:

1. Fix any faulty electrical wiring and connections. This includes frayed wiring, overlong extension cords, broken or corroded fixtures and switches. A main switch by the door that turns off electricity to the entire hangar is a good safety feature.
2. Oily rags used for maintenance and cleaning are a common spontaneous combustion source. These should be

removed or stored in a fire-rated container.

3. Don't tolerate fuel leaks in your aeroplane that cause detectable odours. Just fix them.

4. Batteries are a potent heat and ignition source. The long-term or routine connection of unattended chargers in or out of the aeroplane or vehicles is not recommended.

5. Make sure there is a fire extinguisher available. Be sure you have the correct type and that it is current and fully charged. It should be in the most accessible part of the hangar.

6. The number one domestic fire hazard is normally cooking. You should not leave the hangar when you're cooking.

7. If you have an old beer fridge, you should know that one-third of all residential fires are caused by appliances and electrical faults. If the appliance is no longer suitable for the home, it should not be in your hangar.

8. There's really no good reason to store fuel in a hangar other than what's in the aeroplane. There should be no draining of fuel or fuelling in a hangar including mogas for microlights and LSA's. This is asking for trouble and static-induced fuel fires from plastic containers are alarmingly regular occurrences. The same situation can be created by draining fuel from an aircraft within a hangar.

9. It is important to get rid of the oil-soaked carpets and rubbish and remove the boxes of junk you've been storing, to eliminate a source for a fire.

10. Establish a check list for the hangar by the door as a reminder to check for appliances to be turned off, fuel containers to be emptied or removed, and rubbish to be carried out.

Aircraft and related parts that have not been replaced by other parts are normally covered by your aircraft policy. Your hangar and other contents are generally covered by a premises and contents policy. If you are not sure if a particular item is covered or not you should check with your broker to make sure you have the coverage you need. A little prevention will go a long way to avoid a claim and even higher premiums under these policies.

To discuss this topic or any other aviation insurance questions, contact **Bill Beard at Avsure on 0800 322 206.**

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Accident and Incident Reports

courtesy of 

Type: Diamond DA20 CTC
Location: Raglan **POB:** 1
Operation: Training Solo **Injuries:** Nil
Date: 5 September 2011
Report: The aircraft had a landing over-run and collided with a fence.

Type: Schweizer 269C HGJ
Location: Karamea **POB:** 2
Operation: Hunting **Injuries:** Nil
Date: 23 September 2011
Report: Aircraft suffered a partial engine failure during commercial deer recovery flight and landed on the Karamea river bed. Helicopter sustained damage to the drive pulleys and shroud.

Type: Bell 206B HXQ
Location: Waitotora **POB:** 1
Operation: Agricultural **Injuries:** Nil
Date: 26 September 2011
Report: Tail rotor failed on landing with the helicopter then rolling over.

Type: Tecnam P2002 Sierra SGO
Location: Weber **POB:** 2
Operation: Private Other **Injuries:** Nil
Date: 27 September 2011
Report: Aircraft was blown off the runway on landing and into a drain causing the nose gear to collapse.

Type: B22 Bantam JDN
Location: Kumara Junction **POB:** 1
Operation: Private Other **Injuries:** Nil
Date: 9 October 2011
Report: After takeoff, during a steep turn, the aircraft stalled and crashed.

Type: Schweizer 269C HNC
Location: Ardmore **POB:** 2
Operation: Training Dual **Injuries:** Nil
Date: 4 October 2011
Report: During practice of engine failure after takeoff, a main rotor blade struck the helicopter's tail boom as the helicopter slowed down after a run on landing.

Please note: Reports are selected from www.caa.govt.nz and are provided for information only. Accuracy is not guaranteed.



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