



Event Name: Safer with Sprinklers

Date of Event: 30 April 2009

Attended By: Chris Colgan, KFRS

Introduction

Kent Fire and Rescue Service in partnership with the South East Fire Improvement Partnership has taken its "Safer with Sprinklers" campaign to audiences across the South East.

A major seminar at Buckinghamshire's Pinewood Studios on 30 April addressed some of the region's leading opinion formers including architects, planners and builders. This was followed by a presentation to fire and rescue services from across the South East at Wray Park in Surrey on 8 May. The events were supported by SEFIP and are the latest stage in KFRS's "Safer with Sprinkler" campaign which has already achieved national recognition for its plans to protect vulnerable people by installing these potentially life-saving systems.

KFRS Chief Fire Officer Bill Feeley said: "We need to reach a wider audience outside of Kent if we are going to convince those in positions of responsibilities that sprinklers are a vital resource in protecting our communities. These seminars take our campaign to another level and we also welcome the chance to share our experiences and successes with colleagues from neighbouring fire and rescue services."

The seminars were aimed at sharing best practice amongst architects, building control officers, council planners, technical representatives from housing associations, trade body representatives plus anyone else interested in improving their sprinkler knowledge and industry expertise.

Guests were invited to learn more about Medway Council's new ground-breaking sprinkler policy, Kent County Council's Design Guide and the Government's perspective. A technical outlook highlighted the cost benefits and design freedoms that sprinklers offer while the audience also heard about the success and future plans for KFRS's campaign.

Feedback from the recent Wray Park event suggests that other FRSs are keen to work together to disseminate key messages through a regional 'Safer with Sprinklers' campaign.

All the FRSs represented at the Wray Park event where a feedback form was completed are keen to encourage their local authority to adopt the Medway Council policy of installing sprinklers in all new Council owned buildings

Many FRSs also indicated a keenness to influence a Design Guide similar to that developed by Kent County Council. All the FRSs represented at the Wray Park event where a feedback form was completed, are of the opinion that consistent delivery of messages relating to the installation of sprinklers in the homes of vulnerable people across the region would be beneficial and they would be keen to discuss a unified campaign.

Author: Steve Griffiths

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