

Monday, 8 September 2014

120 extra nursing homes upgraded with fire sprinkler systems

The Department of Planning and Environment today released figures showing 120 nursing homes across the state had met the 1 September deadline to fit out fire sprinkler systems to improve fire protection for residents and staff.

A Department of Planning and Environment spokesperson said under changes made in January 2013, all NSW nursing homes are required to have sprinklers installed by or before March 2016. A number of facilities nominated to meet an earlier deadline of 1 September 2014.

“Driven by the tragic fire at Quakers Hill in 2011, the NSW Government and the aged care industry have worked closely to deliver and implement these reforms that aim to protect vulnerable residents of these facilities,” the spokesperson said.

“More than 500 older aged care facilities across the state now have sprinkler systems, and we expect the remainder to deliver on their obligation to boost resident safety through this important initiative.

“There are about 200 facilities remaining to complete the program. Aged care providers are working hard to meet the March 2016 deadline, and where there are issues, like a lack of qualified contractors in the area, we are working to identify solutions to deliver the upgrades as soon as possible.”

The Department spokesperson thanked the aged care sector for their cooperation in implementing the reforms.

“Installing fire sprinklers, particularly in older aged care facilities, is a critical reform that not only reduces the intensity of fires but also buys valuable time for residents of aged care facilities to evacuate in the event of an emergency,” the spokesperson said.

“The NSW aged care sector and peak bodies have the thanks of the NSW Government for continuing to work with their members in taking this reform seriously.

“We are particularly impressed with aged care providers for over 40 facilities who have completed their installations more than a year ahead of their 2016 deadline.

“The Department of Planning and Environment will continue to work with members of the sector until all upgrades are complete.”

The Fire Sprinkler Systems Implementation Committee (FSSIC) monitors the installation of sprinkler systems, set the requirements for implementation and publish updates at www.planning.nsw.gov.au/firesprinklers

The public can view an interactive map to see details about the status of fire sprinkler installation in their local aged care facility at www.planning.nsw.gov.au/en-au/buildinginnsw/safetycampaigns/firesafetyinagedcarefacilities/nswfiresprinklerinstallationstatus.aspx

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