Monday 30 November 2015

More than eight-in-ten nursing homes now upgraded with fire sprinkler systems

More than 80 per cent of the State’s nursing homes are now fire sprinkler compliant according to the latest progress report released by the Department of Planning and Environment today.

Changes made to legislation in 2013 require all nursing homes in NSW to install an automatic fire sprinkler system.

This was part of the NSW Government’s response to the Coroner’s recommendations following the tragic nursing home fire at Quakers Hill in 2011.

A Department spokesperson said there was a real commitment in the industry to help safeguard nursing homes by installing fire sprinklers.

“There are more than 60,000 residents in nearly 900 nursing homes across NSW and every single resident, visitor and staff member deserves to feel peace of mind about their protection in the event of a fire,” the spokesperson said.

“Over 50 systems were installed over the past six months – which is good progress on this vital requirement.”

Aged and Community Services NSW CEO Illana Halliday said today’s progress report revealed that almost all nursing homes in the State had either fitted their fire sprinklers or were in the planning or installation phase.

“Nursing home residents are precious to their loved ones and we never want to see a repeat of the Quakers Hill fire,” Ms Halliday said.

In exceptional circumstances such as planned renovations, an extension has been requested and provided to some nursing homes past the deadline of March 2016.

Extensions are granted to a final deadline of March 2017 on a case-by-case basis and only after a thorough assessment of safety implications.

The Fire Sprinkler Systems Implementation Committee monitors the installation of sprinkler systems, sets the requirements for implementation and publishes updates at www.planning.nsw.gov.au/firesprinklers.

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