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Sunday 19 July 2020

Attention New South Wales Media

PEAK STRATA BODY ISSUES FIRE RISK WARNING

HUNDREDS OF BUILDINGS AND LIVES STILL AT RISK IN NSW AS FLAMMABLE CLADDING THREAT REMAINS

A fire risk warning has been issued for New South Wales residents living in apartments, units and townhouses.

Thousands more people are now working from or self isolating in their homes in strata title property because of COVID-19, driving up the risk of winter fires linked to the careless use of internal heaters.

Between June 2019 and March 2020, 34 people died in fires in Australia.

The multibillion-dollar strata sector in New South Wales is urging all residents to remain vigilant in using internal heaters to warm up an apartment or unit.

Strata Community Association (NSW) has warned that due to the colder winter months and the increased need for internal heating; fires remain a very real threat. There are also still hundreds of buildings in NSW that have been identified as being at risk because of flammable cladding

SCA (NSW) State President, Chris Duggan, says now is not a time for complacency, and the good work residents have put in during lockdown restrictions should not be tarnished with any avoidable fires.

“We’re in a ‘perfect-storm’ of risk which has the potential to impact the lives of tens of thousands of people in NSW. ACP cladding remains a real cause for concern with internal heater usage skyrocketing in the Winter months.

Fire and Rescue NSW indicate that cooler months see a 10% increase in the number of home fires, with more fires in bedrooms and loungerooms due to heaters and electric blankets.

Fire and Rescue NSW also provide a heater and winter months safety fact sheet:
[Strata Community Association \(New South Wales\)](#)

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- Check your electric and gas heaters before you use them. If you suspect a fault have the item checked by a qualified repairer or replaced. Check all cords for fraying and damage. Plug heaters directly into wall sockets only.
- Do not overload powerboards.
- Ensure everything is kept a metre from the heater.
- Install any new heaters and use as per manufacturer's instructions.
- Check your portable outdoor heaters before use and have serviced or replaced if required. Ensure that the area where you plan to use them is level, well ventilated and away from awnings and other combustible materials.
- Always supervise young children in rooms with open fires or working heaters.
- Never use wheat bags in bed.

Further, never use any outdoor heating or cooking equipment inside your home including those that use 'heat beads' or LPG as a fuel source. This type of equipment is not suitable for indoor use and can lead to a build-up of lethal gases which could be deadly. Always check the manufacturer's recommendations before use.

"We're urging all residents to heed these safety recommendations and to take utmost care when heating their apartments, units or townhouses. Particularly in buildings identified as 'at risk' of flammable cladding.

"The last thing we want to see is an injury or death, or major damage to a building caused by a catastrophic fire," Mr Duggan said.

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About Strata Community Association (NSW)

Strata Community Association (NSW) is the peak industry body for Strata and Community Title Management in New South Wales. Membership includes strata managers, support staff, committee members and suppliers of products and services to the industry. SCA (NSW) has in excess of 3,000 members who help oversee, advise or manage a combined property portfolio with an estimated replacement value of over \$400 Billion. SCA (NSW) proudly fulfils the dual roles of a professional institute and consumer advocate.

Website: <https://nsw.strata.community/>

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