

The City of Oslo Agency for Planning and Building Services want better documentation before gas extinguishing systems can be used in residential buildings

The Oslo City Agency for Planning and Building Services says that the documentation they have received is too thin for fire extinguishing systems based on Inergen being accepted in an apartment complex. They encourage suppliers to work towards central building authorities and within the standardization organizations, to get documentation in place that will match these fire extinguishing systems with the more traditional systems referred to as pre-accepted solutions in the building codes.

In Grønland [a district of Oslo], the matter is development of lofts into apartments. The Grønland project has not been granted a user permit. The arguments of the Agency of Planning and Building Services are that the homes need to be reworked to comply with the Technical Requirements for Building Works of the Planning and Building Act.

The objections from the Agency of Planning and Building Services are that the fire concept does not adequately analyze that the requirements of the [Norwegian] Regulations on Technical Requirements for Building Works (TEK) are met. The agency believes that neither the health aspect of lowering the oxygen content of the building and the consequences this will have for life and health is well documented.

"We believe that the total solution with such gas is not sufficiently documented. What we have received from the company's documentation has not convinced us that the requirements of the legislation have been safeguarded. We therefore believe that this type of solution is not suitable for residential use", says Kyrre Jordbakke, Director of The Oslo City Agency of Planning and Building Services.

The fact that such extinguishing systems are not installed in other buildings for residential purposes makes the agency restrictive in accepting such solutions in the apartment complex in Oslo.

The uncertainties for the Agency of Planning and Building Services are:

- Detection
- Control of system release
- Security against variation of the concentration either by over or under filling of gas
- The impact of natural and controlled ventilation on the gas concentration in the building
- Leakages
- Sound and pressure waves resulting from the release of the system
- How people will be able to understand what such a system implies when it releases

NO SALES PROHIBITED

"We have not put down any sales ban on the use of extinguishing systems based on Inergen. We relate to the existing regulations, and believe that the documentation we have received is not convincing enough to accept such solutions in buildings where people will live, says Jordbakke.

He further states that the agency does not object to such systems on a general basis.

"But before it is to be installed in buildings for residential purposes, we must be sure they will work as they should. We want the suppliers of this type of systems to work with the Directorate for Building Quality, and for the future get documentation and standards in place showing them being suitable for residential use. Then, such extinguishing systems can also be included in the regulations as pre-accepted solutions in line with more traditional extinguishing systems", says Kyrre Jordbakke.

He also says that the references to the offshore sector are insufficient, because such extinguishing systems are not installed in the accommodation sections of e.g. oil platforms.

"The documentation presented to us is simply too thin to conclude whether or not this is a suitable extinguishing system", says Kyrre Jordbakke.

On 20th November the fire consultant was informed that the company loses its right to accept responsibility in connection with the project in Grønland.