

Fire Safety in Timber Frame Construction

Recent research* has shown that fires involving timber frame buildings represent just 1.7% of all fires in England (dwelling and non-dwelling).

Whilst all completed UK buildings have to perform to similar standards to comply with UK Fire Regulations, it is recognised that buildings under construction are far more vulnerable to fire than finished buildings. Best fire safety practice in Timber Frame construction takes account of this fact.

“Knowing your build system and employing “good housekeeping” procedures are key to limiting the risk of fire within construction”

Robin Dodyk – Technical Director, Oregon Timber Frame

Oregon’s Fire Safety Approach

As the UK’s largest independent timber frame manufacturer, Oregon has developed a specific approach to ensure Fire Safety on all of its sites.

Site Security – Most fires on site are caused by arson rather than some intrinsic fault; Oregon’s site practices give priority to site security by adopting a “frame up; windows in; doors fitted” approach, to thwart opportunistic arson.

Compartmentalization – The Oregon approach to construction is to introduce compartmentalization within a structure as soon as possible, thus minimising the risk of fire spreading.

Limited Timber Exposure – Oregon site practice also ensures that all timber is plaster boarded as soon as practicable to ensure that as little timber as possible is left exposed during construction.

Fire Hydrants – One of the first services onto a site is water, so Oregon recommends providing a hydrant(s) in and around the site from an early stage. Oregon also supports the installation of alarm/sprinkler systems early on in the build.

Trained Personnel – Every Oregon site is supervised by a qualified Construction Manager who knows and enforces the law relating to site safety; and is manned by trained operatives at every level.

Safe Storage – Oregon advise that all combustible materials and flammable liquids on site are safely stored, away from the building under construction.

No Smoking – Oregon sites have always been strictly no smoking zones.

Research & Development – Oregon continually work with manufacturers to develop improved materials and treatments that can give enhanced fire ratings and/or offer surface spread protection.

* Communities and Local Government: Fire Statistics Monitor, April 2009 to March 2010
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Delivering safe, sustainable solutions for today's construction industry

