

# “NATIONAL FIRE SERVICE DAY”

## 14<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2023



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“Awareness in Fire Safety for Growth of National Infrastructure (AGNI)” is the theme for this year’s National Fire Service Day on 14th April 2023 and the Fire Prevention Week from 14th to 20th April 2023. Several programmes have been lined up to emphasize the need for creating fire awareness right from the grass root level. The Fire Services in the country observe National Fire Service Day on 14th April. This day is observed to pay homage to the Firemen Martyrs who sacrificed their lives during the course of duty and to inspire fire fighters of today to dedicate their services in saving life and property from the ever-increasing hazards of fire.

### **Awareness in Fire Safety for Growth of National Infrastructure (AGNI)**

### **राष्ट्रीय अवसंरचना के विकास के लिए अग्नि सुरक्षा में जागरूकता**

For the most part, fires are caused by human actions. People being aware of their responsibilities regarding fire safety is therefore of the utmost importance. Whether people are able to leave the building or their home safely in time in the event of a fire also depends on their actions. If people act fire safe, the chances of a fire breaking out are reduced. And when a fire does break out, people knowing how to act decreases the chance of people getting hurt or dying.

The role of education in fire safety in the residential environment is, thus, extremely important because, in the end, people make the difference. Technical fire safety is, of course, very important but it is people who have to safely use the equipment and products, who have to close fire doors, and who have to respond to a smoke detector in case of a fire breaking out, etc. The social dimension of fire safety is therefore not to be underestimated.

Fire hazards in the residential environment cause deaths, (disabling) injuries and hospital visits that could have been avoided through behavioural and environmental modifications. Unfortunately, there is a lack of awareness about household safety practices and procedures. Many adults are not aware of how to minimise the fire risk in their homes, something which is reason enough to raise the awareness about home safety hazards and to teach people fire safety techniques to prevent fires from breaking out. It is also crucial that people know how to react effectively in the stressful situation whenever a fire occurs, something which is essential for their survival.

While it is necessary to pay attention to the day to -day major hazards of fire it is also necessary for the community to broaden our vision and expand our preparedness to face other disasters as well. The increasing incidence of disasters across the globe is creating a devastating impact on the lives, property and livelihoods of people. Disasters impede development and consume resources earmarked for growth and welfare. A holistic approach towards managing disasters is emerging that integrates the prevention, preparedness, mitigation and response activities. Governments are gearing up to prevent, be prepared and respond to disasters.

Disasters make even the mightiest nations fragile. This has enhanced the need for disaster preparedness. A culture of preparedness is emerging as one of the key strategies of reducing risks. Preparedness is necessary to strengthen the abilities and capacities to predict and wherever feasible prevent disasters, lessen the impact, and facilitate response to handle the consequences of disasters at various levels.

Over the past several years the department of Fire & Emergency Services has been endeavouring to sensitize the community on the need for Fire Prevention, Fire Protection and Mitigation of losses due to fire. The extent of provision of Fire Protection measures at the initial stage has increased substantially. However, random audit of continued functional efficacy of these measures has shown significant neglect by various occupants/owners of Buildings prone to fire risk. This is one area where there is a serious concern and the department would like to see serious improvement. Efforts have been made to draw the attention of the owners to the lacuna in fire safety due to failure to ensure continued compliance of the functional efficiency of the installed Fire Protection Measures.

The goals of fire prevention & awareness programs are to prevent loss of life, property damage. Fires often cause disruption of business activities, loss of business documents, loss of employee work hours, and liability claims resulting from the spread of fire to adjacent properties. A

successful fire prevention program is part of the day-to-day operations of every property. Fire prevention is the responsibility of the owner, the manager, and all occupants of a property.

Fire Safety Awareness has been a valuable area of public Fire Protection. This function has undergone rapid change and growth, focusing increasingly on the importance of Prevention in Public Fire Protection Management. The department undertakes 2 phases of Public Fire Safety Education i.e Fire Prevention Awareness and Fire Reaction Awareness.

These phases are important to change the way the general public views fire and encourage people to act in a Fire Safe manner.

There is strong misperception about the frequency of fire and hence there is a lethargy and tendency to avoid to maintain the functional efficiency of Fire Safety System. It is precisely when lethargy and neglect occur that fire too occurs. Continuing with the endeavour for sensitising the community, educational programmes are taken up by the department at Village Panchayat level through lecture and demonstration on Basic Fire Safety and Safe use of Cooking Gas (LPG) as well as Disaster Preparedness.

Extending the activity further we have taken up Fire Safety Education of Secondary School Teachers under the Programme of “Training of Trainers” in the topic of Basic Fire Safety and Evacuation Drill Procedure thus enabling the teachers to provide training their student in the Secondary Schools.

Following the dictum “Catch them Young” the Directorate of Fire and Emergency Services in joint effort with the Directorate of Education (SCERT) in collaboration with M/s Underwriters Laboratories (UL) India has launched a training programme “Safer School Safer India” as a pilot programme with an intention to build a safer India to safe guard children and teach them how to “Stay Safe”. This training programme is for enhancing the awareness level of the Primary School Children and through them the families, on Safety Culture.

The training module is designed to create interest in children at primary level (Ist to IVth Std) and involve them in activities which will lead them to Fire Prevention and Fire Safety learning. A total of 33027 Children of Class Ist to IVth Std. was imparted training in the Safer School Safer India training module which includes topics on “Good Fire and Bad Fire”, Fire Triangle and the 4 P’s i.e. Prevent an Accident, Protect yourself from Fire, Plan to Escape and Practice being safety smart.

An effective fire prevention program does not only serve the citizens but also serves the safety of the Fire Fighting Personnel. Fire prevention and mitigation efforts equate to fire fighter safety.

The Fire Protection Systems must be in place, in working condition. This facilitates prompt access and effective firefighting operations. Such prompt operations help in saving life and property in a minimum possible time, which in turn reduces the risk to safety of fire fighter. We need to foster a culture which incorporates fire prevention & fire safety awareness as our first efforts to bolster confidence towards growth of National Infrastructure.

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