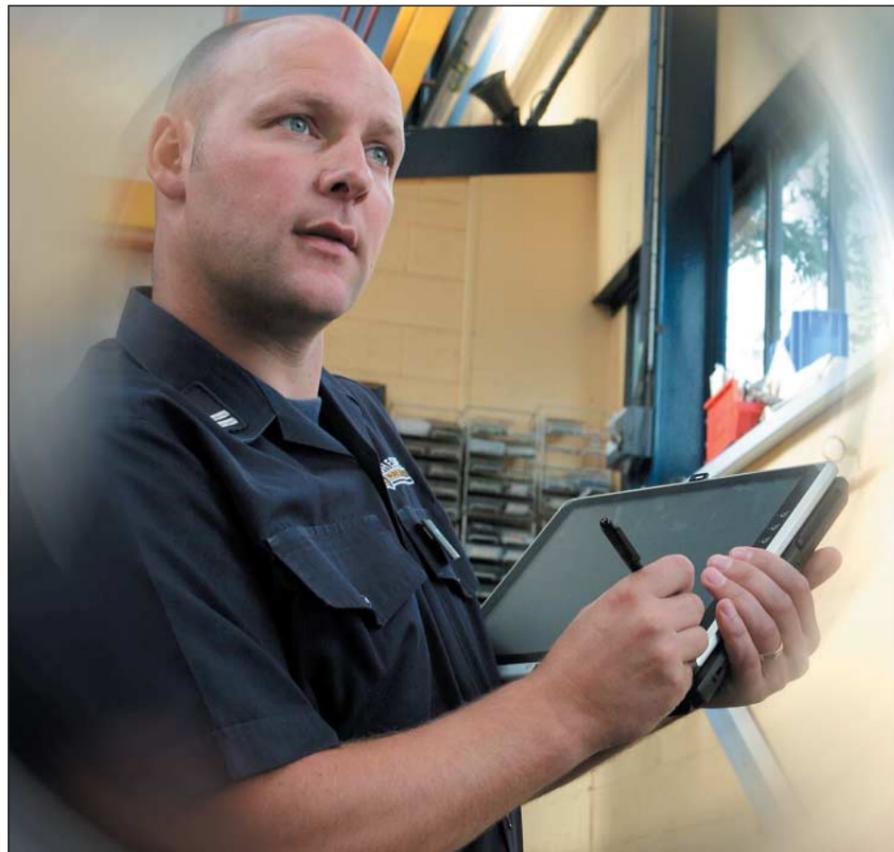


Online campaign on major changes to fire safety law



A SPECIAL programme has been put together by Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service to prepare businesses for major changes in fire safety legislation.

The new Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 comes into force in October 2006 and replaces all existing fire safety legislation. It will affect all employers, owners, occupiers and self-employed businesses, with very few exceptions.

Moves to keep businesses informed about the changes include a special feature on the Service's website -

www.cheshirefire.gov.uk. This allows people to register to receive automatic email alerts whenever new information about the order is added.

John Redmond, the Service's Area Manager with responsibility for Community Fire Protection, said: "The automatic email system is a great way for business managers and those responsible for implementing changes to get up-to-the minute information.

"We have also been organising seminars

and visiting various venues around Cheshire with our mobile 'fire station' so people can discuss issues with us face to face."

Fire Authority Chairman Cllr. Tony Hooton added: "This is the biggest change in fire safety legislation for 35 years and I would urge businesses to keep informed by visiting our website, attending one of our events or contacting their local Community Fire Protection office."

Responsibility for complying with the new Fire Safety Order rests with the 'responsible person.' In a workplace, this is the employer and any other person who may have control of any part of the premises, e.g. the occupier or owner. In all other premises the person or people in control of the premises has responsibility.

The Fire Safety Order requires suitable fire precautions to be put in place based on the risk and what is reasonable and practical.

For more information about the email alert system or local events, visit **www.cheshirefire.gov.uk** and click on 'Business Safety'.

● **SPREADING THE MESSAGE...** (left) new technology will the Service enforce the new laws. Right, staff with the mobile 'fire stations' at one of the recent awareness sessions.



Contacting your nearest Community Fire Protection Office

- Chester**
St Anne Street, Chester CH1 2HP
Tel: 01244 322222
- Crewe**
Crewe Road, Crewe CW1 6DS
Tel: 01270 213246
- Warrington**
Winwick Road, Warrington WA2 8HH
Tel: 01925 634593
- Wilmslow**
Altrincham Road, Wilmslow SK9 5ND
Tel: 01625 524067



Going on e-mail alert



RESIDENTS and businesses are being urged to register with Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service's website to receive all the latest news, advice and information.

The Internet site - **www.cheshirefire.gov.uk** - has recently been revamped and among its key features is the chance for people to receive automatic e-mails whenever information is added that interests them.

"We have made the new site as easy-to-use as possible and we are particularly keen for people to register with us and say which issues they are interested in. All people need to do is click on the 'e-mail alerts' link on the home page," said Head of Communications

Tim Bevington. "The site meets internationally recognised accessibility standards and includes automatic translation into several languages and a special facility to read out pages for people with visual impairments."

Residents and businesses who register with the website also receive regular electronic newsletters highlighting the latest developments by the Service.

Other key features include:

- Online access to details of all major incidents and news stories
- Sign-up service for free home safety assessments
- New community safety information
- Live station statistics

Responding to the local community

A SPECIAL consultation panel is being run by the Service to help it listen and respond to the views of local residents.

Called 'Response', the panel already has several hundred members but the Service is continuing to urge people to join so that the views of all sections of the community are genuinely represented.

Brigade Manager - Chief Fire Officer, Steve McGuirk said: "We are committed to consulting with the local community and want local residents to sign up and join Response to give us feedback and suggestions on our future policies and proposals."

The panel is asked to take part in up to four postal or online questionnaires a year, with a prize draw of £100 in shopping vouchers each time to encourage response rates.

Application forms to join the panel are available on the Service's website - **www.cheshirefire.gov.uk** - or by calling 01606 868994 or email: **consultation@cheshirefire.gov.uk**

The results of all consultations will be displayed on the Service's website, in the local media and in a dedicated Consultation Panel newsletter which will be sent to every member.

"We hope members of the panel will give us honest and meaningful feedback and we can assure anyone who takes part that we will treat their responses in strict confidence," added Mr. McGuirk.

