

Videos in multiplexes, workshops to spread fire safety awareness

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MUMBAI: To avoid a repeat of the Andheri fire incident, the state fire services department plans to start an awareness campaign on fire safety.

The department will play videos on the need to set up fire-fighting system and how it can be maintained at 350 multiplexes across the state. It also plans to conduct workshops and seminars in societies and schools, including the Mumbai Cricket Association club in Bandra. "We will start playing the videos in theatres in a month. It will cost us Rs10-15 lakh. We will also look for NGOs that can help spread the message," said Milind Deshmukh, director, state fire services.

The Fire Protection Association of India will also extend a helping hand to the initiative. "It is important to update the internal fire-fighting system in each building, as it could play a major role in containing the blaze," he said.

A senior civic official said, "We can't keep checking the fire safety mechanism in every building throughout the year. Citizens must act responsibly to ensure their building — whether office or residential — is fire-proof. They must follow the rules and submit fire audit reports to the department every six months."

The department plans to take strict action against those

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responsible for the Andheri blaze to set an example. "We will initiate strict action against owners of the structure for their failure to maintain the internal system and not adhering to the rules. This will send out a strong message," he said.

The department will also publish advertisements in print media and hold meetings with licensed agents who carry out the audits. "We are asking the agents to circulate the brochures and reach out to as many buildings possible," said Deshmukh.