



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

PRESS RELEASE

51/11

8 July 2011

WARNING TO LOCAL BUSINESSES AFTER LANDMARK FIRE SAFETY PROSECUTION

Business owners and companies contracted to provide Fire Risk Assessments to businesses are being advised to pay greater attention to Fire Safety legislation following the sentencing of two Mansfield men at Nottingham Crown Court today.

David Liu, who runs The Dial Hotel and Market Inn, both in Market Place, Mansfield, was jailed for 8 months and ordered to pay £15,000 costs after pleading guilty to 15 Fire Safety offences under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

John O'Rourke, who runs Mansfield Fire Protection Services, Mansfield, was also jailed for 8 months and was ordered to pay £5,862.38 after he pleaded guilty to two breaches of Fire Safety requirements in relation to the inadequacy of Fire Risk Assessments he provided for Mr Liu's hotels.

The Judge said that the time had come to send out a message to those who conduct Fire Risk Assessments and to hoteliers who are prepared to put profit before safety.

Fire Protection Officers from Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service had visited both premises and found that the fire precautions which should have been provided to protect residents and employees in the event of a fire were inadequate. This presented a serious risk to the lives to Mr Liu's customers and staff, so they issued prohibition notices preventing any further use of both premises as hotels until suitable improvements had been made.

Mr Liu was prosecuted because he was the responsible person for both premises, and failed to make sure they were safe for customers staying there. Mr O'Rourke was prosecuted because he carried out Fire Risk Assessments at both hotels, but those assessments were wholly inadequate.

Today Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service is reminding all owners and occupiers of buildings of their legal responsibility to protect their customers and staff against the risk of fire and warning them that, where necessary, action will be taken against anyone found to be in breach of Fire Safety regulations.

Ian Taylor, Fire Protection Group Manager at Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service, said: "It is a legal requirement for places of work to have a Fire Risk Assessment. Guidance on Fire Risk Assessment and Fire Safety measures appropriate for different types of premises are available on the Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service website and also on that of the Department for Communities and Local Government. The guides are to assist employers to undertake a Fire Risk Assessment.

"If employers are unsure about their own ability to undertake a Fire Risk Assessment within their premises they should seek advice from a competent person. In ascertaining someone's competence to provide Fire Safety advice I would encourage people to ask for references, be aware of what Fire Safety training and qualifications they have and check to see if they are registered or accredited with an appropriate third party body."

Further Fire Safety advice and guidance upon all types of premises is available at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/fire/firesafety/firesafetylaw/>

Help regarding Fire Safety in non-domestic premises is available from Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service Fire Safety advice line on 0115 957 5231 or email fireprotection@notts-fire.gov.uk .

ends

NOTES TO NEWS DESKS

For further information, please contact:

- Vicky Brown, Communications Manager, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service, on 0115 967 5893; mobile: 07967 690722 or email vicky.brown@notts-fire.gov.uk .

For further advice on fire safety, contact your local fire station or visit www.notts-fire.gov.uk and www.direct.gov.uk/firekills