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## Many more Retiwalas in store?

### BMC claims industrial estates in the city are not properly equipped to deal with fire

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Fire safety does not seem to be too high on the priority list of most industrial estates. If the recent survey carried out by the fire brigade is anything to go by, the 500-odd industrial houses in the city aren't adequately equipped to deal with a fire.)

The recent fire at the Retiwala Industrial Estate which claimed 10 lives, displayed the scant regard that industrial units have for fire safety norms.

Municipal commissioner Jairaj Phatak, said, "The fire brigade checked out more than 118 industrial estates in the island city and their fire safety measures. Each and every one of them was found to have something or the other missing."

"We will issue all these estates with compliance notices. If they fail to com-



ply the BMC will revoke their license."

According to additional municipal commissioner Kishore Gajbhiye, most of the industrial estates existing in the city lack proper fire fighting equipment. "We found that most of them had blocked their fire escape. We are also going to inspect the industrial

units in the western and eastern suburbs of the city."

A recent amendment in the Fire Safety Act specifies rules and regulations regarding fire safety measures. The BMC has been empowered to disconnect electric and water connections, revoke operation license and file

a criminal complaint against estates not observing fire safety norms.

Gajbhiye said, "The Retiwala incident happened due to violation of fire safety norms. It took several hours for the fire brigade to douse the fire. In order to ensure that there are no such mishaps, we are now going to be stringent and slap notices to all those who are violating the fire safety norms."

Gajbhiye further said that the BMC also has the power to revoke the permission granted to any industrial unit.

However, the blame doesn't completely lie on the industrial units. AD Sawant, chief fire officer, said "It is the ward assistant commissioner's responsibility to ensure that industrial units are following the safety norms. They can take appropriate action against those violating the safety measures."

**Special inspection ordered:** Assistant commissioners of each ward have been directed to carry out special inspection of industrial estates, hotels, hospitals, malls, and petrol pumps. BMC will also seek help from the state and central agencies in such cases."

## Dos and donts

**Loft area** only for storage and fire proof. It must be one-third of the total area

**No storage** within 1 m of electric installations

**Raw material** should be stored away from finished goods

**No combustible** and flammable commodity should be kept on the premises

**All electrical** heating appliances shall be provided with thermostatic control valve

**Cooking, smoking,** dwelling and use of naked light, prohibited

**Entiles, exits,** common passages, corridors, left free from encumbrances

**Fire escape** gallery balcony shall not be encroached at any time

**Above ground** water storages shall not be constructed on open space