**NEWS ARTICLE**

Beware of fire safety when going off-grid with a container home

**25 July 2022:** Container homes are built from shipping containers used for freight in ships, trains, and trucks. They are quick to install, easy to transport, and cost-effective. This not only offers a novel alternative to traditional construction techniques but is also compatible with off-grid solutions like solar power and rainwater harvesting systems.

However, container homes still need to comply with all building and fire-safety regulations, in addition to having the architectural plans approved by the city council approval prior to construction. “Container homes essentially consist of a shipping container shell arranged on-site to form the main structure, which is repurposed as a home,” explains [ASP Fire](http://www.aspfire.co.za) CEO **Michael van Niekerk**.

Several factors must be considered in terms of the fire-rating approval for such a container home. Firstly, steel by itself does not necessarily provide the structural stability required for a residence, as it begins to deform when exposed to temperatures over 550°C.

Thus, the container home must be safe for occupants in the event of a fire and not collapse around them. Secondly, it is important to ensure that neighbouring buildings on adjacent properties are not affected in the event of any fire.

The containers themselves are usually clad inside and outside for aesthetic purposes. Timber cladding can be specified, which means that the distance from the adjacent structure has to be measured to check it complies with fire-safety regulations.

Here the option is either to treat the timber cladding to be fire-resistant or to specify a fire-rated fibre-cement board that resembles timber in its look and feel, as is common with many American homes. Modern cladding materials used in dry walling, from gypsum to fibre board, have varying degrees of fire rating.

“Our main approach is to look at each individual structure in terms of its fire-safety compliance,” explains van Niekerk. ASP Fire’s recommendations can be submitted along with the architect’s final plans to the city council for approval.

“The container home trend is not only environmentally important in that it repurposes existing structures, but it is also quite easy to make these compliant with all the necessary building and fire safety regulations,” concludes van Niekerk.

**Pull quote**

“It is quite easy to make container homes compliant with all the necessary building and fire safety regulations.” – **Michael van Niekerk**, CEO, ASP Fire

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Shipping containers offer a novel alternative to traditional construction techniques and are compatible with off-grid solutions. But do they comply with fire safety regulations? #ASPFire

***Ends***

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**Notes to the Editor**
To download hi-res images for this release, please visit <http://media.ngage.co.za> and click the ASP Fire link to view the company’s press office.

**About ASP Fire**
ASP Fire operates across the entire African continent from its Gauteng base, providing professional, accredited fire risk management and support to its clients. ASP Fire designs, installs and maintains a full range of fire detection and suppression equipment suited to clients’ needs. ASP Fire provides a holistic, proactive and preventative fire solution based on integrated fire risk assessment, training and consulting, with the installation and maintenance of fire detection and suppression systems that meet SABS, NFPA, FPASA, FDIA and SAQCC standards.

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