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Timber companies commission testing report to prove fire safety of CLT

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The three largest suppliers of CLT – KLH, Binderholz and Stora Enso – have invested in a series of fire tests to assess safety and performance.

According to a report in Inside Housing the group is planning spend £500,000 on a series of fire tests over the next 18 months in a bid to demonstrate the safety of cross laminated timber, ahead of a proposed change in building regulations that could lead to CLT being banned for use on the construction of buildings over 11m.

The test results will be released as they becomes available, and the whole programme is due to last 18 months.

The companies backing the report aim to provide “a harmonised testing standard” and “enhanced understanding of fire resistance characteristics” of the product, a spokesperson for the Structural Timber Association (STA) said.

“The STA is... providing test-based research evidence of product performance that will enhance the understanding of fire resistance characteristics. This extensive research will be completed within 18 months and we intend to release the data as it becomes available during the testing programme,” Andrew Carpenter, chief executive of the STA told Inside Housing.

“Building regulations and legislation are frequently misquoted, and it is worth noting that each CLT project has a bespoke fire safety strategy relating to scheme-specific details. We’re acting responsibly to counter misinformation as there is a potential risk of taking out of the market a building material that is the most sustainable construction material.”

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