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>news

Insurers warn of flood risk to new homes

The Association of British Insurers (ABI) has warned that by 2020, one million new homes could be uninsurable due to their being located on floodplains.

During the next thirteen years, the government plans to build three million more houses. However, ABI Spokesman Malcolm Tarling said that in 2007, no less than thirteen housing developments had been approved in spite of the Environment Agency warning their locations put them at high risk of flooding. Warning that if this continued, then a third of these projected homes could be at risk of flooding, the ABI called for government intervention in such cases.

"Where a local authority plans to ignore flood risk advice, the government should step in and review the proposals and be compelled to publish their decision. Insurers want to continue to provide flood cover, but poor planning decisions will lead

to more homes becoming unsaleable, uninsurable and uninhabitable," Tarling said. In the wake of 2007's extensive flooding, homebuyers have become more aware than ever of the dangers of floodwater. A 2007 poll conducted by eSure Home Insurance found that 87% of adults would refuse to buy or live in a property that was located on a flood plain, and 93% would check if a property was at risk before buying or moving into it. A flood map, showing areas likely to be affected, is available online from The Environmental Agency. Junior Housing Minister Iain Wright hit back at the ABI claims, however, saying that the government had put measures in place to make sure that local councils "properly manage the risk of flooding." ■

EcoBuild Exhibition back with a bang

The innovative EcoBuild exhibition returned to Earls Court on February 26th 2008, the doubling in size over the 2007 event reflective of the ever-increasing interest in the sector. More than twice the number of 2007 exhibitors took part, offering wares and services across the green property spectrum, and in excess of 75 free seminars were on

EcoBuild continued. offer. Other attractions at the EcoBuild event included the zero-carbon Zedfactory house – built in just three days – keynote speakers including Yvette Cooper and Janet Street-Porter, the Solar City micro-renewables exhibition and graphic presentation of the road to zero carbon. Organisers expected a record turnout for the event and said it pointed the way to the future. ■

Cleantech forum XVI Connects Investors and Greentech in SF

The US-based Cleantech group held its 16th Cleantech Forum in San Francisco between the 25th and 27th of February. Bringing together entrepreneurs and investors in green technology, top corporate executives, advisors and policymakers to discuss and exchange information, the event also saw over 20 specially-selected leading green companies present value propositions in fields ranging from green transportation to waste recycling. The only investment forum targeted solely at assisting the financing of companies involved in sustainable technology, Cleantech Forums' next event takes place between April 28th and 30th in Brussels, Belgium. For more information, visit www.cleantech.com ■

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