

Fire crews grounded over phone mast row

Fire officers in Suffolk are refusing to use their drill tower because of fears the mobile phone masts on top are a health risk.

The 18 firefighters at Sudbury Fire Station would normally use the 60ft tower every Thursday to practice their life-saving skills.

But the fire crews said they are not prepared to climb the training tower while the aerials are there.



The drill tower has several mobile phone aerials

Suffolk Fire Service said the antennae were operating well within health and safety guidelines and posed no hazard to health.

The Service has mobile telephone base stations fitted to training towers of three of its fire stations at Sudbury, Felixstowe and Woodbridge.

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Safety first

"The installation meets the safety requirements of the National Radiological Protection Board and we are fully satisfied that there are no risks to the health and welfare of our staff or members of the public.

Adrian Mayhew, from the Fire Brigades Union in Suffolk, said: "Our members won't use the towers until there is a guarantee they are safe.

"We've seen this happen up and down the country. It's more to do with money than health and safety."

Prime sites

Barrie Turner-Smith, from One2One said training towers were prime sites for their aerials up and down the country because of their height.

"This is the first one we have had a problem with, as far as I am aware.

"If there are any concerns we go and meet with the fire people and discuss it with them.

"We are satisfied that mobile base stations operating within national and international guidelines are safe and do not present a health risk," he added.