TORONTO Member Motion

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM48.16	ACTION			Ward:All

Retrofitting Seniors Homes with Automatic Sprinkler Systems - by Councillor Joe Mihevc, seconded by Councillor Glenn De Baeremaeker

**** Notice of this Motion has been given.***
**** This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.***

Recommendations

Councillor Joe Mihevc, seconded by Councillor Glenn De Baeremaeker, recommends that:

1. City Council request the City Manager to write to the Premier of Ontario and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and request that the Province expedite the timelines for retrofits to require sprinklers; and that the Province consider a low interest loan program to encourage faster retrofits of multi-residential buildings to include automatic sprinklers.

Summary

The recent fire at a seniors home in L'Isle Verte, Quebec shows the urgency of retrofitting seniors homes and other multi-unit residential buildings with automatic sprinkler systems.

There have been 45 fire-related deaths in buildings which house seniors in Ontario since 1990. Many residents of seniors residences and their families, as well as leading fire and safety advocates across the country, have spoken about the urgent safety issue posed by the lack of sprinklers in many seniors facilities across the country.

Toronto Fire Services has been active in conducting studies involving mock fire drills throughout senior homes in the City. They have demonstrated that sprinkler systems are crucial in saving lives, especially in seniors housing where evacuation times are relatively slower.

The Ontario Building Code does not require the retrofit of all seniors homes with automatic sprinklers until as late as 2025.

One reason commonly cited for the long timeline to retrofit buildings is the cost. These costs could be mitigated by a program to provide low interest loans to expedite the renovations. In addition to promoting public safety, this would have the added benefit of stimulating the economy and creating jobs in the construction industry and skilled trades.

(Submitted to City Council on February 19 and 20, 2014 as MM48.16)

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM48.16