

City Council**Motion Without Notice**

MM32.50	ACTION			Ward:All
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Protecting Toronto's Tenants from Extreme Heat - Councillor Josh Matlow, seconded by Mayor John Tory

** This Motion has been deemed urgent by the Chair.
* This Motion is not subject to a vote to waive referral. This Motion has been added to the agenda and is before Council for debate.*

Recommendations

Councillor Josh Matlow, seconded by Mayor John Tory, recommends that:

1. City Council direct the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards, in consultation with other appropriate divisions, to hold consultations with tenants, landlords and other relevant stakeholders to identify potential solutions to effectively deal with heat in apartment buildings, including maximum heat in apartments and applicable dates in the heating chapter and property standards chapter, and to report back to the Tenant Issues Committee in the first quarter of 2018.

Summary

Toronto tenants have the right to a comfortable and healthy home. Last month, many tenants suffered during a late September heatwave. Some residents reported temperature readings of over 30 degrees Celsius in their units as a result of their landlords turning on heat and/or not turning on air conditioning. Central air conditioning acts as ventilation in many older 'tower block' apartment buildings. If the air conditioning is turned off, there is effectively no ventilation within apartment units

The health impacts of extreme heat include heat stress, heat stroke, morbidity and mortality. People who experience high temperatures for prolonged periods, or are sensitive to heat, are the most vulnerable. The danger of prolonged heat events is also increased by the fact that indoor temperatures tend to climb with each hot day, in the absence of air conditioning. This is significant because heat-related mortality increases with the duration of heat waves, and when night time temperatures are high. Populations that are susceptible to extreme heat tend to be more likely to spend time indoors, including the elderly and those who are chronically ill. As such, total exposures to heat are largely determined by indoor temperatures.

Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 497 – Heat states that:

"A landlord shall provide heat to a dwelling unit that is rented or leased and that is

normally heated at the landlord's expense so that a minimum air temperature of 21 degrees Celsius is maintained in all areas of the dwelling unit from the 15th day of September in each year to the 1st day of June in the following year."

With respect to enforcement of this provision it is the requirement that the temperature in a rental unit not be lower than 21 degree Celsius – not that the heating system is on. Unfortunately, some landlords misinterpreted the chapter and turned on the heat in their buildings. Others reported being concerned that if they turned off their heat and/or turned on their air conditioning that they could be fined should the temperature suddenly drop.

This Motion seeks to amend the City's Municipal Code in order to better regulate room temperatures by requesting the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards, in consultation with other appropriate divisions, to hold consultations with tenants, landlords and other relevant stakeholders to identify potential solutions to effectively deal with heat in apartment buildings, including maximum heat in apartments and applicable dates in the heating chapter and property standards chapter and to report back to the Tenant Issues Committee in first quarter of 2018.

This Motion is urgent to allow Staff to meet reporting timelines to help ensure that the report recommendations are ready for implementation by next spring.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM32.50