
City Council

Notice of Motion

MM45.29	ACTION			Ward: All
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Protecting Tenants' Health: Opening Windows to Keep Cool When it Gets Hot - by Councillor Josh Matlow, seconded by Councillor Mike Layton

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Planning and Housing Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Josh Matlow, seconded by Councillor Mike Layton, recommends that:

1. City Council request the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards review 629-19(4) of the City's Property Standards By-law Window protection in apartment buildings and report to Planning and Housing Committee on measures that will keep children safe without the use of a 'guard' or a 'controlled sash' that restricts outside air into apartment units.

Summary

Many Torontonians take for granted the ability to open their windows to get fresh air, and to cool down, especially in the hot summer months. Residents in high rise rental apartment buildings, however, are not afforded this basic comfort. Under 629-19(4) of the City's Property Standards by-law, tenants in buildings with more than 3 storeys must have a guard installed that does not allow for a window to open more than 10 centimetres (~4 inches).

While 629-19(4) was enacted as a reaction to a tragedy, the by-law has had unintended and harmful consequences. Restricting the opening of windows eliminates the only available avenue of relief for the many tenants who do not have air conditioning. In light of increasingly common extreme heat events, a lack of fresh air poses significant risks to seniors and others with certain health conditions that cause vulnerability to high temperatures.

This Motion requests City Staff to reconsider how we govern apartment windows. By-law 629-19(4) already allows for other options that provide protection, including heavy duty screens that still allow for windows to be fully opened.

With extreme temperatures becoming the norm, it's time for the City to look at a new way to keep people safe that doesn't restrict their ability to allow fresh air into their apartment and cool down when the weather is hot.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM45.29

