



## Fire Code Enforcement Recent Crackdown Affects Multi-Level Condominiums

***The Association of Condominium Managers of Ontario joins CCI-Toronto in bringing this communication to managers and directors.***

Toronto Fire Services and a growing number of other municipal Fire Services from outside the GTA have begun an inspection blitz at all high-rise residential buildings, including multi-unit condominium corporations, to ensure compliance with the Ontario Fire Code, a regulation under the Fire Protection and Prevention Act. Fire Services have instructed all inspectors to visit each building at least once per year. All Toronto Notices of Violation are listed on the publicly accessible Toronto Fire Services website.

Various Fire Services are taking a "zero tolerance" position (i.e., a very firm and comprehensive approach) with respect to Fire Code compliance inspections. Specifically, 300 new fire inspectors have been hired and Toronto Fire Services and other Fire Services are issuing Notices of Violation for building conditions which were not previously inspected. Of course, the work of Fire Services throughout Ontario seeks to ensure that the lives of Ontario residents are prioritized over and above cost considerations, with a view to saving lives.

Though there has been a zero tolerance approach to all Fire Code sections, particular attention has been given to Part Seven, (which deals with inspection, testing, notification and maintenance of certain fire emergency systems), specifically as that part applies to smoke control systems in high-rises. As detailed attention is paid to this section of the Fire Code, directors and managers should be aware that fire inspection vendors have not historically addressed Part Seven Fire Code requirements. Among other criteria, these requirements include pressurization fans, door closers, records of tests and inspections, voice communications and safety plan inclusions.

ACMO and CCI-T each support treating these Notices of Violation as a life safety emergency and recommend that the emergency protocols itemized in management service contracts be used to resolve any noted deficiencies. In addition, it should come as no surprise that while inspecting for Part Seven Code compliance, all other fire related items are also typically reviewed by Fire Services.

ACMO and CCI-T agree that immediate resolution of any noted deficiencies is critical to maintaining a good relationship with local Fire Services. Directors are advised to support an "immediate resolution approach" in order to ensure the health and safety of the condo corporation's residents and to maintain a good reputation in their condominium.