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## **Fatal High-Rise Fire Calls Chicago's Life Safety Evaluation Into Question Again**

### **Did the Park Tower complete the mandatory Life Safety Evaluation?**

(Orland Park, IL (April 12, 2010) —Early this morning, a one-unit fire on the 38th floor of the Park Tower high-rise condominium building in the 5400 block of North Sheridan Road in Chicago claimed the life of one individual. According to fire officials, the cause of the fatal fire is still unknown, however, it was found that there was no working smoke alarm. The building was not protected with a fire sprinkler system.

Ironically, in January Aldermen Edward Burke (14th Ward) and John Pope (10th Ward) introduced a resolution to determine why the City of Chicago has been failing to enforce its high-rise fire safety ordinance. The ordinance requires all residential high-rise buildings built prior to fire sprinkler system requirements in 1975 to either install a fire sprinkler system or complete and file a Life Safety Evaluation by January 1, 2006; all commercial high-rises must install fire sprinkler systems.

After a December 2009 high-rise fire fatality in Chicago similar to the incident that occurred today, the two aldermen introduced the resolution citing that 100 of the then 652 buildings that filed for life safety evaluations failed to meet the deadline. Of the buildings that filed, 496 failed the evaluation.

"It is inconceivable that a law governing the safety of the residents of hundreds of high-rise buildings in Chicago has failed to have been properly enforced," stated Alderman Burke at the time of the resolution.

"The City Council deserves an answer as to why this law has not been strictly followed," Alderman Pope added.

Source: Northern IL Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board.

NIFSAB is a non-profit organization composed of fire officials, contractors, building officials, suppliers, architects, engineers, and manufacturers. NIFSAB is dedicated to educating and informing the public and elected and appointed officials of the vital role that fire sprinklers play in fire protection.

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