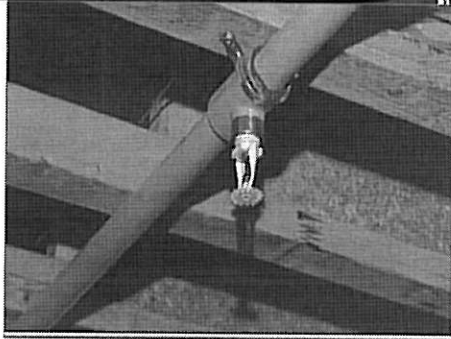


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## Ontario Makes Sprinklers Mandatory For New Condos, Apartments 4 Storeys Or Taller

Wednesday June 18, 2008  
By The Canadian Press

A move to mandate sprinkler systems in all new Ontario condos and apartments four storeys tall or higher was welcomed by firefighters Wednesday, although they said the new rules fell short of what they were hoping for.

While the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs applauded the announcement made by Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Jim Watson, the group suggested sprinklers should be mandatory for all new residential construction projects.

Boyes said in a release.

"This is an important first step and we commend the ... government for moving forward," president Richard

"Ultimately, we would like to see sprinklers being made mandatory in all new residential units including single-family dwellings, townhouses and low-rise buildings."

Boyes said Vancouver and Scottsdale, Ariz., both require sprinklers in all residential buildings and there hasn't been a single fire fatality in either municipality since they mandated them 18 and 22 years ago respectively.

"We would like to see Ontario be a leader as well and achieve a similar safety record," he said.

The Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs has suggested some 90 fire fatalities in the last year could have been prevented by sprinklers.

Watson said the changes bring Ontario in line with other jurisdictions across Canada and in the United States.

"We felt there was great consensus to move forward on the highrises because this is the one area that we are a laggard when it comes to the national building codes," Watson said.

"I found it passing strange that we did not require sprinklers in highrise residential buildings but we do require them in highrise office buildings. We were protecting people when they were at work, but we weren't protecting them when they were at home."

He added that extending the mandate to all residential dwellings isn't a priority.

The building code changes follow public consultations and will take effect April 1, 2010.