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Chicago Facade Ordinance Summary

YEAR ENACTED

1996. Major revisions in 2000, 2007, and 2009. Rules and regulations that supplement the Ordinance were revised March 1, 2016.

ORDINANCE OR LAW

Maintenance of Exterior Walls and Enclosures, Critical Examination Ordinance

CODE

Municipal Code of Chicago

SECTION

Section 14A-6-603.2 Exterior walls of high-rise buildings

ADMINISTERED BY

City of Chicago Department of Buildings

ADDRESS

Department of Buildings
121 N. LaSalle, Room 900
Chicago, IL 60602

Exterior Wall Program
2045 W. Washington
Chicago, IL 60612

TELEPHONE NUMBER

312.743.3522

FREQUENCY AND DUE DATE OF REPORTS

Critical exam required every 4, 8, or 12 years depending on building classification and ongoing inspection at midway point of critical exam cycle *-or-* under the March 1, 2016 Rules and Regulations, owners may choose to file Ongoing Inspection and Repair Program (“Short Form”) reports every second year and not file Critical Examination Program reports at category mandated frequencies, regardless of building category, provided that none of the following criteria apply:

- The building is vacant or subject to registration
- The building is the subject of an active case in the Chicago Department of Administrative Hearings or an outstanding order of compliance by the Chicago Department of Administrative Hearings for a violation; or is the subject of an active case by the City in the Circuit of Cook County or an outstanding order of compliance or consent decree by the Circuit Court of Cook County for violations of the Code
- The building has been classified as “unsafe and imminently hazardous” in the most recently filed report
- The owner of the building is more than one (1) year delinquent in filing an Ongoing Inspection and Repair Report “Short Form”

WHICH BUILDINGS ARE SUBJECT TO COMPLIANCE?

All buildings 80 feet or more in height.

ACCEPTABLE INSPECTORS

Illinois licensed architects and structural engineers or personnel under their direct supervision.



Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc.
Engineers | Architects | Materials Scientists
10 South LaSalle Street, Suite 2600, Chicago, IL 60603
Tel: 312.372.0555 | Email: info@wje.com
www.wje.com

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EXTERIOR WALL SUBJECT TO INSPECTION

Critical examination: close-up examination at a minimum of one (1) drop along each public way spanning not less than 24 feet. Light courts may also require close-up examination depending on configuration and ingress/egress. Visual survey of the remaining facade portions from afar is acceptable unless close-up inspections are recommended by a professional.

Ongoing Inspection and Repair Program: Visual survey of the all facades from afar is acceptable unless close-up inspections are recommended by a professional.

METHOD OF INSPECTION

For critical examination: hands-on, close-up inspection shall be performed where required. For on-going inspections, visual surveys from afar are acceptable unless close-up inspections are recommended by a professional. Substrate inspection may also be required depending on material and building age.



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