



CITY OF CHICAGO

DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS

Details on Amended Exterior Façade Inspection Ordinance

The Commissioner of Buildings recently issued amended Rules and Regulations that change the inspections of exterior façades. This amendment will greatly lower the cost of conducting high-rise inspections without compromising public safety. Almost every high-rise is impacted by the amendment, but the extent will vary depending on the prior filing history building. In all cases, the amount of inspection coverage will be reduced.

Ongoing Inspection "Short Form Only" Program:

- Allow owners to choose to file Ongoing Maintenance and Repair Reports, commonly know as "Short Forms", every second year instead of filing critical examinations at 4, 8, or 12 year intervals, provided:
 - There is a valid critical examination on file at the time of the amendment
 - Dangerous and hazardous conditions have not been identified at the building
 - The building is not vacant
- Does not require newly constructed buildings to submit an initial critical examination, provided that dangerous and hazardous conditions have not been identified.

Critical Examination Program:

- Reduce the amount of inspection coverage to a minimum of 1 representative drop spanning no less than 24 feet on each public way.
- Reports required at frequency determined by building category
 - Category I buildings** – constructed with exterior walls and enclosures primarily reinforced with, or in direct contact with, non-corrodible metal, have a 12-year cycle.
 - Category II buildings** – constructed with exterior walls and enclosures primarily reinforced with, or in direct contact with (i) corrosion resistant metal, or (ii) corrodible metal protected by flashing and corrosion-resistant metal anchors, have a eight-year cycle.
 - Category III buildings** – constructed with exterior walls and enclosures primarily enforced with, or in direct contact with, corrodible metal, have an four-year cycle.
 - Category IV buildings** – constructed with exterior walls and enclosures primarily secured to the substrate by adhesive bond or with masonry headers, have an eight-year cycle. Mortar or cement connects the façade to the actual building structure.
- Perform ongoing inspection at 2nd, 4th, or 6th year between critical examinations, depending on category.
- Required on vacant buildings every 4 years, regardless of category, for entire time building is vacant.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. My building was recently constructed; when is my first critical examination due?

A. The amended Rules and Regulations do not require newly constructed buildings to perform an initial critical examination as long as dangerous and hazardous conditions have not been discovered on the façade. The initial Ongoing Maintenance and Repair Report "Short Form" is due November 1st 2 years after first occupancy.

Q. We did major repairs on our building. Should we submit a critical examination or a Short Form?

A. Owners qualified for and participating in the Short Form Only program can choose which format works best for their building.

Q. How do I know if my building can participate in the "Short Form Only" program?

A. Owners that do not have a past due critical examination are permitted to participate in the program. To verify the filing status of your building, please email asullivan@cityofchicago.org. You will receive a response that either confirms your eligibility or details the required reports that must be submitted before you can participate in the program.

Q. The Department is now allowing the use of suspended equipment (boatswain chairs) for the critical examinations. Are there any advantages to using scaffolding?

A. If it is the intent of the owner to perform repairs in conjunction with the inspection, scaffolding must be used.

Q. Can I submit my report electronically?

A. Two paper copies of each report are required.

Q. Can I get an extension for submitting my report?

A. Rule 10 of the Rules and Regulations outlines the process for requesting an extension.

For more information about the amended façade ordinance or façade inspection reports, please call Allison Sullivan at 312.743.3522.

City of Chicago
Richard M. Daley, Mayor



Department of Buildings
Richard Monocchio, Commissioner