

AN ACT

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To amend An Act To require the erection of fire escapes in certain buildings in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes to require that the owner of certain buildings more than 75 feet in height develop and maintain a fire safety and evacuation plan and conduct fire drills at least once every 12 months; and to amend the Smoke Detector Act of 1978 to require apartment building owners to post notice in conspicuous places in common areas of the building and provide tenants or unit owners, by hand or by first-class mail, with information on the operation of a building's fire alarm system, whether the building's fire alarm system is connected to smoke detectors in individual dwelling units or to the Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department, and to instruct tenants to immediately call 911 in the event of a fire.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the "Fire Alarm Notice and Tenant Fire Safety Amendment Act of 2009".

Sec. 2. An Act To require the erection of fire escapes in certain buildings in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes, approved March 19, 1906 (34 Stat. 70; D.C. Official Code § 6-701.01 *et seq.*), is amended by adding a new section 3a to read as follows:

"Sec. 3a. Fire safety requirements for high-rise buildings.

"(a) The owner of a high-rise building shall:

"(1) Prepare and maintain a fire safety and evacuation plan for the building; and

"(2) Conduct fire drills at least once every 12 months.

"(b) A violation of this section shall be subject to civil penalties as established by the Mayor pursuant to rulemaking.

"(c) For the purposes of this section, the term "high-rise building" shall mean any building having occupied floors more than 75 feet above the lowest level of fire department vehicle access."

Sec. 3. The Smoke Detector Act of 1978, effective June 20, 1978 (D.C. Law 2-81; D.C. Official Code § 6-751.01 *et seq.*), is amended by adding a new section 9c to read as follows:

"SMOKE DETECTOR AND FIRE ALARM NOTICE.

"Sec. 9c. (a)(1) An owner of an apartment building shall post in conspicuous places in the common areas of the building and provide to each tenant or unit owner, by hand or first-class

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mail, a written notice that includes:

“(A) Instructions on the operation of the apartment building fire alarm;

“(B) Whether the apartment building fire alarm is separate from or connected to the smoke detectors in the individual dwelling units;

“(C) Whether the apartment building fire alarm is connected to the Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department; and

“(D) A warning that in the event of a fire the Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department must be contacted immediately by calling 911.

“(2) The notice required by paragraph (1) of this subsection shall be on a form developed by the Mayor and published by the Mayor in English and in the languages required under section 4 of the Language Access Act of 2004, effective June 19, 2004 (D.C. Law 15-167; D.C. Official Code § 2-1933).

“(b) For the purposes of this section, the term:

“(1) “Apartment building” means a structure containing 4 or more dwelling units, including a condominium or cooperative but excluding a single-family residence.

“(2) “Condominium” shall have the same meaning as provided in section 2(2) of the Horizontal Property Act of the District of Columbia, approved December 21, 1963 (77 Stat. 449; D.C. Official Code § 42-2002(2)).

“(3) “Cooperative” shall have the same meaning as provided for the term “cooperative housing association” in section 103(7) of the Rental Housing Act of 1985, effective July 17, 1985 (D.C. Law 6-10; D.C. Official Code § 42-3501.03(7)).”.

Sec. 4. Fiscal impact statement.

The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal impact statement required by section 602(c)(3) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(3)).

Sec. 5. Effective date.

This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of Congressional review as provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December

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24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(1)), and publication in the District of Columbia Register.

Chairman
Council of the District of Columbia

Mayor
District of Columbia