



A COALITION OF THE NATIONAL READY MIXED CONCRETE ASSOCIATION

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## Princeton, NJ, Latest Community to Grapple with Apartment Inferno

*Combustible Construction Materials Lead to Fatality and Displacement of 35 Residents*

**Silver Spring, MD** – On Wednesday evening, firefighters were called to the scene of a fire which spread through the roof of a three-story, wood-frame apartment complex in Princeton, New Jersey. [The 2-alarm fire](#), which broke out shortly after 9 p.m., was responsible for the death of a 73-year-old resident and resulted in the displacement of 35 others.

The [apartment complex in question](#) – Griggs Farms – was owned by Princeton Community Housing, a nonprofit organization committed to providing affordable housing and rental properties to low-income families.

“This is a sad day for Princeton and New Jersey as a whole, as a member of the community was lost in a preventable tragedy,” said Kevin Lawlor, spokesperson for Build with Strength, a coalition of the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association comprised of fire safety professionals, engineers, architects and industry experts committed to strengthening the nation’s building codes and building more resilient communities. “As Princeton looks to rebuild, we urge the decision makers to avoid resorting to combustible materials, which should have no place in multi-family, residential complexes, for the sake of lower construction costs.”

Statewide legislation (Assembly Bill 5196/ Senate Bill 3490) intended to protect residents and firefighters alike from the vulnerabilities that stem from the use of combustible materials and would amend New Jersey’s construction code for fire safety reasons, is expected to be introduced in early 2018. The legislation calls for the installation of an automatic sprinkler system in accordance with NFPA 13; measuring the number of stories from the grade plane; using noncombustible materials for construction; and installing a fire barrier with a fire resistance rating of at least two hours that extends from the foundation to the roof.

The legislation has been supported by a number of organizations and voting bodies throughout the state, including, most recently, [Wall Township](#) and the [Essex County](#)

[Board of Chosen Freeholders](#), which adopted resolutions supporting the bill and stronger building codes for the state.

The legislation is also supported by Build with Strength coalition members, including: The New Jersey Firefighters' Mutual Benevolent Association, The Professional Fire Fighters Association of New Jersey, the New Jersey State Association of County Fire Marshals, the Brigantine Beach Fire Company, Burlington County Fire Marshal Bob Carr, and Retired FDNY Fire Fighter and Wall Township Councilman Kevin P. Orender.

This year, New Jersey has been the site of major fires at wood-framed apartment complexes and structures, most notably in [Lakewood](#) and [Maplewood](#). In 2015, [a fire at a luxury apartment complex in Edgewater](#) displaced more than 500 residents.

Learn more at [www.buildwithstrength.com](http://www.buildwithstrength.com).

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