



A COALITION OF THE NATIONAL READY MIXED CONCRETE ASSOCIATION

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## Lawrence, Kansas, Latest Community Burned by Inferior Wood Construction Materials

*Late night hotel fire has occupants scrambling while putting first responders at risk.*

**Silver Spring, MD** – Firefighters in Lawrence, Kansas, have been battling [a wood-framed hotel](#) fire since Monday afternoon. The fire at an America's Best Value Inn at the intersection of Sixth and Iowa has forced evacuations, caused injuries, required a multi-department response, threatened nearby buildings and required firefighters to work around the clock in frigid temperatures that have led to equipment failures.

"It doesn't take much to burn a wooden structure to the ground even when its surrounded by ice and snow," said Kevin Lawlor, a spokesperson for Build with Strength, a coalition of the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association comprised of fire service professionals, engineers, architects, industry experts and community organizations. "Combustible materials put occupants of multi-unit structures, staff and first responders at risk in every community, every environment and in every season."

Despite the over reliance on combustible materials such as the ones that failed in this particular disaster, a number of hotels in recent years have been constructed with an innovative concrete construction product – Insulated Concrete Forms (ICFs). ICFs "are a type of permanent concrete formwork that creates the external wall envelope of a building." Typically, it is standard reinforced concrete sandwiched between two faces of low absorptive, foam plastic insulating material. According to ICF Magazine, "dozens and dozens of hotels have been built with ICFs in the past 10 years, using virtually every major brand of form. These include the flagship properties of the nation's leading hospitality companies, including Marriott, Hilton, Best Western, Holiday Inn, Drury Inn, Super 8, and Motel 6." In fact, Drury Inn, a Missouri based hotel chain, constructs the majority of their properties with ICFs.

"Non-combustible building materials like concrete are easy to work with and won't break the bank," continued Lawlor. "At the end of the day, guest safety should be the number one priority, and as it stands, combustible building materials simply are an excessive risk."

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

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