



9.14.2017

Contact: Kevin Lawlor

klawlor@buildwithstrength.com

202-253-6402

Yet Another Fire Puts Boston-area Community at Risk *Weymouth, MA, the Latest Boston-area Community to Confront a Wood-Frame Apartment Complex Fire*

Silver Spring, MD – Early Thursday morning, Boston-area firefighters were called to the scene of yet [another fire at a wood-frame apartment complex under construction](#), this time in Weymouth, Massachusetts.

The inferno, which caused millions of dollars in damage and disrupted commuter rail passengers, comes a little more than a month after the [Waltham, Massachusetts City Council voted unanimously](#) to call on the state to implement tighter restrictions on the use of combustible materials for low- to mid-rise residential buildings after not one, but four major fires ravaged wood-framed apartment complexes in the state since the start of summer. The Weymouth fire marks the fifth.

Following the latest incident, Kevin Lawlor, a spokesperson for Build with Strength, a coalition of the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association comprised of fire service professionals, engineers, architects and industry experts committed to strengthening the nation's building codes, issued the following statement:

“As long as Massachusetts permits these structures to be built with combustible materials, their residents, visitors, construction workers and staff of the building in question and those surrounding it, as well fire and emergency service professionals will continue to be at risk while communities are on the hook for increased costs of damage, cleanup and emergency operations. There are ways to build safer and stronger and we pledge to work with any community that agrees it's time for a change.”

Because of a change in 2009 to the International Building Code, Massachusetts allows buildings to be constructed with five wood-frame stories, as long as the first is built with concrete – a policy decision that has sacrificed safety and left a large number of families displaced from their homes, particularly in recent months.

The Weymouth fire comes at a time of increased visibility on the use of wood or wood-framing in apartment complexes, as a number have been the site of spectacular fires

recently – most notably in [Haverhill, MA](#); [Waltham, MA](#); [Charlotte, NC](#); [Warner Robins, GA](#); [Midvale, UT](#); [Oakland, CA](#); [Dorchester, MA](#); [Lawrence, MA](#); [East Hollywood, CA](#); [Lowell, MA](#); [Waterbury, CT](#); [Emeryville, CA](#); [St. Petersburg, FL](#); [Arlington, VA](#); [College Park, MD](#); [Overland Park, KS](#); [Raleigh, NC](#); and [Maplewood, NJ](#). There have been dozens over the last few years.

Learn more at www.buildwithstrength.com.

###