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1.12.2018

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Mercer County, New Jersey, Adopts Fire Safety Resolution in Support of Stronger Building Codes

Joins Essex County and Wall Township in Calling for Timely Passage of Statewide Legislation

Silver Spring, MD – On Thursday evening, the Mercer County Board of Freeholders, the governing body for the County of Mercer, New Jersey, unanimously adopted a resolution supporting Assembly Bill 135, statewide legislation that would amend New Jersey’s construction code for fire safety reasons, and provide an added level of protection for firefighters and residents alike.

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.

Mercer County’s vote comes on the heels of recently passed resolutions on the same matter from the Essex County Board of Chosen Freeholders and Wall Township, New Jersey.

“Mercer County’s decision to join Essex County and Wall Township is a step toward building a safer New Jersey,” said Ed Donnelly, president of the New Jersey State Firefighters’ Mutual Benevolent Association (FMBA). “We’re hopeful the state lawmakers will concur with their local counterparts, and demand stricter building regulations that protect the well-being of residents and their property, as well as our fire fighters that serve them.”

In addition to FMBA, local New Jersey coalition members of Build with Strength include: The Professional Association of Fire Fighters in New Jersey; the New Jersey State Association of County Fire Marshals; the Brigantine Beach Fire Company; the Bricklayers and Allied Crafts – New Jersey; and the Fire Departments of Burlington County and West Orange.

[In late December](#), firefighters responded to a 2-alarm fire at a three-story, wood-framed apartment complex in Princeton, New Jersey, that resulted in the death of a 73-year-old resident and the displacement of 35 others. The fire came after a pair of massive fires in the state over the past couple years – specifically in [Maplewood](#) and [Edgewater](#). There have been [dozens of fires of a similar nature](#) throughout the country over the last several few years.

Despite the massive infernos and the calls for stronger building codes, [legislation introduced last year to help prevent additional fires in New Jersey stalled](#) after facing opposition from

groups like the New Jersey Builders Association and the New Jersey Apartment Association – organizations that stand to benefit financially from the use of cheaper, combustible building materials.

[A September 2016 poll](#) of 400 registered voters in New Jersey found respondents very supportive of the state making changes to building codes following the devastating Edgewater apartment complex fire in January 2015.

Learn more at www.buildwithstrength.com.

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