



Canadian Wood Council Stands by Integrity of Building Codes Completed Wood Frame Buildings are Safe

Wednesday, December 18th, 2013 – The Canadian Wood Council (CWC) is disappointed that a recent fire in Kingston on a 4-storey wood building under construction was inappropriately seized as an opportunity for competing materials to perpetrate anti-wood messaging.

CWC is thankful that there was no loss of life during the construction site fire, and acknowledges the heroic efforts of the emergency responders who managed to contain the fire. “The Kingston construction site fire that occurred on December 17th, although devastating, should not take away from the safety of completed wood-frame buildings,” stated Michael Giroux, President of the CWC. “Through its network of research and technical expertise, CWC will continue to provide support to those involved in the design and construction with respect to safe and effective building practices.”

The vulnerability of any building under construction in a fire situation is higher when compared to buildings after they have been completed and occupied with such safety features as sprinklers and completed fire walls. “This was a construction site fire. The safety level of buildings, once completed and equipped with the required protection systems under the building code, would be equivalent to that of any similar building constructed with other materials” says the fire chief from Surrey British Columbia, Len Garis.

Ontario Wood *WORKS!* and the CWC developed a technical note entitled ‘Fire Safety and Security’, which reinforces the importance of compliance with provincial regulations related to fire safety planning during construction and the need for cooperation between all stakeholders in establishing the plan. The document is available on the CWC website (www.cwc.ca) and is popular literature for the design and building community.

The Kingston building owner, Jay Patry, continues to support his decision for a wood building, “I believe in the environmental and economic benefits that wood has to offer. While this construction fire is a setback, we are committed to using wood look forward to the completed building on Princess Street in Kingston,” says Patry.

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