

Workgroup to Develop Fire Safety Best Practices for Pre-1974 High-Rise Apartment Buildings Charter

Background

HB823/CH0744 established the Workgroup to Develop Fire Safety Best Practices for Pre-1974 High-Rise Apartment Buildings, hereinafter referred to as the “Workgroup”.

Mission and Purpose

The Workgroup is charged with:

Studying fire safety risks in high-rise apartment buildings that do not have automatic sprinkler systems or other fire safety technology;

Studying current strategies, practices, and technology to mitigate fire risks, maximize evacuation of occupants, and allow for greater access and more expedient responses by emergency response professionals

Developing recommendations and best practices for the improvement of fire safety in high-rise apartment buildings that do not have fire sprinkler systems and other fire safety technology.

The Workgroup is directed to consider:

The availability, feasibility, and degree of fire hazard mitigation of each alternative fire protection

The cost, design, installation, testing, and maintenance of each fire protection system

The duration of installation for each alternative fire protection system and the intensity of the disruption of normal occupancy caused by installation.

Objective

The Workgroup is required to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on or before December 31, 2024, in accordance with §2-1257 of the State Government Article.

Structure, Membership and Participation

The Workgroup consists of representatives of the following disciplines and organizations:

State Fire Marshal (Chair)

One member of the House of Delegates

One members of the Senate of Maryland

Chair of the State Fire Prevention Commission or designee
President of the Maryland Fire Chiefs Association or designee
President of the Maryland State Firemen's Association or designee
Representative of the Professional Fire Fighters of Maryland
Fire Sprinkler Trade Association representative
Fire Alarm Trade Association representative
Licensed Architect
Fire Protection Engineer
Two Building Owners and Managers Association Representatives
Full time Resident of a High-Rise Building located in Maryland

Meeting Schedule

To be determined by the workgroup at the first meeting

Operating procedures

All decisions will be made through a vote. Each voting member will be permitted one vote. Members will need to be present in-person or virtually to participate in a vote. A minimum of 8 of the 14 disciplines or organizations must be present to hold a vote.

The Chair through DSP staff will maintain the permanent record of meetings and materials to include:

The Workgroup charter, inclusive of any revisions

The schedule of Workgroup meetings

Meeting notes and any other documents developed by the Workgroup.

The Chair through DSP staff will post for public notice:

Date, time and location of meetings

Agenda of the Workgroup meetings

Minutes or other required public documents associated with the Workgroup meetings