

## STATE RULES FAULTED

# Fire safety advocates say apartments need sprinklers

Posted by the [Asbury Park Press](#) on 09/22/07

BY [KEITH BROWN](#)  
COASTAL MONMOUTH BUREAU

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The head of a state fire safety advocacy group said Friday the fire on the 14th floor of an Asbury Park high-rise could have been rendered impotent before its effects sent several people to the hospital, if the building had been properly protected.

Vincent Fichera, head of the New Jersey Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board, said that if the 15-story Munroe Towers building had been outfitted with fire sprinklers inside individual tenants' rooms, the seven firefighters and several tenants may have been spared a trip to the hospital.

The Munroe Towers building had sprinklers installed in common areas of the building, such as hallways. State building codes do not require fire sprinklers in individual living areas.

"Common areas are not where most fires start," Fichera said. "This is what we call the old way of thinking. Having sprinklers in the hallways may not allow a fire to spread, but it really doesn't do much to help the people in the area of origin."

Most high-rise fires start inside dwelling units, Fichera said. It would seem logical, he said, to have sprinklers near where fires generally start — in bedrooms, living areas and kitchens of individual apartments.

Fire, Fichera said, can double in size each minute it's left unchecked. Fire sprinklers — which are activated by heat, not smoke — can extinguish some blazes before they grow. In many cases, sprinklers can at least keep a fire small until help can arrive.

In high-rise buildings, that can mean more time for evacuation, Fichera said.

"Especially for the elderly," Fichera said. "This could buy more time."

**STORYCHAT** 

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I AGREE AS WELL. BECAUSE OF THE COSTS I BELIEVE IN THAT PARTICULAR BUILDING AS WELL AS ALL HIGH RISES SPRINKLERS SHOULD BE IN THE UNITS THAT FIREFIGHTERS LADDERS CANT REACH THAT WOULD HELP A GREAT DEAL.

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Posted by: [sexxy\\_k\\_nj](#) on Sat Sep 22, 2007 9:15 am

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I agree, too, but retrofitting sprinklers into a 30+ year old building is going to be very expensive. Who

is going to pay for that? They certainly can't raise the rents enough to cover the cost -- no one could afford to continue to liver there.

Posted by: leon700 on Sat Sep 22, 2007 9:04 am

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I agree with Mr. Fichera 100%

Anyone who doesn't, is either radically conservative, or just NUTS!

Steve 🗨️

Posted by: AsburySteve1952 on Sat Sep 22, 2007 8:24 am

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