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MEMO

TO: All Building Officials in Miami-Dade County

FROM: Secretary of the Board
Board of Rules and Appeals (BORA)

DATE: November 23, 2021

SUBJECT: BORA 40-Year Building Recertification
General Considerations and Guidelines

At their meeting of November 18th, 2021, the Miami-Dade County Board of Rules and Appeals (BORA) approved revisions to its Forty-Year Building Recertification's General Considerations and Guidelines, inclusive of the Structural and Electrical Recertification Inspection Guidelines. This action was based on recommendations received from several BORA Building Sub-Committee meetings held after the collapse of the Champlain Tower South in the Town of Surfside.

A copy of the revised Forty-Year Building Recertification General Considerations and Guidelines is attached for your use.

Should you have any questions, please contact Jaime Gascon, Board and Code Administration Division Director at (786) 315-2508.

Thank you for your attention.

Building Facade

Appurtenances on an exterior wall of a threshold building are elements including, but not limited to, any cladding material, precast appliques, exterior fixtures, ladders to rooftops, flagpoles, signs, railings, copings, guardrails, curtain walls, balcony and terrace enclosures, including greenhouses or solariums, window guards, window air conditioners, flower boxes, satellite dishes, antennae, cell phone towers, and any equipment attached to or protruding from the façade that is mechanically and/or adhesive attached.

Loading

It is of importance to note that even in the absence of any observable deterioration, loading conditions must be viewed with caution. Recognizing that there will generally be no need to verify the original design, since it will have already been "time tested", this premise has validity only if loading patterns and conditions remain **unchanged.** Any material change in type and/or magnitude or loading in older buildings should be viewed as sufficient justification to examine load carrying capability of the effected structural system.

Scope of Electrical Inspection

The purpose of the required inspection and report is to confirm with reasonable fashion that the building or structure and all habitable and non-habitable areas, as deemed necessary by the inspecting professional, to establish compliance are safe for continued use under present occupancy. As mentioned before, this is a recommendation procedure, and under no circumstances are these minimum recommendations intended to supplant proper professional judgment.

Electric Service

A description of the type of service supplying the building or structure must be provided, stating the size of amperage, if three (3) phase or single (1) phase, and if the system is protected by fuses or breakers. Proper grounding of the service should also be in good standing. The meter and electric rooms should have sufficient clearance for equipment and for the serviceman to perform both work and inspections. Gutters and electrical panels should all be in good condition throughout the entire building or structure.

Branch Circuits

Branch circuits in the building must all be identified, and an evaluation of the conductors must be performed. There should also exist proper grounding for equipment used in the building, such as an emergency generator, or elevator motor.

Conduit Raceways

All types of wiring methods present in the building must be detailed and individually inspected. The evaluation of each type of conduit and cable, if applicable, must be done individually. The conduits in the building should be free from erosion and checked for considerable dents in the conduits that may be prone to cause a short. The conductors and cables in these conduits should be chafe free and their currents not over the rated amount.

Emergency Lighting

Exit sign lights and emergency lighting, along with a functional fire alarm system, if applicable, must all be in good working condition.

Infrared Thermography Inspection

For electrical systems operating at 400 amperes or greater, an infrared thermography inspection with a written report of the following electrical equipment must be provided as applicable or as otherwise indicated below: busways, switchgear, panelboards (except in dwelling unit load centers), disconnects, VFDS, starters, control panels, timers, meter centers, gutters, junction boxes, automatic/manual transfer switches, exhaust fans and transformers. The infrared inspection of electrical equipment shall be performed by a Level-II or higher certified infrared thermographer who is qualified and trained to recognize and document thermal anomalies in electrical systems and possesses over 7 years of experience inspecting electrical systems associated with commercial buildings.

Historical Documents and Permitting

An attempt should be made to investigate the existence of documents with the local jurisdiction to assist with the overall inspection of the building.

Understanding the structural system, building components, and intended design may guide the design professional to investigate certain critical areas of the structure.

Violations through the local jurisdiction's code compliance division should be investigated. Cases on file may lead to issues pre-existing with the building, especially any unsafe structure determinations. Depending on the nature of the violation, recertification inspections may be affected.

Unpermitted activities may also affect the outcome of a recertification inspection, especially with unpermitted additions to the building. The recertification of a building is conducted on the entire structure including the original construction and any subsequent permitted addition. Unpermitted additions found by the recertification process present an unsafe situation and must be identified in the report, even if found to be properly built. Like a repair process identified by the report, legalizing an unpermitted addition would be a prerequisite to the completion of a successful recertification report. Examples of unpermitted work that may affect recertification include but are not limited to additions, alterations, balcony enclosures, etc.

Repairs identified in the recertification report will most likely require permits. Once the initial report is completed it should be immediately submitted to the local jurisdiction for processing. Do not proceed to conduct repairs without permits. Some repairs, like changing a bulb in an exit sign, may not require a permit but most other work will require permits. Proceeding without obtaining repair permits may lead to a violation of the code. Additionally, repairs being conducted under a permit will afford additional time to comply with a complete recertification report.

Completing the reports concisely is vital to the overall understanding of the conditions of the building and successful completion of the recertification process. The approved report forms provided must be used, proprietary forms will not be accepted. Where required, photos must be in color and with sufficient resolution to detail