

SAMPLE TENETS FOR A LOS ANGELES CITY ORDINANCE (IMPROVING FIRE-SAFETY STANDARDS FOR BUILDINGS)



The State of California and the City of Los Angeles are **leaders in many areas**, from environmental standards and the preservation of its coastline to the innovation founded in the entertainment and technology industries.



It is critical for the city to lead by example on issues of public safety and building codes as it begins expanding the availability of affordable housing while grappling with the mounting homeless population. The cities of New York and Chicago have had similar ordinances in place for decades.

SAMPLE ELEMENTS TO AN ORDINANCE



This is a public-safety issue. Wood burns, and the height and area limitations promulgated in the IBC since 2006 have favored a first-cost mentality that speeds up construction. The result are fires like the one destroying the DaVinci, which caused millions of dollars of damage to surrounding properties, not to mention the displacement, inconvenience, and economic losses during reconstruction.



These mid-rise buildings, often used for multifamily housing and mixed-use construction, are vertical lumber yards waiting to ignite. Noncombustible building products, including concrete and steel, provide fire safety and cost savings over the long term comparable to combustible building materials, especially wood or wood products.



Construction standards in multi-family units of up to seven stories (height of 85 feet and lower) should include a maximum square-footage floor plan requirement to construct these multi-family units using noncombustible materials.

Requirements should also include:

- 2-hour noncombustible fire walls
- Requiring the podium or pedestal to count as a floor above grade
- Limiting the footprint and number of stories of these buildings (if combustible products are being used)
- Requiring robust sprinkler standards for maximum protection of occupants and firefighters



Construction standards must provide multifamily housing units with longterm durability, longevity, and strength that stand the test of time.



To secure the property against possible arson while keeping an eye out for accidental fires, developers should be required to have 24-hour on-site security during construction. Even the American Wood Council recommends this on job sites in mid-rise construction.