

From: [Laura Mork](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Todd Malo](#)
Subject: Fwd: life/safety loop hole to be closed for townhome construction
Date: Monday, October 03, 2016 12:20:11 PM
Attachments: [0009_001.pdf](#)
[0010_001.pdf](#)

City Council members,

As our city becomes more dense , a greater percentage of our population will live in multifamily housing. Almost all of this new multifamily housing will be protected via fire sprinklers. I believe it is an expectation of modern residents of multifamily housing that they will have this kind of life safety protection.

There is a loop hole, however, in the fire code that does **not** require fire sprinklers in townhome construction of less than 4,800 sq ft. I understand developers in Snohomish County are taking advantage of this loophole.

A building protected via fire sprinklers pays lower property taxes (as the fire district charges are lower), and has a smaller contribution in the calculation of required fire stations (which is good for the city); this loophole, then, is only advantageous for a relatively small percentage of one time building costs, not the ongoing costs over the life of the building, and exposes residents this multifamily townhouse construction to increased risk. I have discussed this matter with Todd Malo, the Fire Marshall of the Shoreline Fire Department, who has offered to provide additional information, if requested, on this issue.

There is an easy way for Shoreline to close this loophole. Adopt Appendix V (WAC 51-51-60107) for multifamily townhome construction.

The recent fire in West Seattle, sending the residents to shelters is an example of the greater risk and community disruption that can occur when multifamily housing does not have fire sprinkler protection.

Thank you for your consideration in closing this loophole.

Sincerely,

Laura Mork

**WASHINGTON STATE
BUILDING CODE**

CHAPTER 51-51 WAC

**INTERNATIONAL RESIDENTIAL CODE
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Washington State Building Code Council

Effective July 1, 2016

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WAC 51-51-60107

APPENDIX V

FIRE SPRINKLERS

The provisions contained in this appendix are not mandatory unless specifically referenced in the adopting ordinance.

AV107.1 Fire sprinklers. An approved automatic fire sprinkler system shall be installed in new one-family and two-family dwellings and townhouses in accordance with Appendix Q.

(Insert as Page 888a)

Effective July 1, 2016