

**Affidavit of Structural Soundness Required
Every Five Years on Three or More Units and
No Wooden Ladders!**

Many small property owners with three or more units are unaware that they are required by law to submit an affidavit every five years attesting to the “structural soundness” of their buildings.

Passed by the Board of Supervisors in September 2003 (Ordinance 192-02), this requirement is separate from the periodic and routine health and safety inspections mandated by the San Francisco Housing Code.

Although the ordinance calls for fines for failure to submit an affidavit, the Department of Building Inspection states that no fines have to date been issued to any property owner.

The ordinance reads as follows:

Affidavit required. *All wood and metal decks, balconies, landings, exit corridors, stairway systems, guard rails, hand rails, fire escapes or any parts thereof in weather-exposed areas of apartment buildings and hotels shall be inspected by a licensed general contractor or a structural pest control licensee or a licensed professional architect or engineer, verifying that the exit system, corridor, balcony, deck or any part thereof is in general safe condition, in adequate working order and free from hazardous dry rot, fungus, deterioration, decay or improper alteration. Property owners shall provide proof of compliance with this section by submitting an affidavit form (provided by the Department) signed by the responsible inspector to the Housing Inspection Services Division every five years.*

The simple-to-complete form may be downloaded from:

sfgov.org/site/uploadedfiles/dbi/.../AffidavitSec604HC3_RVB.doc. The completed affidavit, signed by the licensed professional who inspected the building must then be mailed to:

San Francisco Department of Building Inspection
Housing Inspection Services Division
Section 604 H.C. Affidavit Filing
1660 Mission Street, 6th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94103-2414

Wooden Ladders Get the Ax!

Wooden exterior fixed utility ladders are now prohibited on all San Francisco residential buildings and must be immediately removed with a proper building permit – the result of a new law that took effect in December 2008.

Wooden ladders must be replaced with code-compliant metal ladders properly secured to the building with a permit. For replacement requirements, see Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations, Sections 3276 and 3277 (Cal OSHA) and the S.F. Building Code

Administrative Bulletin No. AB-019, which may be viewed on the San Francisco Department of Building Inspection's (DBI) website at www.sfgov.org/dbi.

For questions or more information, contact the Housing Inspection Services Division at (415) 558-6220 or the Technical Services Division at 558-6205 for information regarding the code standards for metal replacement ladders. Visit DBI's website and click on "Housing Inspection Services" for detailed information on the wooden ladder ban.

Reprinted with permission of the Small Property Owners of San Francisco Institute (SPOSFI) News. For more information on becoming a member of SPOSFI or to send a tax-deductible donation, please visit their website at www.smallprop.org or call (415) 647-2419.