

Understanding Florida's New Condo Safety Laws

Presented by: LEGAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT of Attorneys' Title Fund Services, Inc.

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Understanding Florida's New Condo Safety Laws: The Surfside Legislation and its Impacts

Presented by: Michael Rothman, Esq., Sr. Manager Fund Legal Education Dept.

Champlain Towers South Collapse

June 24, 2021 @ 1:22 a.m.

- 40 years old at time of collapse
- 98 killed
- 135 apartments destroyed
- Financial cost \$1.02 billion settlement with families of victims





State's Response – Surfside Legislation



2022 Special session - SB 4-D • Signed into law May 26, 2022

2023 General session - SB 154Signed into law June 9, 2023

2024 General session – HB 1021Signed into law June 14, 2024

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By the Numbers

Impact of New Laws Cannot be Understated



- Florida has approx. 1.5 million condo units
- Housing over 2 million people
- 28,000 associations statewide
- 912,000 units 30+ years old
- 600,000 units 40+ years old





And Finally ...

Champlain Towers land sold at auction for \$120 million to Dubai-based developer.

12 story, 57 luxury unit mid-rise planned.



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Florida Building Safety Legislation

"Surfside was to condo safety what Hurricane Andrew was to construction standards in Florida"

Milestone Inspections

"The structural inspection of a building, including an inspection of loadbearing elements and the primary structural members and primary structural systems ..." Sec. 553.899(2)(a), F.S.

Milestone Inspections - General

Primary concern is with critical structural elements:

- Foundation
- Load-bearing elements
- Shear walls
- Roof deck
- Balconies
- not cosmetic issues like cracked stucco or paint.





Milestone Inspections - General



Applies to any building three or more stories, whole or in part residential condominium or co-op, incl. mixed-use buildings.

Does not apply to single, two, three or four family dwellings with three or fewer habitable stories.

Not a determination if building is to code or a fire safety inspection.



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Milestone Inspections – General



Phase I - visual inspection of

• By licensed architect or engineer

Phase 2 (if needed) -

- When "*substantial structural deterioration*" is noted in phase 1
- Destructive or non-destructive testing done to ensure building safety at inspector's direction



Milestone Inspections - General

Key SB 154 Changes

Can be led by a "team of professionals"

- Architect or engineer acting as design professional in charge
- Reports may be signed & sealed by a "qualified team member"



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Milestone Inspections - General

Florida Building Commission has implemented a building safety inspection program through the Florida Building Code.

Created common forms for use during inspections.



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Milestone Inspections – Phase I

What may be expected

A visual examination

of habitable & nonhabitable areas of a building, including the major structural components of a building

A historical analysis

of existing construction documents, permits, inspections, & maintenance records

A qualitative assessment of structural conditions of the building

based on the examination & analysis by the inspector



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Milestone Inspections – When Due Inspections due by December 31st of year that building turns 30 years old December 2024

Then every 10 years

Buildings that turn 30 before July 1, 2022: due by December 31, 2024 Then every 10 years

Buildings that turn 30 b/w July 1, 2022 and before December 31, 2024: due by December 31, 2025

Then every 10 years



Milestone Inspections – When Due

Building dept. may determine local circumstances, incl. proximity to salt water, will require milestone inspection by Dec. 31st of year building turns **25**.



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Milestone Inspections – Association Duties

Key SB 154 Changes



- Association must give unit owners notice of milestone inspection deadlines
 - Electronically or
 - By posting on association website
- Association must distribute copy of summary of inspection reports to unit owners within 45 days of receipt

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Cemed unsafe	The New York Ti	imes
vor tilse jaken i kolaren kolarisen ander in som en som Som andere som en so Wither i Published Augest 28, 2024 - Upbaled on Augest 22, 2024 at 18-47 cm	Florida Condo Residen	ts Are Forced to
SOUTH FLORIDA		spection
Fort Lauderdale condo owners deemed unsafe Residents at the Springbrook Gardens Condo building have decided to sel		unit building in North rly two years after the arby Surfside.
By Sasha Jones - Published January 3, 2025 - Updated on January 3, 2025 at 8:47 pm		
leemed unsafe, residents	s relocated	
alkways at risk of collapsing could pose a threat at th eek after a condo building near Miami Beach partiall		
	buildings evacuated in Je neering report deeming the	
Share 👩 👽 🗞	∞25 WPBF	Updated: 6:52 PM EDT Aug 9, 202



SIRS - General

Reserves as Percentage of Annual Budget

MIAMI 9% Las Vegas 14% Chicago 15% Boston 18% Los Angeles 33%







SIRS - Components

Per Sec. 718.112(2)(g), F.S. Buildings 3+ Stories Must Now Reserve for:



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SIRS – When Due

- For associations existing on or before 7/1/22 and controlled by unit owners, SIRS due by December 31, 2024
- A SIRS must be done at least every 10 years after the condo's creation



Identify	State	Provide	Perform
Common areas being visually inspected by licensed architect or engineer	Estimated remaining useful life & replacement cost or deferred maintenance expense of each item visually inspected	A reserve funding schedule with recommended annual reserve amount that achieves the estimated replacement cost or deferred maintenance expense of each item inspected by the end of the estimated remaining useful life of the item	Developer must perform at least one study (per 3- story building) before turning control of the association over to unit owners



Individual Components

Category / Component	Year Placed in Service	Useful Life (Years)	RUL (Years)	Next Project Date	Current Replacement Cost	Percent of Tota
A - Roof						
A - Flat Roof: Condominium Roof	01/01/2023	35y	33y	01/01/2058	\$1,424,940.00	18.58%
A - Flat Roof: Porte Cochere	01/01/2023	35y	33y	01/01/2058	\$109,956.00	1.43%
A - Roof Total					\$1,534,896.00	20.01%
B - Structural System						
B - Concrete Restoration: Building Exterior	01/01/2022	10y	7y	01/01/2032	\$666,876.00	8.70%
B - Concrete Restoration: Garage	01/01/2022	10y	7y	01/01/2032	\$450,212.70	5.87%
B - Structural System Total					\$1,117,088.70	14.57%
C - Fireproofing & Fire Protection Systems						
C - Fire Alarm System Modernization: Fire System Modernization	01/01/2023	30y	29y	01/01/2054	\$149,328.00	1.95%
C - Fire Pump: Controller	01/01/2023	30y	29y	01/01/2054	\$25,500.00	0.33%
C - Fire Pump: Pump	01/01/2021	30y	26y	01/01/2051	\$58,614.30	0.76%
C - Fireproofing & Fire Protection Systems Tota	al				\$233,442.30	3.04%

30-Year Cash Flow Method

Inflation: 2.00% | Interest Rate: 2.00%

YEAR	STARTING BALANCE	CURRENT ANNUAL RESERVE CONTRIBUTIONS	INTEREST EARNED	RECOMMENDED SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS	EXPECTED ADDITIONAL CAPITAL	EXPENDITURE FUTURE COST (INCLUDING INFLATION)	ENDING BALANCE
2025	\$1,416,514.00	\$383,500.00	\$28,330.28	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,828,344.28
2026	\$1,828,344.28	\$383,500.00	\$36,566.89	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$22,888.80	\$2,225,522.37
2027	\$2,225,522.37	\$383,500.00	\$44,510.45	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$396,483.00	\$2,257,049.82
2028	\$2,257,049.82	\$383,500.00	\$45,141.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,685,690.82
2029	\$2,685,690.82	\$383,500.00	\$53,713.82	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,122,904.64
2030	\$3,122,904.64	\$383,500.00	\$62,458.09	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,568,862.73
2031	\$3,568,862.73	\$383,500.00	\$71,377.25	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,023,739.98
2032	\$4,023,739.98	\$383,500.00	\$80,474.80	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,721,009.71	\$2,766,705.07
2033	\$2,766,705.07	\$383,500.00	\$55,334.10	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,091,891.26	\$2,113,647.91
2034	\$2,113,647.91	\$395,005.00	\$42,272.96	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,550,925.87

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When Reserves Not Required Reserves do not need to be maintained for an item for which: (i) estimate of useful life, (ii) estimated remaining

- (ii) estimated remaining useful life exceeds 25 years, or
- (iii) estimate of replacement cost

cannot be determined.



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SIRS – When Not Applicable

Does not apply to:

- Buildings less than 3 stories tall
- 1, 2, 3, 4-family dwellings with three or fewer habitable stories above ground
- Any portion/component of building not submitted to condo form of ownership
- Any portion/component not maintained by association
- Non-residential



New Budget Reserve Requirements

For budgets adopted on or after Dec. 31, 2024, those associations that are required to obtain SIRS:

May no longer vote to waive reserves

- Or underfund reserves for items required to be included in a SIRS
- Can't vote to use reserve funds or interest accrual for any reason other than their intended reserve purpose









Sales Requirement – Turnover Inspections

Adds turnover inspection report to required presale disclosures Developer's mandatory turnover inspection report can involve

 reserve specialists & professional reserve analysts



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A Word on Windows • Windows & exterior doors <u>are</u> included • Sec. 718.112(2)(g), F.S. • But windows within a unit are typically responsibility of each unit owner • Most SIRS will only include windows & doors in areas accessible to all owners (e.g., lobbies). • And see new hurricane protection laws in HB 1021 affecting doors/windows

A Word on Windows

Hurricane Protection

- Sec. 718.103(19) provides uniform definitions, incl. doors, windows, shutters
- Sec. 718.113(5), w/majority member vote, condo can require owners at their expense to install doors, etc.
- Enforceable as assessment
- Other rules



Find





Bill touches on these areas



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HB 1021

Condo Meetings

- Associations with 10+ units must now meet at least once per quarter
- At least 4x annually, agenda must include opportunity for members to question board, incl. repairs, revenues, reserves



<section-header> HB 1021 Online Records Effective January 1, 2026, decreases from 150 units to 25 units the threshold requirement for an association to maintain specified records available on the association's website or on a mobile device Impacts 90% of all Florida condos Easier for sellers to obtain records



IMPACTS OF THE SURFSIDE LEGISLATION

Concerns

- Increased association fees
- Special assessments
- Impact on property values
- Sales of condos
- Financing challenges
 - The "Blacklist"
- Master policy insurance



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Disclosures



Takes into account a number of changes

- Paragraph 5:
- Annual financial statement and annual budget must be provided together with declaration, articles, bylaws & rules, and FAQs











New Condo Rider CR-7 (Rev. 12/2024)

Takes into account a number of changes

- Paragraph 11:
- Vertical Subdivisions/Mixed Use Buildings
- Effective Oct. 1, 2024, buyers are to be given a special disclosure

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To Do

- Make sure using all new contract forms and riders
- Is buyer financing?
- If so, is project on blacklist? Anything worrisome in Milestone?
- Has Budget Committee received SIRS and placed budget on agenda?
- Obtain and review last 12 months minutes and agendas
- Consider extended due diligence period
- Consider escrow agreement/holdback

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To Do

- Be prepared to review Milestone Inspection Report
- It's now a "condo doc"
- Properly disclose if required and if done or scheduled
- Review Summary of Findings page
- Phase II called for?
- It's now a "condo doc"

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To Do

- Be prepared to review SIRS and other Reserve Studies
- Straight line or pooled methodology?
- Review remaining useful life for big ticket items
- Review Budget
- What % of operating revenue is going to reserves
 - Bare min. 10%, ideally 25%+

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To Do

- Inquire into status of possible installation of wind resistant windows and doors
- Review new statutory paradigm









FL BAR Reference Number: 2501303N

Title: Understanding Florida's New Condo Safety

Laws

Level: Intermediate

Approval Period: 04/01/2025 - 10/31/2026

CLE Credits General	1.0
Certification Credits Condominium & Planned	
Development Law	1.0
Real Estate	1.0

NALA THE PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION

CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE

Certified Paralegals are required to record evidence of 50 hours of continuing legal education hours to renew the CP credential every 5 years. CLE hours are recorded in CPs' accounts through the <u>NALA online portal</u>. Of the 50 hours, 5 hours must be in legal ethics, and no more than 10 hours may be recorded in non-substantive areas. If attending a non-NALA sponsored educational event, this certificate may be used to obtain verification of attendance. Please be sure to obtain the required signatures for verification of attendance. The requirements to maintain the CP credential are available from NALA's web site at <u>https://www.nala.org/certification/certtest2view</u>. Please keep this certificate in the event of a CLE audit or further information is needed.

PLEASE COMPLETE THE SPACES BELOW AND ATTACH A PROGRAM

Session Length	Session Topics	Validation
In Hours	(Description and Speakers)	of Attendance

1.0	Understanding Florida's New Condo Safety Laws: The	Míchael Rothman
	Surfside Legislation and its Impact / Michael Rothman	

Name of CP (Please Print)	NALA Account Number (On Mailing Label)
	149113
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Address	Authorized Signature of Sponsor Representative
	Michael Rothman
	Date of Educational Event:
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