

# Oshawa Fire Fighters Urge City to Add Resources to Help Battle Woodframe Building Fires

*City resolution on code enforcement must be followed up with enough fire fighters to respond, says fire fighters group.*



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OSHAWA – in the wake of a massive blaze in June, the Association representing Oshawa’s fire fighters applauds a recent city resolution calling for more strict safety rules and guidelines for woodframe buildings over four storeys. Following the City’s resolution, Oshawa fire fighters researched the current requirements and given recent events in Oshawa it is clear that they are not sufficient. When these types of buildings are added into our community, increased risk is also added, risk that needs to be addressed with balanced resources.

Advocating for changes at the provincial level is only one part. Steps can also be taken locally to keep residents and property safe in the event of fires and other emergencies. It is no secret that the Oshawa Professional Fire Fighters Association believes emergency response capabilities need to be increased. Adding even more risk into our community with these types of buildings only reinforces our position.

“The city resolution is important and we support it, we’re only saying that the city should also ensure there are enough fire fighters and vehicles on duty and ready to respond quickly and effectively when fire breaks out,” Oshawa Professional Fire Fighters Association President Peter Dyson said. “As the June 9 fire on Bloor Street West showed, fires in woodframe buildings, in particular those under construction, burn unexpectedly large and hot and have the potential to be extremely dangerous to fire fighters and to the public.”

Dyson points out that building codes do not require cities to have a specific level of fire protection in place for specific kinds of structures, but there are internationally accepted industry standards which recommend the number of fire fighters in a specific period of time for various types of structures to allow for simultaneous rescue and fire suppression. That standard is known as National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1710.

Last year, the Oshawa Professional Fire Fighters Association commissioned a state-of-the-art analysis which confirmed the need for additional frontline resources in order to meet NFPA’s response time and deployment standards. The fire fighters provided the report to the City, and the City is currently conducting a new Master Fire Plan. The Association is hopeful that this Master Fire Plan will result in similar recommendations for improved frontline resources.

“We agree with the City’s concerns about woodframe construction and once again we offer our assistance and input to help the city work toward a fire department deployment model that provides the level of protection the citizens of Oshawa expect and deserve,” Dyson said, adding that the Association is looking forward to meeting with the City’s consultant to provide its input.

The report, which was conducted by the International Association of Fire Fighters, is available on the [www.oshawafirefighters.org](http://www.oshawafirefighters.org) website along with other information and public safety resources.

## **CONTACT**

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