

BOMA International Comments

NIST Conference
Federal Building and Fire Safety Study
on the WTC Disaster
Gaithersburg, Maryland
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BOMA International

- 19,000 individual members
- 109 Local BOMA Associations
- Own or manage over 9 billion sq ft
- Downtown and suburban commercial space
 - Includes offices, medical, governmental, institutional, and industrial space
- 90% of Class A Office Space

BOMA International Services

- Research and Data Gathering
- Representation/Advocacy
- Codes and Standards
- Education and Custom Services
- Print/Electronic Publications
- Special Interest Groups/Committees
- Networking
- Annual Convention and Office Show

NIST WTC Research

- BOMA supportive of NIST research into WTC collapse
- Focus on high rise buildings to address practices, standards, and code issues
 - Structural Integrity
 - Enhanced Fire Resistance
 - Evacuation, Procedures, Programs
 - Emergency Response
 - Education/Training
- Sensitivity to industry concerns critical

What Is a High-Rise?

Evolving Definition

- Early 20th century - 7 to 10 stories
- Generally accepted now - 50 stories
- Code defines as 75 to 100 feet above reach of firefighting equipment

What Enabled High-Rises?

- Elevators
- Steel Frames
- Lightweight fireproofing materials

Why Build High-Rises?

- Location, location, location
- Increase site density
- Tenant prestige
- More amenities
- Demand continues to be strong –
High-Rises fill a market niche

Strong Demand for High-Rises

- Great views
- Distinctive architecture
- Notable structure and prime location
- Proximity to like economic activity
- Proximity to successful neighbors
- Tenants generally feel secure

Benefits of High Rises

- Increase city density
 - Population
 - Number of businesses
- Increase economic activity and tax base
- Distinctive skyline providing a unique identity for the city
- Market niche

Issues in Consideration of NIST Recommendations

- Cost/Benefits Analysis Should Accompany Recommendations
- Statistics show high rise and commercial office buildings have performed well
- Caution for possible unintended penalties with unnecessarily restrictive requirements

More BOMA Comments

- Provide safety in a cost-effective manner
- Must identify the extent to which certain criteria need to be met
- Confirm differences between existing buildings and new buildings
- National private codes & standards development processes are the proper forum for consideration of regulatory changes

More BOMA Comments

- Determine the general characteristics of building population to “right-size” life-safety requirements
- BOMA believes that lessons learned from World Trade Center 7 may be more useful than the WTC 1 and 2
- Building design is a difficult balance of life-safety, energy conservation, environmental sensitivity, and tenant satisfaction.
- Opportunities for collaboration between NIST and commercial real estate industry (BOMA)

NIST Proposed Code Revisions

What's the Proper Forum

- Must be addressed in a national codes and standards forums, not community by community adoption
- Recommendations developed after one event should not reverse over 70 years of advancement in the national building codes

NIST Proposed Code Revisions

What's the Proper Forum

- Code development is evolutionary, not a reactionary process
- Trade offs must exist to meet fire safety and life safety requirements

Opportunities for Joint NIST/BOMA Initiatives

- Education for tenants and owners
- Joint training
- Joint publications
- Regular meetings to discuss commercial real estate market trends

Questions?