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**MAYOR EMANUEL INTRODUCES MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN LIFE SAFETY EVALUATION
ORDINANCE**

*Reforms Include Tools to Increase Transparency and Accountability
Among Building Owners Across the City*

Mayor Emanuel introduced measures to strengthen Chicago's Life Safety Evaluation (LSE) ordinance today. The reforms, including disclosure of LSE information to prospective tenants and increased fines for noncompliance, will increase transparency and accountability among building owners required to submit and implement an LSE compliance plan.

"The LSE process is critical to ensuring the safety of Chicagoans across the city," said Mayor Emanuel. "While City government will do whatever it can to help building owners swiftly come into compliance, we will also ensure that people across the city can stay informed as buildings move forward."

The proposed ordinance would reform the Chicago Building Code to stipulate that buildings required to conduct a LSE and submit a life safety compliance plan to the City also maintain a written LSE statement available for inspection for tenants of apartment buildings at the execution of a new lease or the renewal of a lease and for unit owners of condominiums and cooperative buildings. The statement must include:

- Whether the building filed a life safety compliance plan with the City, specifically the Department of Buildings and the Fire Prevention Bureau of the Chicago Fire Department;
- Whether the life safety compliance plan was approved in writing by the City; and
- Whether all of the modifications identified in the approved life safety compliance plan have been implemented.

The proposed ordinance also strengthens the penalties for building owners who do not comply with the LSE requirements by increasing the fine range for violations from \$200 to \$500 per day to \$1,000 to \$2,500 per day.

“The 2015 deadline to be compliant with the LSE ordinance is fast approaching, and we’re urging all building owners to do the work they need to get done as quickly as possible,” said Department of Buildings Commissioner Michael Merchant. “We’ve put information on the LSE status of residential buildings online, and this is just another step in making sure people across the city can stay informed as buildings come into compliance.”

In January, the City notified all building owners and/or property managers of buildings required to submit an LSE compliance plan that they must provide the City with an update on their compliance progress by February 10, 2012. To date, 513 buildings have replied to this mailing with an update of their LSE status. Of these buildings, 104 indicated they consider their LSE modifications to be finished and requested a final inspection. Of the 513, 180 buildings that replied indicated they had not yet started work on their LSE modifications.

To date, there are over 600 residential buildings across the city required by City Ordinance to submit a Life Safety Evaluation report. These reports are used to determine the current fire safety status of a building and if necessary map out concrete steps building owners will take to ensure their buildings meet the City’s fire safety standards. At the beginning of February, information on the Life Safety Evaluation (LSE) status for hundreds of high-rise residential buildings was made available online at data.cityofchicago.org. The information will be updated monthly.

The Chicago Life Safety Ordinance was passed in 2004 to improve fire safety standards in high-rise buildings eight stories or higher. Because the Chicago building code has since 1975 required new high-rise residential buildings to be constructed with sprinkler systems, the Life Safety Ordinance mostly impacted high-rise residential buildings constructed prior to 1975. It requires owners of these pre-1975 buildings to file a report, called the Life Safety Evaluation, which provides information on the current life safety elements of the building as well as any plans needed to meet requirements for fire safety.

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