

Welland Fire and Emergency Services levies \$25,000 in fire code enforcement fines

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 16, 2022

Welland, ON – The Fire Prevention Division of the Welland Fire and Emergency Services (WFES) continues to inspect properties across the City to ensure compliance with the Ontario Fire Code. Recently, several prosecutions concluded following the discovery of fire safety violations at properties across the City. Including court costs, the WFES registered fines totalling approximately \$25,000 in Provincial Offences Court against several properties pursuant to the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 (FPPA).

Since 2019, WFES has had extensive dealings with the property 309 Beatrice Street, City of Welland. In January 2021, the supportive living residence was directed by order of the Fire Safety Commission of Ontario to extend the existing fire alarm system with smoke detection into each sleeping room in the building. Fire prevention staff attended the property and discovered the work was not completed within the timelines established. Due to the discovery of non-compliance, a prosecution was commenced in May 2021 pursuant to the FPPA. On Thursday, June 9, 2022, the corporate ownership was convicted in Provincial Offences Court, with a fine of \$7,500, pursuant to the FPPA. The fire alarm system has since been extended into the sleeping rooms under a building permit. Since 2019, the property has previously been convicted of fire safety violations, with current and former corporate owners receiving fines totalling \$58,000. WFES continues to work with the corporate ownership to conduct annual inspections and fire drills to ensure the safety of staff and residents.

In June 2021, fire prevention staff attended 478 East Main Street in response to a fire safety complaint. During the inspection, the main floor was used as a residential apartment, with a second apartment on the floor above. The WFES found numerous Ontario Fire Code violations during this inspection. The violations listed on an inspection order directed the property owner to rectify the fire safety issues within a certain timeframe. Following the order's compliance date, a property re-inspection occurred in October 2021, where it was witnessed the inspection order was not complied with. On June 9, 2022, the Provincial Offences Court convicted the property owner for not complying with an inspection order, receiving a fine of \$5,000. The property owner has since complied with the inspection order.

In July 2021, fire prevention staff attended the property 268-276 King Street to respond to a fire safety complaint. During the inspection, WFES discovered that the property owner had unlawfully converted an old commercial storefront into a residential apartment at the time of inspection. As a result, the property ownership, directed by an inspection order, was to cease using the commercial unit as a residential apartment or engage the City's Building Division to lawfully convert the space into an apartment with a proper building permit. Following the compliance date, a re-inspection occurred, and WFES found the commercial storefront still used as an apartment. On June 9, 2022, the property owner was convicted in Provincial Offences Court and fined \$5,000. The property owner has since obtained a building permit and is in the process of retrofitting the building.

Media Release



In September 2021, fire prevention staff attended 158 Hagar Street, City of Welland, to respond to a fire safety complaint. During the inspection, several Ontario Fire Code violations were discovered, including the lack of a second exit from the second-floor area. Due to the seriousness of the offences, a prosecution was commenced pursuant to the FPPA. On June 9, 2022, the property owner was convicted in Provincial Offences Court and fined \$3,000 pursuant to the FPPA; the property owner was fined \$2,000 for similar violations in 2020. As a result, the property owner has since rectified the fire safety issues.

WFES will continue to enforce the Ontario Fire Code across the City. It is incumbent on property owners to ensure their properties comply with the Fire Code at all times to ensure the safety of occupants and emergency personnel who may need to respond there.

-30-

For media inquiries, please contact:

Marc MacDonald
Corporate Communications Manager
905-735-1700 x2337
marc.macdonald@welland.ca

Adam Eckhart
Fire Chief/CEMC
905-735-1700 x2400
adam.eckhart@welland.ca