

## Frequently Asked Questions Concerning the Façade Ordinance

### Cincinnati Department of Buildings & Inspections

**Q.** *What does the facade ordinance require of tall building owners?*

**A.** If you own a building that is 5 stories or greater than 60 feet in height and the building is more than 15 years old, you are now required to hire a registered professional engineer or architect to conduct a critical exam of your building's façade to ensure it is in a safe condition.

**Q.** *How do I know if my building is five stories or 60 feet or more?*

**A.** A story is the space in a building between the surfaces of any floor and the floor next above or below or roof next above or any space not defined as a basement, ground floor, mezzanine, balcony, penthouse or attic. Count the number of stories in your buildings but do not count the basement, penthouse, balcony, attic, or mezzanine as a story.

**Q.** *What's a critical exam?*

**A.** This means a close up visual examination of the façade by having the professional or someone under their direct supervision actually touch the façade with their hands or a tool to determine if the façade is in a safe condition.

**Q.** *Who does the inspection?*

**A.** A State of Ohio registered professional architect or professional engineer shall conduct or directly supervise the person conducting the actual hands-on exam of the façade. This professional shall then provide a written report of the condition of the façade to B&I.

**Q.** *Is this required every year?*

**A.** No. The requirement to submit the first exam report will be staggered based on the age of the building.

- Owners of buildings that were built prior to 1920 will be required to submit a report by July 1, 2017.
- Owners of buildings built between 1920 to 1950 will be required to submit a report by July 1, 2018.
- Owners of buildings built between 1951 and 1990 will be required to submit a report by July 1, 2019.

The frequency of how often reports are due is based on the exterior wall construction and is outlined in the ordinance.

**Q.** *How do I determine the age of my building?*

**A.** B&I may have the approximate age of the building on our current database. The age may also be found by checking the microfilm for the property and viewing the original building permit or other information that may reveal the age of the building. This microfilm is available for viewing weekdays between 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM at the Cincinnati Permit Center, 805 Central Avenue, Cincinnati, 45202. You may also check the public library Sanborn Maps or City Directories.