

ATT rgfry

From: AT&T rgfry [rgfry@att.net]
Sent: Thursday, October 08, 2020 15:07
To: Walter Schroeder (Walter.Schroeder@cityofchicago.org)
Cc: Paige Fry (pfry@chicagotribune.com)
Subject: 400 E Randolph St, 2020-09-15 fire debriefing, Oct 14, 2020 Zoom

Attachments: 2017-04-12_pritzker-fry.pdf



2017-04-12_pritzker-fry.pdf (1...

TO: Walter Schroeder, Deputy District Chief, Chicago Fire Department (Walter.Schroeder@cityofchicago.org)
CC: Paige Fry, Chicago Tribune (pfry@chicagotribune.com)
FROM: Richard Fry (rgfry@att.net)
DATE: 2020-10-08
SUBJECT: 400 E Randolph St, 2020-09-15 fire debriefing, Oct 14, 2020, Zoom

Dear Chief Schroeder:

. . .

Our building, 400 East Randolph Street - and in contrast to more responsible properties - was among those exempted from safer-but-more-expensive sprinklers in exchange for an updated fire detection system. Unfortunately, it became well known early on that the newly installed fire detection system did not work properly.

WHY DOES THE CHICAGO FIRE DEPARTMENT CONTINUE TO COVER THIS UP?

On the afternoon of Friday, March 10, 2017, my wife went to the hallway to use the elevators. Unfortunately, after a long wait, none of the elevators appeared to be working. So she returned to our apartment and called the front desk. The only "explanation" she received was, "Go back to your unit."

At about that time, the Chicago Fire Department appeared on the street below with one or more trucks. Apparently there was a fire - or a response to a possible fire. And on a Friday afternoon there was no building employee around trained in the use of the new fire system.

Eventually, one of the maintenance workers, Harry Santiago, climbed the stairs 40 floors to investigate a sensor that apparently had tripped in the elevator room.

Since there had been no voice announcement - sound, lights, or any indication whatsoever apart from non-operating elevators of any problem - we were concerned about the obvious malfunctioning of the new fire alarm system.

That weekend we stopped by nearby Fire Station 13 on North Columbus Drive. We spoke to the officer in charge and asked what had happened to trigger the dispatch of CFD equipment to our building.

The CFD officer told us he didn't know.

We asked if there was a log. The officer said that the fire station did not keep a log.

In addition to New York, my wife and I also have lived in Boston and Dallas, and we are reasonably familiar with fire and police procedures in major cities. We were dumbfounded to hear that, in contrast, CFD does not keep logs.

For an explanation, I contacted Brendan Reilly, our local alderman. Rather than respond in any knowledgeable way about Chicago fire services, however, he simply asked Habitat Company!

As you will see from the attached April 12, 2017, e-mail, Habitat Company joined in this runaround by purposefully confusing fire safety compliance with an "elevator problem"!

To date, not much has changed. According to newspaper reports of the 2020-09-15 incident, not only do smoke alarms and other fire alarm systems still malfunction but CFD firefighters even were trapped in our elevators!

As we are all aware, LIVES MATTER: including not only high-rise minorities of whatever color but also first responders!

AGAIN: WHY DOES THE CHICAGO FIRE DEPARTMENT CONTINUE TO COVER THIS UP?

Sincerely,

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