

National Building Expert Urges 10-Year Building Inspections Due to Florida Building Collapse

HONOLULU, USA, August 2, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- National building expert and best-selling author [Lance Luke](#) suggested during a recent interview that Florida's 40-year recertification procedure should be adjusted to require inspections every 10 years after the recent building collapse in Florida.

Luke, the principal consultant at Construction Management Inspection, LLC, has been in the construction industry for over 41 years. He is a former general contractor and worked as a construction and project manager for real estate development companies. He has experience in design, home inspections, construction inspections, construction management, reserve studies and real estate development. His specialty is in inspection and construction management for condo association buildings and commercial properties. Luke serves as an expert witness on construction and real estate litigation cases.

He is a former Advisory Board Member for the State of Hawaii Regulated Industries Complaints Office as an expert consultant.

"After seeing the video and photos, my first reaction was that either a bomb went off or a huge earthquake occurred. Rarely does a building or sections of a building entirely collapse," Luke said. "Then, when those causes were initially ruled out, my next thought was that there were major concrete spalling that affected the foundation and structure of the building."

Luke believes there will be findings pointing to multiple causes for the collapse, such as soil conditions, construction work nearby, poor original design and construction. In his expert opinion, the main cause of the collapse was due to concrete spalling, which is the deterioration of the concrete and corroding of reinforcing steel. When the steel embedded in the concrete corrodes, it expands and cracks the concrete. The marine environment is the worst environment for reinforced concrete. Salt and chlorides in the air and water is a contributing factor to acceleration degradation of concrete.

Luke also believes there were human factors and errors made at each step of the way by each involved party that factored into the eventual collapse. For example, Luke stated, "the report by the consulting engineer should have contained more information and explanation and should have recommended immediate action be taken to start repairs immediately, shore up and support various locations, etc. The local building department should have inspected the building

better and communicated the facts to the condo association. The municipal building inspector should have issued a notice of violation to the concrete spalling issues. The condo board should have commenced immediate action to mitigate the problems by starting repairs right away. Even if the Association did not have money to fix the building, the law requires the board to fix the building period. Thus, either the board should have taken a vote by the condo membership to get a loan, or the board members should have voted for a special assessment to raise funds. The board members have a fiduciary duty to protect the property.”

Currently, Florida has a 40-year recertification procedure that requires a structural and electrical inspection. After that, an inspection should be performed every 10 years. Luke believes changes need to be made to require inspections every 10 years or every 20 years as major components of the building start to fail at the 10-, 15- or 20-year mark. A building should be painted every 10 to 15 years and, during that process, spalling of concrete should be repaired. Many roofs start failing at years 20 to 25. Cast-iron drain piping and electrical distribution systems have a general life expectancy of 35 years. Elevators have a useful life of around 35 years.

“Waiting 40 years is way too long a time, as components can fail before then. Also, the self-monitoring program does not work because some condo boards and building owners are more reactive than proactive. Once a building is built and occupied, no structural inspection is required until 40 years later. That is too little, too late,” Luke said.

Every building should have in place a repair and maintenance program, according to Luke. The program should be in addition to the condo reserve study. He proposes it is very important that the program be updated and followed such that components affecting life safety be repaired or replaced promptly. Insurance companies are now requiring inspections of buildings in Florida within 45 days.

“When a building collapses, the first order is the search and rescue, which at some point becomes a search and recover mission. Due to the unfortunate deaths, the entire property is considered a crime scene. When forensic investigators are allowed on the scene, there is a complete protocol for the gathering of the forensic samples, photographs and much-needed data,” Luke stated.

Pieces of concrete, reinforcing steel and other building components need to be inspected and sent to a laboratory for in-depth analysis. The original concrete mix will be evaluated, and the concrete tested for chlorides, compressive strength, etc. There will be an entire battery of tests conducted. It will take a couple of years to get a complete comprehensive report regarding an analysis of the original design, original materials used, construction means and methods, building code conformance, and more. The analysis will also include laboratory test results to determine the quality and condition of the concrete, reinforcing steel and other building components at the time of the building failure. Additionally, hundreds of witnesses will be interviewed.

Caution should be taken at the site due to crystalline silica, which is in concrete debris and

concrete dust.

Luke made some recommendations for building owners. "The big question to ask is, is your building safe?" In Luke's book, "The Big Question," written with Larry King, there is a chapter on building safety he recommends for all building owners. "To keep your building safe, make sure you conduct inspections often and hire experts to help you. When you get the inspection results, please act upon them and fix things that need to be fixed promptly. Make sure your building conforms to the building code," Luke recommends. "Support a change in the inspection law requiring inspections and more frequent intervals than 40 years. Be proactive rather than reactive. Condo board members, remember that you have a fiduciary duty to protect your property. Property managers have a duty and standard of care to inform your client and make sure that your client follows the proper protocol. There is no exemption from this duty if there is no money to complete the repairs. Safety first. This unfortunate catastrophic event is a huge wake-up call for everyone."

For more information, visit floridabuildingcollapse.now.site. Visit Luke's websites at www.hawaiibuildingexpert.com and lanceluke.com. He also gives free webinars on building and construction topics.

To sign up to view the webinar live or watch the replay, go to askbuildingexpert.now.site.

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