



Skyline Restoration reveals updates on the launch of NYC Department of Building's Cycle 8 of FISP; Classifies buildings as safe, SWARMP (Safe With A Repair and Maintenance Program) and unsafe

April 27, 2015 - Spotlights

Skyline Restoration, Inc., a leading building envelope/exterior restoration company based in Long Island City, has revealed updates on the launch of the NYC Department of Building's (DOB's) FISP (Façade Inspection Safety Program) Cycle 8 program that classifies buildings as safe, SWARMP (Safe With A Repair and Maintenance Program) and unsafe. The first wave of inspections (Sub-cycle A) began on February 21.

Skyline director of marketing Eva Hatzaki said, "The spring season is in full swing. We continue to see the effects of an unusually harsh winter, one that interrupted work and took its toll on the urban landscape. Building owners and managers are finding the signs of winter's damage throughout: in corrosion; in stress cracks; in an overall weathering of buildings sorely in need of repair and restoration. There is much work to be done, and the building restoration industry is on a fast track schedule."

The legislation that has governed much of the industry's site safety programs for buildings over six stories high for the past 35 years was born of a tragic accident. In 1979, a chunk of terra cotta fell from the 8th floor of a building on 115th St., striking and killing Grace Gold, a student at Barnard College. The tragedy led to Local Law 10, signed into law on February 21, 1980 by mayor Ed Koch. Columbia University's Grace Gold Memorial Scholarship Fund recently held a ribbon cutting ceremony renaming Broadway between W115th and W116th St. Grace Gold Way.

Local Law 10 required building owners in all five boroughs to hire a licensed architect or engineer to periodically inspect building exteriors every five years. In 1998, Local Law 10 was deleted and replaced by Local Law 11/98, signed by mayor Rudolph Giuliani.

As Kevin Duffy of Sullivan Engineering recently noted in a company newsletter, a series of masonry accidents caused Local Law 10 to be replaced with Local Law 11/98 which was far more stringent. Under the original law, only building façades facing the street had to be inspected; the revised law involved the entire building. Also, under Local Law 10, if a façade or partial façade was more than 25 feet set back from the street it did not require an inspection. If the building was greater than six stories, but had a 25 foot setback for the top floors - a "wedding cake" formation - those upper floors were excluded. All setback exclusions have been eliminated in LL 11/98 and the current FISP since debris could bounce off a higher floor to a terrace and then again onto the street.

Building enclosure services experts such as Consulting Associates of NY (CANY) routinely use Industrial Rope Access (IRA) to perform façade inspections.

As Charles Merritt, PE of Merritt Engineering Consultants notes, the law has further been amended in recent years to require a more thorough inspection of all handrail and guardrails, which now must

be inspected for structural stability and code compliance. A qualified exterior wall inspector (QEWI) needs to ensure that components (balusters, intermediate railings, and filler panels) are positively secured (by welds, bolts, or screws) against upward movement.

The DOB revealed in April that they are instituting a limited time amnesty program for those that did not file 7th cycle FISP reports prior to the February 20 deadline. From May 1 to June 30, owners who failed to file a FISP Report during the 7th Cycle, may file an early 8th Cycle report, regardless of the assigned sub-cycle (A, B or C). This is not a program that accepts late Cycle 7 reports. It allows the submission of an early Cycle 8 report to administratively close out Cycle 7 and avoid further violations and fines. All late fees, civil penalties and ECB fines resulting from failure to file during any previous cycles must be paid by the time of filing. This is a one-time amnesty and will not be considered in the future.

Skyline Restoration, Inc., is among the top building envelope/ exterior restoration firms in the area, having completed construction work on thousands of residential, commercial, industrial and institutional buildings, including several designated landmark sites. www.skylinerestoration.com

New York Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540