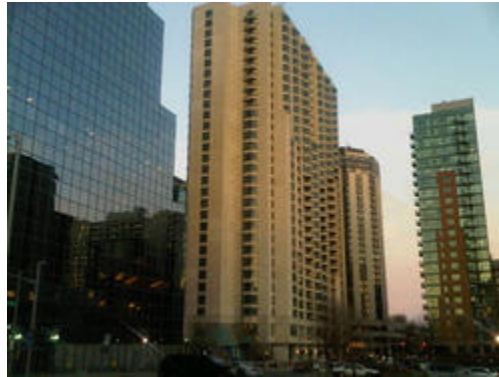




Breaking Glass- Condo Balconies

By Armand Conant on August 18, 2011



The [hottest news item](#) concerning condominiums is the recent rash of glass railings on balconies that have shattered and fallen to the ground, usually from units on very high floors. Thankfully so far no one has been seriously injured. Now developers, condominium corporations and others have retained engineers to try to determine the cause or causes of the problem.

We have been heavily involved in some of these cases and are closely following the research and suggested solutions to the problem(s) and advising our clients. It appears at this time that the glass that has broken is tempered glass, with some of the hypothesized causes being the extreme heat causing the concrete to expand and apply abnormal pressure or forces on the glass thus breaking it; or that the aluminum or other metal brackets holding the glass were too close to the glass and at times touching it causing deterioration and failure. Certainly the early reports seem to show inclusions in the glass. One suggested solution announced yesterday is to replace the tempered glass with laminated glass.

Much more research and analysis is needed to determine the actual cause(s) so that the proper corrective measures can be taken and government action for the future (assuming they are not anomalies in the construction industry, but rather a bigger issue). However, other questions arise. Why is it happening now and not with other buildings, whether new or older buildings, or is this just the beginning? Can windows of condominium buildings have a similar problem, but are as yet undetected?

These and other questions will be answered in due course and we will be working with the professionals on this. We will keep everyone advised as more information becomes available. Stay tuned.

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