

A Safer Tomorrow: How Florida's SB 154 Revolutionizes Condo Safety Inspections

In June 2023, Florida Governor Ron Desantis signed Senate Bill 154 (SB 154) into law. This law clarifies Florida Senate Bill 4-D, which was passed in 2022 and provides clearer safety measures for condominiums. These Senate bills were introduced in response to the structural collapse of the Champlain Towers South condominium building in 2021, which killed 98 people. These changes will have major effects on multi-family communities in Florida and it's important to be aware of the key changes being made.

Senate Bill 4-D (SB 4-D) introduced **milestone inspections** for all condominiums and cooperative buildings in Florida that are at least three stories tall. Originally under SB 4-D, if a building was located within three miles of a coastline, it must be inspected once the building is 25 years old and every 10 years following. However, SB 154 (2023) **removed this 25-year requirement for buildings within three miles of the coast**. Now all condominiums must receive a milestone inspection after reaching 30 years of age and re-inspections every 10 years following.

While the 25-year requirement is not required anymore under the SB 154 (2023) revisions, local enforcement agencies can enforce the 25-year requirement if **they can justify it for environmental conditions**, which include being near seawater.

These milestone inspections are made to ensure that these buildings remain structurally sound and to look for signs of structural deterioration. These inspections **are not concerned with compliance with building or fire safety codes**.

The revisions made in SB 154 (2023) limit inspection requirements to buildings that include a residential condominium or cooperative. It also changes ownership requirements, as **mixed-ownership buildings are now required to follow these milestone inspection requirements**. All owners in a mixed-ownership building are responsible for their compliance with the inspection and **must share the inspection cost**.

SB 154 (2023) **allows local enforcement agencies to extend the inspection deadline for a building via petition** if the building can show that the building owners have contracted an architect or engineer to do the inspection, but that the inspection cannot reasonably be done before the deadline.

Inspections completed before July 1, 2022, may potentially be accepted if the inspection and report substantially comply with the new milestone requirements. If this inspection is accepted, the 10-year re-inspection date will be based on the date of the previous inspection.

Condominium associations are responsible for all of the costs of the inspections of the relevant portions of the building that it oversees. **Associations are also required to notify unit owners about inspection deadlines**, either electronically or by posting on the association's website. This notice must be posted **within 14 days of the association receiving the initial milestone notice** from a local enforcement agency. Additionally, an association must provide unit owners a copy of the inspection report **within 45 days of receiving it**.

With these changes and more to Florida law regarding milestone inspections, True Property Inspections is here to lighten the load. True Property Inspections is a full-service provider that can identify maintenance problems early and save you money. Visit our website to see our full range of services, request a quote, or complete a free assessment.

Remember that a property inspection today can save you thousands tomorrow.