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**MAYOR EMANUEL DIRECTS DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS TO TAKE ACTION TO RESTORE HEAT IN APARTMENTS DURING HISTORIC WINTER COLD**

With Chicago experiencing record-breaking cold and the with the closure of Cook County courts today and tomorrow, Mayor Rahm Emanuel is directing the Department of Buildings (DOB) to utilize its full police power granted by the Chicago municipal code to protect the health and safety of residents. DOB has already taken immediate action to work to restore heat in three properties today, and, if necessary, DOB will continue take action to have heat restored in apartment buildings.

“Chicagoans are facing historic and extreme cold weather, and it is not only unsafe but unconscionable to let tenants go without heat,” said Mayor Emanuel. “We are not waiting 48 hours for the courts to reopen to hold landlords accountable, so I have directed Commissioner Frydland to use her police powers to protect the safety of Chicagoans and make emergency repairs to restore heat in buildings where landlords are failing to do their jobs.”

DOB works closely with the Department of Law to file court cases to ensure property owners restore heat and hot water to bring their building into compliance. In emergency heat situations where the owner is uncooperative or incapable of addressing the problem, the City asks the Circuit Court to appoint a receiver to make emergency repairs and provide assistance to tenants in buildings.

Due to the closure of courts over the next two days, if necessary the Commissioner of Buildings will direct the receiver to make emergency repairs to a building now and seek reimbursement from the owner after Circuit Court reopens. In fact, the Commissioner has already directed the receiver to execute its duties on three properties in Chicago.

“First and foremost, we need to do everything in our power to keep residents safe when there’s an emergency,” said DOB Commissioner Judy Frydland, Commissioner. “The ability to appoint a receiver in emergency situations is an important tool we can use to address issues immediately rather than wait for delinquent building owners who are slow to respond.”

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