# Ontario hopes new rules stop glass from falling off highrise balconies

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Tyler Anderson/National Post
A police car blocks traffic on Bay Street after glass fell from a condo building at the corner of Bay Street and Grosvenor Street in Toronto, Ontario, Tuesday, September 6, 2011.

Ontario's housing minister has announced new building code rules she says will help prevent glass panels from breaking off highrise balconies during hot weather.

Kathleen Wynne says the province will require construction companies to install the same kind of heat-resistant glass used in car windshields for outside panels of balconies.

Construction firms will also have to use laminated or tempered glass meant to withstand high temperatures for inside panels.

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The move comes after a recent spate of incidents that have seen shards of glass rain down from skyscraper balconies in downtown Toronto.

Wynne says the rules will kick in July 1 and are meant as an interim measure until a national standard is developed.

The changes apply only to new construction.

Anyone in Toronto concerned about their balcony should contact the city, Wynne said.

The rules follow recommendations made to the province by an expert panel on the glass-panel issue.

"We knew that we needed to act fast but we also needed to make sure that the solutions were technically sound and safe," Wynne said.

"There's a lot of learning that's happened because of the failures of the glass that's been used" in high-rises, she added.

"We haven't been using glass for balconies for 100 years. We need more research on exactly how high the standard should be."

"When the Canadian Standards Association brings out their standard we will look at that vis-a-vis the one we've got in place."