

Labour Ministry has issued 18 orders to developer since first collapse at Welland condo building

Evertrust Development has applied for rebuild permit, says spokesperson for developer

By [Kris Dubé](#) Tribune Reporter
Sat., April 1, 2023

Ontario Ministry of Labour has issued 18 orders to the developer behind a 266-unit condo building under construction in Welland since the first of two partial collapses at the project on Prince Charles Drive.

On Feb. 18 the first collapse occurred. That was followed by another eight days later.

Since then, minimal details about the cause of the incidents have been released, as both constructor Evertrust Development Inc. and the ministry have cited an ongoing investigation as the reason why.

Ministry spokesperson Anu Dhar said visits by inspectors on March 15, 24 and 29 resulted in a number of orders and requirements being issued recently.

The ministry has been tight-lipped about what those orders involve throughout the investigation at the five-storey project.

“As the investigation is ongoing, the ministry cannot comment further at this time,” Dhar said.

A timeline on when the probe of the two collapses will conclude is something the ministry is unable to provide.

“Ministry investigations are detailed and thorough, and may take weeks or months to complete depending on the complexity of the investigation,” said Dhar.

On March 8, a stop-work order was lifted by the ministry and the constructor was permitted to return to the site to continue with remedies.

On Saturday, Joyce Morocco, a contracted spokesperson for Evertrust, said she had limited information on progress made so far, but that the “cleanup on the ground has been completed” and that the builder has applied for a rebuild permit.

She said the developer continues to work closely with the ministry.

The Welland Tribune filed a Freedom of Information request March 9 at Welland city hall asking for names of all contractors, subcontractors, architects and engineers who have worked on the Upper Vista Welland build. The city’s site inspection reports have also been requested. Deputy clerk Laura Bubanko said at that time the municipality would respond to the request within 30 days.

City staff, including planning and development director Grant Munday and corporate communications manager Marc MacDonald, said this information would need to be sought through the FOI process.

Soil conditions have been a topic of speculation at the site.

Local historian Terry Hughes recently said the area the Upper Vista building is on was once swam that was filled in with soil from excavation of the third and fourth Welland canals.

But Harvey Russell, who was the lead on the neighbouring Seaway Pointe condo building, was skeptical to point to that being the problem — but he didn’t rule it out.

“The soil beside us could be something different,” he said in early March.

Falling under the Ontario Building Code, mandatory inspections of the Upper Vista Welland Condominiums would have been carried out at specific stages of construction, said MacDonald after the first collapse.

The project has a construction value of about \$55 million.

A partial demolition started on March 6.

Both collapses occurred on the south tower of the project, which sits on the west side of the Welland Recreational Canal.

Evertrust Development remains subject of a \$10-million lawsuit brought forward by residents of the developer's Niagara Falls site, citing poor conditions at that building.