# Fire Risk Assessment Model for Residential Buildings Using Bow-tie Method



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### **Executive Summary**

Ensuring the safety of citizens is a responsibility of the government. Fire incidents can create many adverse impacts on human, property, environment and reputation. In this research, a probabilistic model to assess the fire risk in residential buildings using the Bow-tie Method was developed. A user-friendly predictive tool called "DynamicFire" was developed based on the aforementioned predictive model. This tool is focused on fire risk assessment of multi-unit residential buildings (MURB), due to their recent popularity. "DynamicFire" is expected to support risk management decisions to minimize fire risk and its adverse impacts on MURBs, especially on human, property, environment and reputation. Furthermore, this tool includes a list of safeguards for prevention and protection to reduce the probability of a fire incident. Potential benefits of the proposed methodology and the tool are as follows.

**Quantitative fire risk management decision making:** The proposed tool will enhance the local fire department's ability in making risk-based decisions in daily operation as well as for long-term capital investment and resource allocation for effective fire risk management. For example, the fire department could strategically locate the fire engines in areas where buildings with highest fire risk. Annual fire risk assessments using the proposed method would inform insurance companies of the fire risk level of a particular building.

**Flexibility of use:** The user-friendly interface allows users to change the parameters according to the current context. Furthermore, based on up-to-date information, users could adjust the fire risk probabilities. No expert input is required for the use of this tool.

**Excel-based platform for convenient adoption:** The Excel-based platform allows wider use of this tool. Therefore, benefits of this method could be reaped by a wider group of users, from building managers, to fire departments and insurance providers.

### **Problem Statement**

According to the 2016 census, 28% percent of Canadians live in multi-unit residential buildings [1]. For growing communities such as Kelowna, there has been a 42% increase in MURB living from 2011-2016 [1]. The number of MURBs continues to increase in order to cater the housing needs of the growing Canadian urban population [2]. Multi-unit residential buildings (MURB) construction exceeded single-family detached house construction in 2012 [2]. Based on the number of building permits issued in Canada's three largest metropolitan areas, more than 50% of the total planned residential developments are MURBs [2]. MURBs have been popular due to a number of trends, such as declining household size, changing household characteristics, an ageing population, high prices of single-family homes in certain areas, as well as land shortages and development policies of municipal governments.

Fire incidents are one of the most devastating events in buildings, posing a significant threat to public safety and property. In 2014, building fires accounted for 62% of fire incidents in Canada [3]. Out of all building fires, 65% of the incidents were reported in residential buildings. Ensuring the safety of residents is a key responsibility of the government. Statistics show that even though the number of fire incidents has been declining, the expenditure on firefighting has increased [4]. Consequently, municipalities are pressured by the need for additional resources to maintain their firefighting services [4]. Importance of fire safety in MURB has been highlighted in previous literature [3].

Several strides have been made to minimize and eliminate fire risk. These efforts include establishing effective fire risk management frameworks, enforcing building code regulations, promoting public education on fire hazards, and conducting evacuation training and drills [5]. An effective fire risk management framework is of vital importance in the control and prevention of fire incidents. ISO 31000 recommends risk assessment and risk treatment as steps in fire risk management. The fire risk assessment of a system involves synthesizing all available information to estimate fire risk to life, property, and the environment. The fire risk assessment process is comprised of fire risk prediction, risk analysis, and risk evaluation [5]. Fire risk prediction is the process of investigating the probabilities of fire incidents occurrence under certain circumstances. Fire risk analysis is the process of estimating extents and probabilities of the adverse effects resulting from fire incidents [6]. The fire risk prediction and analysis can be expressed either in qualitative, mixed, or quantitative ways, depending on the type of risk, the purpose of risk analysis, and the availability of information resources [5]. Fire risk evaluation involves applying the developed risk criteria to decide the level of fire risk. Fire risk treatment is the process of improving existing risk controlling measures and implementing these measures to reduce fire risk. As the first step of fire risk management, fire risk prediction serves as the foundation of regulatory decisionmaking on actions to reduce risk [7]. Studies on fire risk prediction are, therefore, critical and essential.

Many modelling tools were developed to facilitate fire risk management from different perspectives and levels. For example, models such as FIRECAM and FIERA system were utilized to calculate the expected life risk and fire cost expectations [8][9]; a Bayesian belief net model was introduced to assess the risk of human fatality in fire incidents [10]; Probabilistic methods have been used to assess levels of people's safety in buildings [11] and quantitative risk assessment approaches have also been used to quantify the risk to occupants using stochastic factors [12]. However, few models can predict the probability of fire occurrence based on the information of various fire risk factors such as time, location, the characteristics of occupants, building conditions, and the environment. The information revealed by statistical studies on fire risk factors could be critical for fire risk prediction [13][14]. Moreover, the causal factors of fire outbreaks are dynamic, e.g., building material deterioration, stochastic nature of igniting objects (e.g., frying pan, oven, toaster handling), weather, occupant characteristics (e.g., temporary loss of judgment due to alcohol, sleep, fatigued). In addition, the causal factors interact with each other, increasing the complexity of fire prediction. The model allows for the effective trade-off analysis of multi-scenarios and the multi-attributes of fire incidence prediction over time [15]. Therefore, the systems dynamics model can assist decision makers to understand the implications of investment decisions and actions on fire risk management [16].

The main objective of this research is to develop a fire risk rating methodology for MURBs. The proposed methodology assesses the risk of fire incidence in MURBs. The Bow-tie Method was used as the fire risk assessment method. A user-friendly risk-based predictive tool called "DynamicFire" was developed based on the developed methodology. The proposed tool will serve as a decision aid tool to formulate and prioritize fire response planning decisions.

#### Methodology

The analysis of risk and safety scenarios needs to take threats and safeguards into consideration effectively. The Bow-tie method is capable of considering threats and safeguards, can be used to prevent the incident occurrence, and to protect from undesirable consequences. Bow-tie analysis has been applied in many different areas, such as oil and gas industries, petrochemical companies, defence and security, shipping (taking into consideration ports and harbours), mining, medical, aviation, and emergency response. Therefore, the Bow-tie method was identified as a feasible method for fire risk analysis in residential buildings. The overall fire risk assessment methodology is illustrated in Figure 1. The features of the Bow-tie method are presented to illustrate its credibility as a reliable technique for risk and safety assessment as follows: (i) Provides a visual representation of the causes of unintended events, (ii) Easy to understand by all levels of operations and management, (iii) Provides explicit linkages between inputs (causes) and outputs (consequences), and (iv) Defines the preventive and the protective barriers to reduce the occurrence of the top event and the severity of its consequences, respectively.

Bow-tie analysis (BTA) is one of the quantitative methods which has proven its efficiency for risk management in many industries [17]–[20]. In BTA, causal scenarios need to be derived from possible hazardous events, and safety goals should be defined. Among the different models available to identify and analyze accident scenarios, the Bow-tie method has been well proven to be a reliable and efficient technique. Bow-tie analysis is used to prevent, control, and mitigate undesirable events by formulating a logical relationship between the causes and consequences of an undesired event. The method is based on the integration of two well-established techniques, namely fault tree analysis (FTA) and event tree analysis (ETA) [21]–[24]. Bow-tie analysis as the graphical presentation was originally developed by the Royal Dutch/ Shell group.



FIGURE 1: DIAGRAM OF BOW-TIE ANALYSIS METHOD

Construction of the Bow-tie method is based on mathematical operations. Fault tree analysis relies on AND and OR gates that formulate the relation between basic events and the top event. However,

ETA is only based on AND gates to build the relationships between the top event and the consequences. Mathematical equations for both AND and OR gates are presented in Table 1:

| Gate | Input pairing   | Calculation of output   |
|------|---|---|
| OR   | $P_A OR P_B$<br>$f_A OR f_B$  | $P(A \ OR \ B) = 1 - (1 - P_A) \cdot (1 - P_B)$<br>= $P_A + P_B - P_A \cdot P_B \approx P_A + P_B$<br>$f(A \ OR \ B) = f_A + f_B$ |
| AND  | P <sub>A</sub> AND P <sub>B</sub><br>f <sub>A</sub> AND f <sub>B</sub><br>f <sub>A</sub> AND p <sub>B</sub> | $P(A AND B) = P_A \cdot P_B$<br>$f(A AND B) = f_A \cdot f_B$<br>Unusual pairing, reform to $f_A AND p_B$                          |

TABLE 1: EQUATIONS USED FOR BOW-TIE METHOD

Where *P* is probability and *f* is frequency

The dynamic fire tool incorporates five steps as follows:

- 1. Identify common threats and probabilities of fire incidents
- 2. Define preventive and protective safeguards and their probabilities
- 3. Determine the level impact of consequences to people, properties, environment, and reputation
- 4. Determine risk level based on scenarios probability with the level of impact
- 5. Propose safeguards for prevention and protection to reduce fire incident probability and the impact of consequences.

#### STEP 1: IDENTIFICATIONS OF COMMON THREATS AND PROBABILITIES OF FIRE INCIDENT

A comprehensive literature review was conducted to identify threats and their respective probabilities [25]. Appendix A-1 presents a summary of the literature review. This data was used in constructing the left-hand side (fault tree) of the Bow-tie. Table 2 presents the threats resulting in fire hazards for MURBs and their respective probabilities. The probability of a fire incident can be calculated using the following equation:

$$TE = \sum_{i=1}^{n} C_i S_i$$

TE: top event,

C: causes, and

S: Safeguard

i: number of scenarios that involve causes and safeguards

| Threat                            | Probability |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| Arson                             | 1.55E-01    |
| Open fires                        | 6.60E-02    |
| Arson by children                 | 2.90E-02    |
| Heating                           | 3.80E-02    |
| Cooking                           | 5.40E-02    |
| Electric distributor (cables)     | 4.50E-02    |
| Heat radiation from other sources | 2.40E-02    |
| Natural fires (lightning)         | 1.30E-02    |
| Explosion & fireworks             | 3.00E-02    |

TABLE 2: FIRE THREATS AND PROBABILITIES OF OCCURRENCE FOR MURB [25]

#### **STEP 2: DEFINE PREVENTIVE AND PROTECTIVE SAFEGUARDS AND THEIR PROBABILITIES**

Define the preventive and protective safeguards using FTA and ETA. Fault tree analysis involves the preventive safeguards or suggesting the appropriate precautions. Event tree analysis defines the safeguards for fire incident protection along with the probabilities of success and failure. Success and failure of various fire protection systems were identified from the literature [25]. Three fire protections are defined; (i) smoking material with a failure probability of 3.0E-01, (ii) sprinkler system with a failure probability 4.0E-02, and (iii) regular evacuation drills with a failure probability of 2.0E-01. The probability for each scenario is defined using the probability of a fire incident with a probability of the success of safeguards with the following equation:

$$P_{SC} = \prod_{i}^{n} P_{Ei} \cdot P_{Si}$$

*P<sub>SC</sub>*: probability of scenario,

 $P_E$  : probability of events

*P<sub>S</sub>* : probability of safeguards

i: number of scenarios

# STEP 3: DETERMINE LEVEL IMPACT OF CONSEQUENCES TO PEOPLE, PROPERTIES, ENVIRONMENT, AND REPUTATION

The impact level of the scenarios was determined to estimate the impact on four factors; people, property, environment, and reputation. A fire incident would impact the four factors with different weights based on the importance of influenced factors. Various impact levels for categories were defined based on literature and expert consultation (Table 3).

| Impact<br>level | People              | Properties       | Environment      | Reputation           |
|-----------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| Very Low        | No/Slight Injury    | No/Slight damage | No/Slight effect | No/Slight Impact     |
| Low             | Minor injury        | Minor damage     | Minor effect     | Local Impact         |
| Medium          | Major injury        | Local damage     | Local effect     | Regional Impact      |
| High            | Fatality            | Regional damage  | Regional effect  | National Impact      |
| Very High       | Multiple fatalities | Extensive damage | National effect  | International impact |

#### **TABLE 3: IMPACTS OF FIRE EVENTS**

General impact level is determined using the following equation:

$$I_g = \sum_{i=1}^4 (W_i \cdot I_i)$$

 $I_a$ : general impact

W: weight for each factor based on its importance

I: impact on factors; people, properties, environment, and reputation

i: number of impacts

# STEP 4: DETERMINE RISK LEVEL BASED ON SCENARIOS PROBABILITY WITH THE LEVEL OF IMPACT

The fire risk level for MURBs was defined using a five-level scale. Table 4 defines the fire risk levels for MURBs. Risk level is defined using a matrix, where risk probability is defined using the following equation:

$$R_{L} = \frac{1}{2} \left[ (log(Pr_{SC}) + 6) + I_{g} \right]$$

 $R_L$ : Risk Level Pr<sub>sc</sub>: Probability of scenario  $I_g$ : general impact

#### **TABLE 4: FIRE RISK DEFINITION**

| Risk       | Level | Definition                          |
|------------|-------|-------------------------------------|
| Absolutely | 5     | Urgent action required              |
| Extreme    | 4     | Immediate action required           |
| High       | 3     | Senior management action required   |
| Moderate   | 2     | Management responsibility specified |
| Low        | 1     | Managed by routine procedures       |

# **STEP 5: PROPOSE SAFEGUARDS FOR PREVENTION AND PROTECTION TO REDUCE FIRE INCIDENT PROBABILITY AND THE IMPACT OF CONSEQUENCES**

The following preventive and protective measures are proposed to mitigate fire threats and enhance fire event management. These measures were identified from published literature, reports, and guidelines from reputable institutions [25]–[42]. As more than 50% of fire incidents' causes are not clear [25], the proposed precautions are for the mentioned common causes as well as the possible threats.

|   | Suggestions for prevention  |   |  |  |  |  |
|---|---|---|--|--|--|--|
|   | To avoid  | A | Appliance and combustible materials should be separated by a distance at least of the $\frac{1}{2}$ metre. |  |  |  |
|   |   | В | Combustible or flammable storage should not be in the electrical intake room.                              |  |  |  |
| 1 | Electrical as   | С | Verification of equipment to be off at the end of the working day.   |  |  |  |
| 1 | Source of<br>Ignition   | D | The sources of heat (plugs) should not be overloaded with electrical equipment.                            |  |  |  |
|   |   | Е | Electrical fuses and circuit breakers should be inspected frequently.                                      |  |  |  |
|   |   | F | Inspections and tests of electrical equipment should be completed by a competent electrician.              |  |  |  |
|   | To avoid open<br>fires (candles,<br>heaters, etc) as<br>source of<br>ignition | А | The open fires should be away from combustible materials   |  |  |  |
| 2 |   | В | The candles and heaters should be far from children reach  |  |  |  |
|   | To avoid<br>heating as<br>Source of<br>Ignition                               | A | Maintain a safe separation distance of ½ metre between appliances and combustible materials.               |  |  |  |
| 4 |   | В | Heaters should be secured to walls with appropriate safety guards  |  |  |  |
|   |   | С | Portable heaters should not be under desks and heating appliances should be well arranged                  |  |  |  |
|   | To avoid<br>Cooking as  | A | Provide a 5Kg CO2 and a 6 Litre wet chemical extinguisher in the kitchen.                                  |  |  |  |
| 5 | Source of   | В | There should not be combustible storage in the gas boiler room.  |  |  |  |
|   | Ignition  | С | Maintain a safe separation distance of ½ metre between appliances and                                      |  |  |  |

#### **TABLE 5: PREVENTIVE AND PROTECTIVE MEASURES**

|   |   |   | combustible materials.   |
|---|---|---|--|
|   |   |   | Heaters should be secured to walls with appropriate safety guards  |
|   |   | Е | Portable heaters should not be under desks and heating appliances should be well arranged  |
| 6 | To Avoid<br>Arson                                   | А | Add precautions by introducing external lighting, secure boundaries, increased security patrols, or external CCTV.               |
|   | To Avoid  | А | Introduce a permit to work system for contractors who carry out 'hot work' involving processes such as welding or flame cutting. |
|   | Explosion &   | В | Designate smoking areas.   |
|   | residents,  | С | Prohibiting smoking in residential buildings should be enforced.   |
| 7 | Outside   | D | Appropriate safety data sheets should be verified  |
|   | Contractor and<br>Building                          | Е | Training to all persons for appropriate firefighting equipment should be taken into account.                                     |
|   | Works<br>Hazards                                    | F | Hazard management of explosives should be inspected frequently   |
|   | ind di us   | G | Isolating dangerous substances has to be by competent persons.   |
| 8 | To Avoid<br>Natural Fires<br>Due to<br>Lightning    | A | A suitable lightning protection system should be added to the building.  |
|   | 0 0   |   | Suggestions for protection   |
|   |   |   |  |
|   |   | А | Inform visitors and guests of fire evacuation arrangements in the building.  |
|   | Enhancement<br>of Procedures<br>and<br>Arrangements | В | Coordinate fire safety arrangements with other occupants through the managing agents in the building.                            |
|   |   | С | A suitable job description should be appointed for/by a fire safety manager in writing   |
| 1 |   | D | Provide details of the fire emergency plan to residents during fire awareness training.  |
|   |   | E | Inform maintenance contractors and cleaners of the fire evacuation arrangements and working of safety systems in the building.   |
|   |   | F | Fire information and instruction details should be recorded in the fire emergency plan.  |
|   |   | G | Appoint sufficient fire wardens to help in evacuating the premises.  |
| 2 | To Increase<br>Efficiency of                        | А | Arrange fire drills at least once every six months for the building occupants and workers  |
| L | Training and<br>Drills                              | В | Coordinate fire safety training and fire drills with other occupiers through building managers.                                  |
| 3 |   | Α | Schedule regular inspections and maintenance.  |
|   | To Improve<br>Testing and<br>Maintenance            | В | Ensure verification of emergency lighting is carried out by competent persons on a monthly basis.                                |
|   |   | С | Ensure weekly tests and periodic inspection of sprinkler installations are carried out and recorded by competent persons.        |
|   |   | D | Ensure that appropriate methods of training are made available for workers with language difficulties.                           |
|   |   | Е | Monthly checks and annual maintenance of portable firefighting   |

|   |   |   | appliances should be carried out by competent persons.  |
|---|---|---|---|
|   |   | F | Ensure that weekly fire alarm tests and periodic servicing is carried out   |
|   |   | A | Buildings (especially multi-storey buildings) should be constructed to<br>ensure that fire, heat and smoke will not spread through the building to<br>the extent that people are unable to use the escape routes. |
|   |   | В | The existing escape routes should be adequate for the numbers and type<br>of people that may need to use them, e.g. members of the public, young<br>people, and disabled people.                                  |
|   |   | С | The width of the escape corridors should be no less than 1.2 metres.  |
| 4 | To Improve<br>Means of                            | D | The exits and the escape routes should lead as directly as possible to a place of total safety.   |
|   | Escape Level                                      | E | Install suitable interlocks on doors normally kept closed for security reasons and openable when necessary in the direction of escape.  |
|   |   | F | Fire doors should be provided with appropriate fire door signs, such as<br>"fire door keep shut" and "fire door keeps locked," at eye level on both<br>faces of the fire doors.                                   |
|   |   | G | The people who work in the building should be aware of the importance<br>of maintaining the safety of the escape routes by ensuring that fire doors<br>are not wedged or held open.                               |
|   |   | А | Combustible construction and fire-resisting should be verified.   |
|   | To Protect the<br>Spread of Fire                  | В | Frequent programs for testing and maintenance of fire dampers and control systems should be well followed.  |
| 5 |   | С | Appropriate signs, such as firefighting equipment and emergency telephones signs, and storage of hazardous substances should be well managed.   |
|   |   | D | The capacity of the emergency lighting system should be from 1 to 3 hours in duration.  |
|   | To Improve  | А | Ensure there is a backup power supply for emergency lighting.   |
| 6 | Escape<br>Lighting                                | В | Ensure there is emergency lighting to illuminate the escape routes and fire points with appropriate directional arrows and to indicate the secondary escape routes.   |
|   | To improve<br>Fire Safety<br>Signs and<br>Notices | А | Maintain all necessary signs and notices so that they continue to be correct, legible, and easily understood.   |
| 7 |   | В | The means of warning should be clearly heard or be perceptible and<br>understood by everyone throughout the whole building when initiated<br>from a single point.   |
|   |   | С | Ensure red flashing lights are linked to the fire alarm system. Install an auto-dialler device to inform a remote manned centre of a fire alarm activation via a secure telephone line.                           |
| 8 | To Improve<br>Fire Warning                        | A | The fire control panel should be located at an exit and visible to<br>emergency services from the outside of the building. Provide a repeater<br>panel on the front face of the building.                         |
|   |   | В | There should be enough fire extinguishers, they should be located close<br>to fire hazards, and positioned so they can be used without exposing the<br>user to increased risk.                                    |
|   |   | С | Firefighting appliances should be maintained and checked at least monthly.  |

## **DynamicFire Tool**

The fire risk assessment method developed in this research was used to develop the Dynamicfire tool. This tool was developed in the Microsoft Excel platform. The user interface of Dynamicfire is presented in Figures 2-5.



FIGURE 2: ANALYSIS OF THREATS AND PREVENTIVE SAFEGUARDS USING FAULT TREE ANALYSIS



FIGURE 3: PROTECTIVE SAFEGUARDS ANALYSIS



FIGURE 4: ANALYSIS OF PROTECTIVE SAFEGUARDS WITH IMPACT OF SCENARIOS



FIGURE 5: RISK LEVEL FOR EIGHT SCENARIOS

The developed tool helps to define the probability of fire incidents by determining the probability of threats with preventions and safeguards using fault tree analysis. The tool enables the determination of all possible scenario probabilities based on the existing safeguards with ETA. The impact level of all scenarios on people, properties, environment, and reputation are considered. The risk is then determined for all scenarios. The user manual of DynamicFire tool is attached as Appendix B.

### FEATURES OF DYNAMIC FIRE TOOL

The developed fire risk assessment method for MURB is a unique approach for determining the fire risks level in MURBs. The advantages of this model are: (i) identifications of common threats and probabilities of occurrence of a fire incident, (ii) Identification of preventive and protective safeguards and their probabilities, (iii) determine level impact on people, properties, environment and reputation, (iv) Determine risk level taking probability of scenario with level of impact, (v) Safeguards for prevention and protection are found to reduce fire incident probability and the impact of consequences.

Other benefits of the proposed tool are as follows:

**Enhanced fire risk management decision making:** The proposed tool will enhance the local fire department's ability in making risk-based decisions in daily operation as well as for long-term capital investment and resource allocation for effective fire risk management. The fire department could strategically locate the fire engines in areas where MURB with highest fire risk. An annual fire risk assessment using the proposed method would inform insurance companies of the fire risk level of a building.

**Flexibility:** The user-friendly interface will allow users to change the parameters according to the current context. Furthermore, based on up-to-date information, users could adjust the fire risk probabilities. No expert input is required for the use of this tool.

**Excel-based platform:** Excel-based platform will allow wider adoption of this tool. Therefore, benefits of this method could be reaped by a wider group of users, from building managers, to fire departments and insurance providers.

For the efficient and effective execution of this project, the research team consisted of two principal investigators who have diverse and in-depth experience of civil infrastructure and life cycle assessment, environmental risk assessment, and engineering decision making. In the last decade, these two researchers have been involved in numerous national and international projects related to various environmental and public health risk assessment related projects.

### Future Research

The method developed in this research can be enhanced in the following areas.

**Regional fire risk assessment:** The Same concept can be used to predict the fire risk of various types of buildings and other facilities. By combining the aforementioned risks, a regional fire risk level could be determined. Geographic information systems (GIS) could be used to present the

individual and regional fire risk level. This information will assist in regional planning as well as fire risk management planning.

**Incorporating data uncertainty:** Data uncertainty can be accounted for by using the suitable mathematical methods (e.g., fuzzy logic). Moreover, a method such as fuzzy set theory enables the incorporation of vague, qualitative, and uncertain information into the analysis. This approach will further enhance the analysis method.

**Time modelling:** The proposed method can be extended to analyze threats, safeguards, and consequences with time. This analysis will enable prioritizing scenarios and find the appropriate safeguards for each scenario.

**Developing a web-based tool:** Developing the proposed method using a web-based approach will enable easy adoption and access to a wider community. The web portal could become a database with detailed fire risk information about various MURBs in the region. This data would support better resource allocation to mitigate fire risks.

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**Dr. Rachid Ouache:** Dr. Rachid Ouache has received his Bachelors, Masters and Ph.D. in process safety engineering. He has worked on two main projects in his academic career: (i) Risk assessment in petrochemical industries; and (ii) Investigating effects of different active fire safety strategies in high-rise buildings. He has received several medals: bronze, silver, and gold, at national and international levels.

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## Appendix A

Factors contributing to the fire incidence in MURBs were identified from the literature.

| Category | Criteria                 | Subcriteria                           | Reference     |
|----------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| Exterior | Physical/Natural         |                                       | [43]          |
| Factors  | Environment              |                                       |               |
|          | Climate                  | Heating degree days                   | [44]          |
|          | Adjoining buildings      | Vacancy rate                          | [44][45]      |
|          |                          | (In the neighbourhood)                |               |
|          |                          | Proximity to the adjoining structure  | [46]          |
| Building | Age of the building      |                                       | [44][47][48]  |
|          | Building height and area |                                       | [49]          |
|          | Quality of construction  | Existing layout and construction      | [44]          |
|          |                          | Material                              | [50][51]      |
|          | Interior                 | Availability of flammable articles    | [50]          |
|          |                          | Housekeeping                          | [46]          |
|          |                          | Dangerous substances: storage and use | [46]          |
|          |                          | Electrical system safety              | [46][51]      |
|          |                          | Insulated core panels                 | [46]          |
|          |                          | Heating and cooling system            | [51]          |
|          | Past incidents           |                                       | [49]          |
| Human    | Occupancy                |                                       | [44][49] [48] |
| Action   | Income                   |                                       | [48]          |
|          | Demographics             |                                       | [44][51] [49] |
|          | Knowledge & experience   | Education                             | [44][52][51]  |
|          |                          | Powers of judgement & Observation     | [53] [48]     |
|          | Life style               | Smoking                               | [46]          |
|          |                          | Arson                                 | [46] [48]     |

## TABLE 6: IDENTIFICATION OF RISK CRITERIA

## Appendix B

"DynamicFire" is a fire risk assessment tool for multi-unit residential buildings (MURB), that supports risk management decisions to minimize fire risk and its adverse impacts on residential buildings. "DynamicFire" assists users in the following tasks:

- 1. Prediction of fire risk in buildings
- 2. Suggestions for fire risk management

#### **GUIDELINES:**

This tool operates on the Microsoft Excel platform. The users could change the data in the cells with a background of "sky blue" colour and white font colour to a specific building. The steps for applying the tool are as follows:

**Identify threats, preventive and their respective probabilities:** Identify threats, preventive and their respective probabilities in constructing the left-hand side (fault tree) of the Bow-tie. Literature-based probabilities are already included in the tool. However, users can modify the probabilities according to a specific building. Figure 6 presents the common threats causing fire incidents for MURBs, preventive safeguards and their respective probabilities.



FIGURE 6: ANALYSIS OF THREATS AND PREVENTIVE SAFEGUARDS USING FAULT TREE ANALYSIS

**Define safeguards:** The common safeguards are defined in ETA for fire incidents protection along with the probabilities of success and failure. Eight suggested safeguards and three fire protections are defined: (i) smoking material with a failure probability of 3.0E-01, (ii) sprinkler system with a failure probability of 4.0E-02, and (iii) regular evacuation drills with a failure probability of 2.0E-01. The suggested safeguards for protection will decrease scenario probabilities (Figures 7-8). The probability for each scenario is defined using the probability of a fire incident with the probability of the success of safeguards.



FIGURE 7: PROTECTIVE SAFEGUARDS ANALYSIS

**Define the scenarios:** scenarios are used to estimate the impact on four factors; people, property, environment, and reputation. Various impact levels for categories were defined based on literature and expert consultation. Users need to define the scenarios based on their knowledge (Figure 8).



FIGURE 8: ANALYSIS OF PROTECTIVE SAFEGUARDS WITH IMPACT OF SCENARIOS

**Fire risk definition:** The fire risk level for the MURB can be defined using a five-level scale. Table 7 presents the fire risk levels for MURBs. Risk level is defined using the Table 7 and Figure 6.

| TABLE 7: RISK LEVELS |       |                                     |
|----------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|
| Risk                 | Level | Definition                          |
| Absolutely           | 5     | Urgent action required              |
| Extreme              | 4     | Immediate action required           |
| High                 | 3     | Senior management action required   |
| Moderate             | 2     | Management responsibility specified |
| Low                  | 1     | Managed by routine procedures       |



FIGURE 9: RISK LEVEL FOR EIGHT SCENARIOS

![](_page_28_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_28_Picture_1.jpeg)

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