

Canvas residents begin moving in July 25

CALGARY – A little more than a year after a fire devastated their homes, residents of the Canvas condominium complex in Millrise are moving back in.

For Gord House, site superintendent of the rebuild, it was particularly gratifying.

“I was the assistant supervisor of the original build,” says House. “It was nice to see the work we had done back then get restored.”

It was a year ago March 19, 2010, when a fire ripped through the condominium, destroying about half of the 159 units. The building was about 90 per cent occupied at the time. Some 400 people were directly impacted by the fire.

Fire officials said at the time the fire started was the result of careless disposal of smoking material.

Calgary’s Emergency Management Agency deemed the building uninhabitable and turned the building over to the owners. The condo board decided how best to proceed.

It was decided to repair the complex and Medican Construction, which had built the building originally, was contracted to undertake the repairs and make it habitable again.

Residents whose units suffered water damage were handed keys in March.

With the waterside work completed, the crews on the site turned their full attention to completing work on the fireside.

“It was a job filled with challenges,” says House. “We had 50 labourers working just to clear out the contents of the building.”

House says that a few units remain have to be painted, but residents of the fireside started moving in Monday.

In the year since the fire broke out, changes were made to the building codes and there are now sprinkler systems in the attic, closets and on decks.

The rebuild of the condominium unit cost \$12 million and was covered by insurance.

Earlier this month, the condominium project received its occupancy permit for the fireside damage.

Residents whose homes were destroyed in the fire began moving in July 25.

House says all residents will be in their homes by August 31.

Medican Chief Restructuring Officer Tyrone Schneider says the work on condos demonstrates the value of the Companies’ Creditors Arrangement Act (CCAA).

“What CCAA allowed us to do,” says Schneider, “is continue operating as a company to the benefit of all secured and unsecured creditors. Because of CCAA, we were able to take this company – with millions of dollars in debt – and turn it around. The process allowed us to continue operations and as a result Medican won the bid to rebuild the Canvas condos in Calgary, which were destroyed by fire.”

Medican entered CCAA protection on May 26 of last year. Tyrone Schneider was appointed by Court of Queen’s Bench as Chief Restructuring Officer.

“Thanks to the process of CCAA,” says Schneider, “we will be emerging a stronger, financially sound company in the weeks ahead.”

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