

# Judge Grants Emergency Order To Delay Demolition Of Lowell Apartment Building



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LOWELL (CBS) – The apartment building where seven people died in a fire in Lowell last week will not be torn down as planned on Tuesday. A lawyer representing the families of the victims has obtained a temporary restraining order to block crews from tearing it down.

The complex on Branch Street was gutted in the July 10 fire that killed five members of a Cambodian family and two others.

More than 40 other people lost their homes.

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There's still no official word on how the fire started.

**Attorney Douglas Sheff** says the families of those killed are simply looking for answers which they will only get from further investigation. **Sheff** says he would like to work on

the investigation with city officials but would conduct the investigation privately if needed.

A full hearing is scheduled for Thursday.

Part of the investigation is focused on the fire alarm system. Records at Lowell City Hall show the smoke and carbon monoxide detectors were operating properly during an inspection in March 2013. But WBZ-TV's I-Team reports that police and fire crews responding to Thursday's fire did not hear any alarms going off inside the building.

There were also reports from witnesses of fireworks or explosions going off inside the complex, which was built in 1890.

Officials did say that they don't believe the building had sprinklers and that they were not required.