

Inspectors find danger in Montreal parking structures

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The agency that enforces Quebec's building code found problems in six Montreal parking lot structures soon after a man died in a collapse last November.

The death, at a parking structure on 135 Deguire, prompted a blitz of inspections in the city.

Reports retrieved by CJAD through an Access to Information request reveal that provincial inspectors uncovered multiple defects in the structures they looked at, including cracked support posts and concrete that threatened to fall from the ceiling.

One member of the public complained of acid leaking from the roof. The name of the author was withheld in the documents' release, but the letter to the Régie du bâtiment du Québec says that a liquid was leaking from the roof of the parking structure connected with the apartment building 1520 Docteur Penfield Ave.

"The mechanic who repaired a car that was damaged told us that the liquid in question was an acid," the letter says in French. "Please understand that many renters are worried about the situation and fear having to live through what happened to the renters in the St.-Laurent suburb (the deadly collapse of an underground parking lot)."

The Doctor Penfield Ave. structure was shut down to the public within days, with an inspector saying it "represented a danger." Although it was still closed, a manager for the owner, Le Mont-Belliard Inc., says no acid was dripping from the ceiling. "Of course not," says Marc Barchichat, "why would there be?"

Five other parking structures were inspected, and though all were found to have problems, two were not closed to the public.

The other three are still completely or partially off-limits.

A two-level structure connected with apartments at 5120 Earnscliffe had corroded and exposed bars in its frame, concrete that threatened to come loose, and a cracked support beam. Two thirds of the structure was damaged, and it is still closed.

Another apartment building at 5875 Cavendish had two levels of its structure declared off-limits after an inspector also found corroded bars, loose concrete, and cracks in the structure that were being filled with water. "It looks bad," the inspector wrote in the margins of the report.

Another structure, attached to the Days Hotel and Conference center on 1005 rue Guy has a section open for hotel guests only, but three levels are still closed to the general public.