

MILWAUKEE COUNTY FIRST

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MCF: Safety Inspections of All Milwaukee County Buildings Needed Immediately

On Thursday, June 24, 2010, a large concrete façade fell off of the parking structure at O'Donnell Park. Tragically, the façade struck three people, killing a fifteen year old boy and injuring two other people. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the victims and their families as they try to cope with their injuries and loss.

Within hours of this tragedy, Milwaukee County Board Chairman Lee Holloway called for a safety inspection of all Milwaukee County buildings and structures. Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker criticized Holloway's calling for the audit and claimed that it was "irresponsible."

However, there is more than enough reason for a safety inspection to be done now. If anything, it actually should have been done long ago.

In 2008, some park rest rooms [had to be closed](#) because they were found to be unsafe and unserviceable. In 2009, [a Milwaukee County](#) audit found many of the county parks buildings and other parts of the infrastructure to be in deep disrepair and in an unsafe condition. Earlier this year, a large part of the [courthouse cornice](#) fell off, even though an inspection in 2008 warned that [repairs needed to be done](#). Most recently, an inspection of the mental health complex found it to be in "[shoddy condition](#)," and required immediate repairs.

"In 2007, when the bridge in Minnesota collapsed into the Mississippi River, Republican Governor Pawlenty and the governors of several other states ordered an immediate safety inspection of the bridges in their respective states," said Chris Liebenthal, Chair of Milwaukee County First. "No one called them irresponsible or accused them of playing politics with that horrific event."

"It doesn't matter whether the tragedy at O'Donnell Park was caused by poor construction, a design flaw, deferred maintenance or something else," continued Liebenthal. "An immediate inspection of all the county structures is the only responsible thing to do, before someone else gets hurt. For Scott Walker to state otherwise makes one wonder who is really playing politics with this senseless tragedy."

Milwaukee County First is a registered 501(c)4 non-profit organization based in Milwaukee County.

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