

Bronx tenants sue to oust their landlord

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Tenants of a six-story building in the Bronx filed a lawsuit Monday calling for the Bronx Housing Court to appoint an independent administrator to take over the property from its landlord. The property has been identified as one of New York City's 200 worst-maintained buildings by the city Department of Housing Preservation and Development.

Some 30 tenants at the 56-unit apartment building, located at 2710 Bainbridge Ave., claim that the landlord, known as Semper Fi Management II Corp. or Semper Fi Management 4 Corp., has failed to fix nearly 200 emergency code violations, including collapsing ceilings and walls, broken windows, mold, exposed wiring and leaking and defective piping, as well as roach and rodent infestations.

"It is rare to see conditions as severe as in this building," said Garrett Wright, the staff attorney with the Urban Justice Center who is representing the tenants in this case, in a statement. "With housing code violations on such a massive scale, tenants have a right to call on the city and the courts to intervene. By New York City's laws, this landlord is obliged to provide decent housing conditions and adequate services."

Semper Fi Management could not be reached immediately for comment.

According to the lawsuit, the building needs approximately \$800,000 worth of repairs for common areas and individual apartments. The tenants are asking the court to appoint an independent administrator to take over the property, collect rent and make necessary repairs on behalf of the landlord. Some of the rent would go toward fixing apartments. The lawsuit also calls for the administrator to "be authorized to borrow up to \$20,000 per dwelling unit or \$100,000, whichever is greater."

Semper Fi Management is reportedly linked to Frank Palazzolo, who was recently listed by *The Village Voice* as one of the worst landlords in the city. Mr. Palazzolo could not be reached for comment on this article.