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Alderman urges drug house demolition

By RENATO GANDIA

The wrecking ball is inching closer to swinging on abandoned properties littered across the city that were once drug houses.

Ald. Diane Colley-Urquhart, who first told the Sun about the problem, will ask city council Monday to amend a city bylaw giving the fire chief the authority to demolish any structure that has been used in the production or manufacture of illegal drugs.

Currently, there are about 150 abandoned properties in Calgary, about 100 of which were drug factories, said Colley-Urquhart.



The alderman wants the city to demolish the potentially dangerous homes whose owners won't fix them and cover the costs of demolition by acquiring the properties.

"It's very difficult for the police to exercise the authority they need, they're more constrained," she said.

"If you have one of these houses sitting on your street for three years, people would realize that we need to do something about the problem," said Colley-Urquhart.

"They cause the deterioration of the neighbourhood, they're unsafe for children."