

## Condo Smarts

Headline: Model Communities

Topic: Consultants

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**Dear Condo Smarts:** Our strata is a multi-unit series of apartment style buildings in Burnaby built in 1972. In 2008 we hired an engineering firm to perform building envelope inspection for our complex. Overall our buildings are in good shape; however, our roofs were in need of replacement on our pool building and one residential building. With the help of our site manager, and our consultant, we underwent a series of estimates on products and installation costs, and we managed to replace the roofing systems on all three of our buildings for the cost of what originally projected to be two buildings. By using a Canadian-based torch on product, and tendering our pricing with specs written by our consultant, we saved over \$600,000. The owners are happy and secure with the results and we have a 10-year manufacturer's warranty on labour and material, and the successful contractor's 15 warranty in addition. The consultant's fee was marginal and invaluable considering their expertise, and project supervision and inspection. Robina Gaskell, Loughheed Estates

**Dear Robina:** It is important for strata councils in the province to experience the success of other strata corporations. We are all too often inundated with bad news stories, but over all we have the pleasure of working with many communities that execute proper planning, funding and scheduling of repairs and maintenance. It is always more cost effective and beneficial for the owners to

plan in the long term for both your future financial needs and for routine maintenance and renewals. Whenever buyers are looking at buying a strata titled property they should take a look at the maintenance schedules and long-term planning. If the buildings are well maintained and the strata is planning for the financial needs of future repairs, it is a good indication that this is a mature and competent community. Whenever a contractor tries to discourage a client from using an independent consultant who performs technical writing, tendering and supervision on major construction, my alarm bells go off. Qualified and competent consultants provide an invaluable service. Their goal is to ensure you get the appropriate repairs/renewals, proper tender documents are created so everyone is bidding on the same job and you get the best job for the best price, and that the work you pay for is what you get. At the end of the project, there is no way to ensure you can meet these conditions without an independent person acting on your behalf. Loughheed Estates is a model community that is almost 40 years old. The owners support and respect each other, the strata maintains and repairs the property, and the value and asset of each unit is well protected. There are many strata corporations that fit this model in the province. Congratulations on such a successful project.

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