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## Strata Living

Headline: Common area mail boxes

Topics: Mailboxes

Publication / Date: 24 Hours, May 4, 2017

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**Dear Tony:** Our strata corporation recently had a break in that affected the mail boxes in our lobby. In addition to the break in, there was significant damage and vandalism to the mail boxes. Council has told owners they are responsible for the repair of each of their mail boxes, but this is not part of our strata lot so how is that possible? We don't have any bylaws that control our mail boxes so we don't know how they came to this conclusion. How will owners expect to get their mail until these repairs are done?

*DM New Westminster*

**Dear DM:** In your strata corporation, as is the case in most common area lobbies that hold the owner mail boxes, the mail boxes are common property. Common property is the responsibility of the strata corporation to maintain and repair. This could be an insurance claim or a common expense of the strata corporation to repair or replace the mail boxes. Security access, such as the lock or key is generally up to each owner to manage in the event they lose their keys or jam their locks; however, it is always easier to manage costs and collect fees when the strata corporation has a clear bylaw or rule that regulates this activity and sets user fees for the replacement keys or locks. One of the problems that occurs in mail box areas, especially in older buildings, is the ability to repair the damages. It is often necessary to replace the entire system which may take months if the parts or new product are not available, or approval of the owners is required for additional funds. In the duration, owners and tenants may want to set up delivery or postal service at their local postal outlet until the mail boxes have been repaired.