

# Condominium Home Owners Association

A non-profit association serving strata owners since 1976

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## Condo Smarts

Headline: Strata has say on tree disposal

Topic: Christmas tree disposal

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At our office we're never amazed at the variety of calls and complaints we receive after each holiday season. Disposal of Christmas trees is a crisis for many strata owners and their tenants.

As a resident owner or landlord, if you or your renter causes damage or violate bylaws by improperly disposing of trees, you may be responsible for those damages. It's bizarre that residents often want to toss their trees from their balconies to avoid being caught having a live tree because it's against the bylaws.

In our experience, here are but four crises caused by falling trees:

- The ground-floor skylights of a town home unit were cracked and leaked like a sieve after a tree landed on them.
- One neighbour's new Lincoln proved not to be dent-resistant – especially when impacted by a blunt 20-kg missile from the seventh floor.
- Branches of trees have caught on to the downspouts halfway down the building, with resulting disastrous damage.
- The deck of a swimming pool sustained cracks and leaks causing extensive damage throughout the underground parking area.

**Strata Law:** Many strata corporations have strict bylaws and rules governing Christmas trees and decorations. Often live trees are prohibited or there are clear rules on how to dispose of the trees. Live trees can be fire hazards, cause wall and carpet damage during transit and should never be thrown from balconies or decks.

Owners or residents who dispose of their trees inappropriately can be found paying for the damages and the violations of the bylaws and rules.

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