

Condominium Home Owners Association

A non-profit association serving strata owners since 1976

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Condo Smarts

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One of the bizarre problems that can plague strata corporations is the oldest profession, prostitution. What to do when prostitutes or escort services are being marketed out of a strata lot?

One Victoria high-rise currently houses five separate strata lots thus engaged. The business itself is a concern of the council, but the side effects have created a grave concern over security breaches, violent encounters, property devaluation and building maintenance problems. As one council member put it: "We're not questioning the morality of the business, but why should we have to deal with the associated crime, damage and security problems?"

Strata Law: There may be several methods of addressing this issue. The bylaws may restrict businesses. They may require that strata lots be occupied by tenants who adhere to their intended use. There may also be bylaws regarding common-area keys, parking locations, noise or nuisance. The strata may also be able to recover the cost of damages caused by a strata lot or its visitors. Several of the strata lots are also rentals. Because of the crime and constant bylaw violations, the strata council is acting on section 138 of the act and is proceeding with eviction.

Tips: Other than enforcement of bylaws, the strata should undertake an aggressive security program. After-hours security guards or a doorman, recorded security cameras, restricted access after hours and a general public awareness by all residents will be helpful.

In addition, all crime should be reported to the police and the council. The local police department may also be will to help your council assess your security plan. Their experience and advice on this matter have been very successful for many strata corporations throughout the province.

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