

Condominium Home Owners Association

A non-profit association serving strata owners since 1976

Bulletin: 300-116

Condo Smarts

Headline: Buyer Beware

Topic: Buying – Schedule of unit entitlement

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The members of a Maple Ridge townhouse complex are at odds over who pays what share of their new roofing.

There are 42 townhouses, 20 of them with basements and 20 of them without. The people with basements are having to pay twice as much for the roof as the others. One owner who recently bought such a basement unit thought all the units were the same, and hadn't realized that the costs would be different.

At the time she purchased her unit (and requested information about the purchase) all that was disclosed to her was the amount she would pay in strata fees. She never thought to compare her strata fees with the fees for units without basements. Now, much to her surprise, she has discovered that in addition to higher strata fees, her neighbour is paying only a \$2,500 special levy for the roof and she is paying \$5,000.

Strata Law: The schedule of unit entitlement - the amount of strata fee payments for each unit and for special levies - is generally created according to a formula based on area. Each unit is assigned its portion or share of the liability. In this case, because the basements double the floor area, the fees for suites with basements were doubled. The strata may amend the schedule with a unanimous vote, but if there has been no amendment the Act requires that common expenses must be calculated using this schedule.

Tips: This owner should have reviewed the registered strata plan and fee. The schedule affects virtually every common expense you pay in a strata. Before you buy, review the schedule of unit entitlement.

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