

Condominium Home Owners Association

A non-profit association serving strata owners since 1976

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Condo Smarts

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Topic: Election signs

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Prior to the call of this year's B.C. election, a province-wide property management firm issued a notice to all of their clients. It advised them that only election signs approved by the managers and councils of the buildings would be permitted to be displayed. The notice advised owners that the signs' location, size and method of installation would be the criteria according to which they would be approved. A number of owners are upset, questioning whether the management firm, managers and councils have the authority to do this.

Strata Law: A key issue regarding political signage is whether it will be placed on common property or on part of the individual strata lot. Signage limitations can be enforced on common property according to either rules or a bylaw, while signage that is displayed within the property lines of an individual strata lot can only be limited if a bylaw is in place.

The Canada Elections Act states that no landlord or condominium corporation may prohibit a tenant from displaying election advertising posters on the premises of his or her unit. However, it also says that "reasonable conditions" may be set regarding the size or type of signage on the premises and signage may be entirely restricted in common areas.

Tips: Developing sensible guidelines with regard to signage is a helpful strategy that allows opinions to be expressed while maintaining the civilized expectations of proper strata life. During the last federal election several owners displayed digital and neon flashing signs from their lots in a strata building where the corporation had not limited the type of signage. This caused a disruptive nuisance to other owners. What you display from your strata lot - whether it is signage, window coverings or interior lighting - should not cause this kind of disruption to other owners.

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