

Condominium Home Owners Association

A non-profit association serving strata owners since 1976

Bulletin: 300-150

Condo Smarts

Headline: Ask before you renovate

Topic: Renovations

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Dear Condo Smarts: We are planning a kitchen/den renovation, interior only, which entails removing a bearing wall, adding a gas line for a stovetop and a bit of rewiring. We have engaged a structural engineer and design consultant for the drawings and building permit. All work will be done by licensed contractors. Do we need strata approval?

- R.A. Muster

additional conditions and requirements such as legal costs, insurance conditions, engineering reports, municipal permits and liability insurance may also be required. Before you renovate, you must ask your council.

Dear Mr. Muster: Yes. The standard bylaws of the strata act require written approval of the strata corporation before undertaking any of the following: alterations that involve building structure; the building exterior, chimneys, stairs, balconies or other exterior attachments, doors, windows, or exterior skylights, or that front onto common property; fences, railings or similar structures that enclose a patio, balcony or yard, common property located within the boundaries of a strata lot. Included also are those parts of the strata lot which the strata must insure, such as floor and wall coverings, electrical and plumbing fixtures.

The list seems long, but any of these items can have a significant impact on the strata, on a neighbouring unit, and on the status of the insurance for the strata and the home owner. The strata may require a written agreement for the obligation of maintenance and repair, and owners should review their own bylaws closely. Many

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