

Condominium Home Owners' Association

Serving BC's Strata Property Owners since 1976

Bulletin: 300-195

Condo Smarts

Headline: In-suite laundry needs building permits, permission

Topic: Alterations

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Dear Condo Smarts: We live in an older apartment (now condo) building in Nanaimo. There has always been a central laundry facility on the first floor that served all the owners. Now two owners on the third floor have installed washers/dryers and venting without permission. This strangely seems to coincide with owners on the first floor complaining about soap suds in their toilets. Can owners alter their own plumbing and electrical without the permission of the strata corporation?

-- John & Lilly

that the strata-lot owner to restore the unit and common property to the same condition as it was prior to the alteration. Many older buildings have shared laundry facilities. While they are not always convenient, they are economical both for the strata and the residents, and they greatly reduce the risk of dryer-related fires in strata lots and washing-machine flooding over multiple floors.

Dear John & Lilly: Owners may make alterations to their strata lots without the permission of the corporation that do not change the structure of the strata lot, or affect the common facilities, as permitted in the bylaws.

Basically this means decorating, no more.

Critical in your case is your third-floor owners altered and damaged the building exterior by coring vents through the building exterior systems, which are common property, as well as part of their strata lots. All these actions required the written permission of the strata corporation and building permits.

So, in this case the strata council needs to proceed with bylaw enforcement.

Options include fining the third-floor owners in accordance with your bylaws and requiring

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