

# Condominium Home Owners' Association

*Serving BC's Strata Property Owners since 1976*

Bulletin: 300-217

## Condo Smarts

Headline: Don't ignore routine maintenance

Topic: Maintenance

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**Dear Condo Smarts:** We manage over 100 strata corporations. although most understand, at least in principle, that they are required to repair and maintain common property, we often deal with councils and/or owners at general meetings that just don't seem to get it when it comes to approving getting the actual work done, whether it's fixing balconies, leaking roofs, leaking windows etc.

This is very frustrating for Bayside, and the owners who want to do the right thing and keep their property maintained to a reasonable standard, because it often seems impossible to get a 3/4 vote to spend any money. Any suggestions?

-- *Allen Regan, Bayside Property Services*

**Dear Allen:** We know by law that the strata must maintain and repair the common property.

In BC we have over 33,000 strata corporations and over 1.3 million strata units. Many of these neglect their buildings.

I often use the example of hot water boilers in wood frame buildings. Fix it before it fails and you have a basic expenditure.

Respond to an emergency repair and insurance claim and you spend two to three times as much.

It really is a simple choice: maintain the building systems every year at a controlled cost, or wait till they fail and be faced with

crippling special assessments and over-inflated construction costs.

A great starting place is an inventory of the building systems. Often owners are simply not aware of what they are neglecting. They live in a strata and hire a management service so they don't have to deal with the routine maintenance and repair of buildings.

An annual report to the council and owners including a detailed list of all building systems requiring both short and long-term maintenance and replacement cost, is a critical tool in budget planning and protecting the owners' investments.

The list should include: roofing, skylights, roof top heating and ventilation systems, gutter cleaning, decks and patios, windows and building cladding, heating and hot water systems, plumbing and drainage services, security, landscaping including tree maintenance and irrigation, waste disposal systems, enter-phone systems, underground parking, security gates and sump pumps, fire safety systems, dryer vent cleaning, insurance, general building envelope maintenance and water proofing, and any maintenance requirements set out in warranties on building systems for both old and new buildings.

Smaller stratas that may not hire a building management company should keep careful records on all these issues as well.

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