

## Condominium Home Owners' Association

*Serving BC's Strata Property Owners since 1976*

Bulletin: 300-227

### Condo Smarts

Headline: Vote to outlaw lock boxes

Topic: Selling\_Lock Boxes

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*This is the second in a six-part series on buying and selling a condo*

**Dear Condo Smarts:** In the last six months our strata corporation has experienced constant vandalism and break-ins to strata lots.

We could never find the source of the entry because common doors were never damaged — until last week, when we noticed a real estate agent placing keys for a strata lot and the common areas into a lock box that was then attached to our entry railing.

We questioned what he was doing and he advised us we couldn't stop him because the strata cannot prevent an owner from freely selling his or her strata lot.

This makes no sense to our council. Why does the safety and security of owners take a back seat to vendors?

*-- The Council of Connaught Terraces, Burnaby*

**Dear Council Members:** Lock boxes are used for the convenience of realtors to permit access to the buildings and units without the vendor's realtor being there, but they are the security scourge of strata corporations.

There are a few common types —ones that are locked on a railing, and ones that are either screwed to a door or in a wall.

None of them work safely for the strata and many strata corporations pass bylaws that prohibit them.

Once your security is breached, personal property is at risk, the strata may be exposed to vandalism, and your residents' personal safety is compromised.

Lock boxes that are screwed to the exterior of the building also cause damage to the walls and siding, which can seriously affect your warranty or worse. When someone rips them off the wall you're left with expensive damages.

No one has rights over common property that are not permitted by the strata corporation, including installation of lock boxes.

Canvas your owners. Odds are, they will gladly prohibit them by creating appropriate bylaws.

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