

Condominium Home Owners' Association

Serving BC's Strata Property Owners since 1976

Bulletin: 300-254

Condo Smarts

Headline: Drainage a strata problem

Topic: Drainage and maintenance programs

Publication date: November 18, 2007

Publication: The Province

Written by: Tony Gioventu

Dear Condo Smarts: We are desperate and don't know where to turn.

For the third time this year, the drainage system outside our townhouse has failed and our living room has been flooded. We have written to the strata council on numerous occasions, requesting that the drain lines be maintained and they have simply refused.

The council claims that the drainage is our responsibility, but how can we be responsible for maintaining pipes that are not in our strata lot and that everyone else's units drain into? Please tell us who pays for drainage maintenance and repairs, the strata corporation or each owner?

-- Mrs. M. Daniels, North Vancouver

Dear Mrs. Daniels: Many strata corporations spend all of their resources on the water that comes into our homes, but often neglect where it goes once we're done with it.

Internal drains for sewage and domestic services can ultimately do more damage to buildings because they often contain grey contaminated water. Likewise, external drainage systems, downspouts and gutters, weeping tiles in perimeters and landscaped areas, parking garage sumps, and deck and balcony drains are also part of the common services of the corporation and require routine maintenance.

In both building-type and bare-land strata corporations, drainage in common areas is the responsibility of the strata corporation. This is best left with the strata corporation so that the entire drainage system can be maintained under one contract.

The strata should commit to a preventive maintenance program to avoid backups and floods, or respond quickly to emergencies and coordinate any work for the entire development, making it much more economical for everyone.

Check your annual budget. Has your strata even funded maintenance of your drainage systems?

Ultimately, if the strata neglects their duties to maintain the system and this causes damage to your unit, you may want to consider court action to recover those losses.

For more information on CHOA resources and benefits visit www.choa.bc.ca
or contact the office at 1-877-353-2462 or email office@choa.bc.ca.

No part of this publication may be reproduced without the prior written permission of CHOA

This publication contains general information only and is not intended as legal advice. Use of this publication is at your own risk. CHOA will not be liable to you or any other person for any loss or damage arising from, connected with or relating to the use of this publication or any information contained herein by you or any other person.