

## Strata Living

Headline: Why we need council's approval before we change our carpets

Topic: Alterations; to a strata lot

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**Dear Tony:** Our strata council has sent a notice to all of the owners in our building advising that before we change our carpets, we require written permission. So we asked if this also required the strata to maintain the carpets and they replied no, it is only because the carpets are original. Please explain if this is correct, and if so, why we would have to seek the permission from council to change from an old carpet to a new carpet?

*Gina M. Coquitlam*

**Dear Gina:** It all depends on the bylaws of your strata corporation and whether your strata has retained Standard Bylaw 5 from the Strata Property Act. Standard bylaw 5 requires that before an owner alters those parts of a strata lot that the strata corporation must insure under section 149 of the Act, the owner requires written permission. Basically, this means anything that is an original fixture in the building and in the strata lot requires an owner to obtain written permission from council before they proceed. That would be those items that were built or installed by the owner developer that are attached to the building. The reason for this bylaw is so the strata corporation is informed about an owner making a change to items that are currently under the insurance policy of the strata corporation. It gives the strata the ability to maintain an inventory of those items they

are no longer required to insure, and advise the owner of the obligation to include these betterments under their own home owner policy. It is also a good practice as it requires owners and strata councils to review bylaws, where they may discover a bylaw that limits or prohibits the types of alterations that may be conducted in a strata lot, including changes such as removing the carpets and installing hard surface floors. The best practice in any strata: always seek written permission before you renovate or alter.

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