

## Strata Living

Headline: Changing my floors  
Topic: Flooring  
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**Dear Tony:** I just bought a great condo that is 18 years old. I have decided to upgrade the unit before I move in and have changed the lighting, repainted, added granite counters and I am having hardwood floors installed. The strata council stopped by last Saturday and gave me a notice of bylaw violation because they said hard wood floors were prohibited in the building. I read the bylaws closely and there is nothing in the bylaws to indicate hardwood floors are prohibited. Considering my floors were almost done, we completed the job on Saturday night. I received another notice form the council members advising that I had to remove the floors or cover them over with carpeting. Did I miss something? I don't want to get off on the wrong foot with my strata, but they seem to be very heavy handed.

*JM, Surrey*

**Dear JM:** You are correct. Your strata corporation does not have any bylaws that relate to floors and alterations. Your strata corporation have also completely repealed the *Standard Bylaws of the Act* and adopted a set of bylaws that have excluded any requirements about alterations to strata lots, which is a significant problem if an owner is wanting to make structural changes to their strata lot. Strata councils cannot impose conditions on strata lots. The strata council have the authority to enforce bylaws that have been adopted by the owners, and the standard bylaws, and their authority is limited to those applications. It is interesting to note that your strata corporation has adopted a rule recently that applies to

"alterations of flooring within the building that require strata approval". Council members frequently misunderstand the limitation on rules, and that they cannot apply to strata lots. Rules only apply to the use and enjoyment of common property and common assets or facilities. They are adopted by council and ratified by the owners at the next general meeting, and have a fine limit of \$50 per violation. Rules must also be attached to a Form B Information Certificate when an owner, buyer or their agents requests the document. Even though the strata does not have a bylaw relating to flooring or alteration to a strata lot, the change may result in higher noise levels which the strata corporation will have to address in the event of complaints.

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