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## Strata Living

Headline: Pet Problems

Topics: Pets

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**Dear Tony:** I live in a large townhouse development in Surrey. The strata corporation is family and pet friendly so there are several small children and many families with dogs. The challenge is a few dogs bark all day while their owners are at work, plus there have been several instances where owners have not picked up after their dogs and the kids have stepped in dog feces. The owners without dogs are starting to get angry at the owners with dogs. Strata council doesn't know what to do. How can we encourage our dog owners to be responsible?

*Howard D., Surrey*

**Dear Howard:** Every strata owner has a responsibility to clean up after their pet. Strata bylaws and rules should make this clear. Animals are part of our daily lives, but no one should have to live with the waste of their neighbour's pets. A good place to start is with a review of the strata corporation's bylaws. To assist with this query I took a look at the bylaws for Howard's strata and they specifically require owners pick up after their pets. The strata also has a bylaw that prohibits an owner, tenant, occupant or visitor from causing unreasonable noise.

Under the *Strata Property Act*, strata corporations may enforce a bylaw or rule by imposing a fine, remedying a contravention (including removal of objects from common property) or, in certain circumstances only, denying access to a recreational facility. The strata corporation may also decide to warn a person or give the person time to comply with the bylaw or rule prior

to enforcing it. However, before taking any steps to enforce a rule or bylaw, the strata corporation must follow the basic procedures established in the Act, and give the owner or tenant an opportunity to respond to the allegations, including the opportunity for a hearing if requested.

Communication in any strata corporation is important. Strata council may want to discuss this matter and remind all pet owners they must clean up after their pets plus excessive barking is not acceptable. Owners found not to be cleaning up after their pets or leaving dogs to bark all day will face bylaw enforcement.