
Strata Living

Headline: Who maintains dryer vent ducting?

Topics: Repair & Maintenance; Dryer Vents

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Dear Tony: Our strata is an 8 year old development in Kitsilano. We have been advised to have our dryer vents cleaned routinely to avoid moisture build and guarantee the best energy use of our dryers. Our strata is 28 units and the council says the owners are responsible for each dryer duct because they are exclusive use, but very few of the owners are getting the work done. What's the best approach to solving this problem?

Jenny B.

Dear Jenny: Pipes, wires, ducts and cables that are used in connection with other strata lots or pass through a ceiling or wall that forms and boundary between two strata lots or a strata lot and common property, are deemed by the *Strata Property Act* to be common property. The *Act* and Regulations currently do not permit a strata corporation to make an owner responsible for common property. As shown on your strata plan, your dryer ducts leave your dryers and enter the wall between two units and exhaust through a wall vent. The wall forms a boundary between two strata lots which deems the vents and ducting as common property. Whether they are for exclusive use or not is irrelevant. The ducting could be in the floor or ceiling between two strata lots, or run through an attic space that is common property. In any case the dryer ducting in your building within the walls and the exterior vent is common property. As a result, the strata corporation must maintain and repair the dryer ducts. From a practical view, it is always better for the strata corporation to maintain and repair any items that can be grouped in quantities. It is less costly to have one contractor 28 vents compared to each owner contracting separately. In extreme cases clogged vents may also be a fire hazard. If the strata conducts the work, they can ensure it is done.