

CANADIAN CONDOMINIUM INSTITUTE
NORTH ALBERTA CHAPTER

INSITE TO CONDOS

THIS ISSUE:

**How to Have a
Cool, Cool Summer**

**Apartment & Condo
Waste Changes**

**Navigating Difficult
Situations (& Board
Members)**

VOL. 38, ISSUE 4 - SUMMER 2023

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The Canadian Condominium Institute is an independent, non-profit organization formed in 1982 with Chapters throughout Canada, including the North Alberta Chapter. This organization is the only national association dealing exclusively with condominium issues affecting all of the participants in the condominium community. The Chapters throughout the country provide practical comparisons to the different provincial Acts. The CCI assists its members in establishing and operating successful Condominium Corporations through information dissemination, education, workshops, webinars, courses, and seminars.

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ABOUT THE **ARTIST**



A condo is a home for many individuals. It serves as a place where they establish their roots and thrive alongside fellow residents.

This artwork captures the essence of these individuals, who live and work in perfect harmony to ensure the smooth functioning of the entire building.



Aaron MacKay is a member of Pine Creek First Nation along the southwestern shore of Lake Winnipegosis in Manitoba.

He currently lives in Winnipeg and works as an online assistant at Canada's National History Society and freelance graphic designer.

His specialties include graphic design, web design, illustration, video and photo editing.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

BY ANAND SHARMA

Welcome to the Summer Edition of Insite to Condos!

CCI North Alberta had a very busy spring session, and the summer will not leave us much time for rest.

The Alberta Condo Expo (ACE) was held at a new venue this year at NAIT. Our one day expo on April 29, 2023 was highly successful bringing together nearly 400 people to engage and learn about important condominium issues and topics. Many thanks to the volunteers, the presenters, and the participants for making this event such a success. We have taken feedback and are already starting to plan for the next ACE in 2024. I would also like to thank our fantastic and generous sponsors led by title sponsor HUB International Insurance as well as our amazing staff team led by our Executive Director Dan Nielsen, Communications and Administration Coordinator Beverley Thornton, and Education Coordinator Raffaella Loro. This dream team worked day and night to help organize this immensely successful event to the benefit of the condominium community in Alberta.

Our Education Committee led by 2nd Vice President Dawn Mitchell and Board member Bereket Alazar have been hard at work this summer setting up the education schedule for the remainder of 2023 and 2024. The Committee has integrated some of the topics, you as members, have asked us to teach. Stayed tuned for the comprehensive schedule, that will host both in person and online courses, in the coming

weeks CCI North Alberta, through its partnership in the Alberta Condominium Management Education Consortium (ACMEC), has created a summer webinar series to help educate the condominium community and public about management licensing and what you can expect as we phase into becoming a licensed profession. Thanks to the Alberta Real Estate Foundation (AREF), ACMEC was provided a grant to provide a summer webinar series that is free to the public on this important topic. Many thanks to the volunteer presenters and staff who have made this project happen!

The CCI North Alberta leadership team has just returned from the Annual CCI National Leaders' Forum held in Saskatoon. As a veteran attendee and the North Alberta Chapter representation on the National Council, it was great to see many new faces around an energized table. Joining me from our chapter were board members Jeremy Dagliesh, Jason Wood, Steven DeLuca, and staff members Dan Nielsen and Beverley Thornton. Much was learned at this conference including new and innovative approaches to education, advocacy, and methods of communication.

This summer promises to be busy for our chapter as we work to prepare for an ambitious fall and winter schedule. Our Board of Directors and Executive will be meeting at two different retreats to prioritize goals, work on succession planning, and devise a budget that is reflective of your priorities. I would ask

that you consider how you can continue to grow our organization and strengthen our community as volunteers and contributors. It's an exciting time to be a member, and we need your help getting the word out about the incredible work we do at CCI North Alberta. Membership renewals are currently in full swing, please renew your members AND bring on new members to our community. Our amazing 1st Vice President Hamish Farmer leads these efforts as the Chair of our Membership Committee and would be happy to speak to any potential members.

Finally, our Annual CCI Golf Tournament is nearly sold out! This popular event is being held at the Northern Bear Golf Course on August 25, 2023, and we expect another fantastic day of socializing, golfing, and watching me get lost in a golf cart with my friend and Board Chairperson Susan Milner! At the time of publishing we have a few spots available for golfing, and some incredible sponsorship opportunities. Please reach out to the office for more information.

Wishing you and your families a fun filled, safe and restful summer,

Anand Sharma
President
CCI North Alberta

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GOVERNMENT ADVOCACY REPORT

DAN NIELSEN

Executive Director, CCI North Alberta
Government Advocacy Committee

Building on the busy winter season, this past spring did not prove to be any less active for our government advocacy for the Canadian Condo Institute in Alberta.

Several big events allowed our chapters to highlight and push forward on issues important to the condominium community. This advocacy was focused around the recent provincial election, which we used to highlight the policy changes that would benefit our members and the great community as a whole.

In the lead up to the Alberta Condominium Expo (ACE) on April 29, we invited both the Minister of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction, the ministry that most impacts condominiums, and a member of the official opposition to speak to our members about their parties priorities to help improve the condominium community. Prior to ACE, we set some expectations of what the condominium community requires to make improvements, sharing a press release asking for each party to make the following commitments:

- Establish a condominium dispute resolution tribunal

- Provide electricity rebates for condominiums
- Implement a condominium building retrofitting grant and green energy program
- Clean up the Condominium Property Act

We were very pleased that both Minister Dale Nally and MLA Sarah Hoffman were able to attend for our lunchtime program. Both spoke to the importance of those Albertans living and working in the condo industry and that they would work to make policy improvements if they were elected as the next government. Minister Nally indicated that cleaning up the Condominium Property Act would be a priority for his government, while MLA Hoffman indicated that if the NDP were to form government, they would implement the condominium retrofitting grant program we called for. We thank both for their attendance and participation at ACE.

Immediately following ACE, the election was officially called, and the province moved into campaign mode, which allowed CCI to continue our advocacy work. During the campaign, CCI North Alberta worked in collaboration with CCI South Alberta and the Condo Owners Forum (COF), to develop a policy survey

which we distributed to each of the main provincial political parties. In the survey, we outlined if and when each party would work to implement our previous calls to action, along with the establishment of a condominium database to help provide access to vital data on condominium demographics that the government currently does not have access to.

We held a media availability on May 25, where representatives of CCI North and South Alberta and the COF, including CCI NA president Anand Sharma, were able to speak to the media about our calls to action, and the commitments that both the NDP and the UCP made through their submission to the policy survey, and when they spoke at ACE. You can read further, and watch the media event on the CCI NA website in our News, Announcements & Events section.

On Monday May 29, the province went to the ballot box, and voted in the United Conservative Party as a majority government, with the Alberta New Democratic Party forming the largest opposition in our province's history. Shortly after the election, Premier Danielle Smith announced her cabinet ministers, with Minister Nally

again being named the Minister of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction, which will allow for an excellent continuation of our existing relationship. In the coming weeks, the government advocacy team will be reaching out to the ministry, and continue our advocacy work, to ensure the commitments that were made during the campaign period, and that the rest of our policy calls to action are included in the government work plans.

We continue to work collaboratively with CCI South Alberta and AREA through the Alberta Condominium Management Education Consortium (ACMEC) to try improve the condo manager licensing process. Through the summer months, ACMEC will be hosting a free four part webinar series on what the impacts and benefits of condo manager licensing to those in the condominium community mean. Registration details for these webinars are available on the CCI NA and website.

As we get closer to the September 30th deadline for condo managers to complete the licensing, we are still working with the Real Estate Council of Alberta (RECA) to make improvements to the testing process, and we will be communicating any changes and improvements, as we are made aware of them, so please look for this through the CCI NA website and social media channels.

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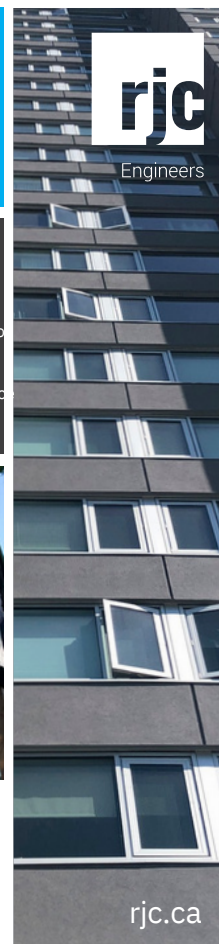
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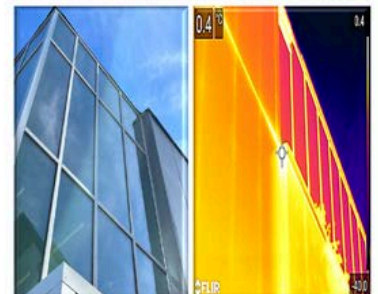
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We need your help. Local leaders, City councillors (like me), Mayors, town councillors, and others are scratching our heads trying to determine better ways to engage you and your neighbours in your community.

I've created a short list in this article of ideas that I would like to hear from you about. We would love to attend your condo board meeting, host a summer BBQ, or merely play bellhop in your elevator for a morning and engage with you.

Civic engagement has long been dominated by folks in single family detached homes. Their voices matter, but residents of apartments, condos, and multi-family complexes have persistently been left out of the conversation despite making up a growing percent of our communities. At election time, candidates diligently door-knock up and down the driveways, but unless you are lucky enough to get buzzed into a building or know a friend who lets you deliver flyers, it's really tough to seek feedback from those in buildings.

When elected officials can have familiarity with board members or building residents, collaborating on local matters ranging from crime and safety to bus stops in need of TLC becomes much easier. More people connected to your building as a home and feeling that sense of shared ownership can result in cost-savings but also meaningful value generation through a heightened level of care and sense of community.

Municipalities are non-partisan, and local elected officials are often the first point of contact for your building for civic services. Are you taking advantage of the rewards and benefits of this local access? Your neighbours are, and you should be too.

Your voice matters, so here are a few ideas. What if you...

- **Invite your city councillor to your condo board AGM? Electeds can show up, provide greetings, maybe even bring the treats.**
- **Offer to host a "meet and greet" with your councillor in the lobby one evening? We can show up and hear what is on the minds of the residents.**
- **Consider posting City Council events and updates to your CondoGenie or equivalent as well as opportunities for civic feedback?**

Looking to get in touch with your municipal elected official? Check out the contact pages for your city/region below,



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- **Create a posterboard or opportunity to post civic announcements or updates near your mailboxes?**
- **Host a community BBQ or block party in front of your building, inviting your adjacent neighbours to come by and visit?**
- **Work with your city councillor to conduct a CPTED analysis (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) or a minor disaster response scenario?**
- **Reach out to me for a phone call and explored further ideas?**

You know your building best. You know your needs, wants, and the engagement of the community. Start somewhere. Even a first small meeting of a dozen residents or board members would be well

worth our time, and hopefully yours too. I've tried a few of these ideas and I know it depends on the building and the community. One secondary benefit I've found is that many residents were just as pleased to get to know one another as they were to meet me. The community connections were plentiful, I merely provided the ice breaker and an excuse to come out and be social.

We all know we've got room for improvement on the macro-city level and the micro-city level. The first step is bringing people together for constructive dialogue and to discuss solutions.

As the bodies that represent dozens to thousands of residents, you have an enormous opportunity to help build a better city through better condos.

Michael Janz is the Edmonton City Councillor for Ward papastew (South Central Edmonton) and is passionate about neighbourhoods and community development.

He's lived and worked in condos and multifamily developments on and off for the last 20 years.





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Edmonton is known for the Oilers, West Edmonton Mall, its River Valley, Festivals, and friendly people. What's not well known, is we have 325 sunny days per year on average – one of the most in North America.

Enter the HEAT DOME of 2021!

This term was coined in 2011, and in 2021 we experienced it firsthand in Western Canada, and experts all agree that extreme heat waves across the Prairies will be our new normal. Because of that, it's crucial to consider the role of your heating and cooling systems in maintaining indoor air quality and your indoor comfort.

During a heatwave, Air Conditioning Systems play a critical role in keeping indoor temperatures at comfortable levels. However, poorly maintained systems can pose a threat to indoor air

quality, as they can become a breeding ground for bacteria, mold, and other contaminants that can worsen your air quality and lead to health problems. In addition to ensuring that HVAC systems are functioning correctly, building owners and managers in Alberta must also consider ways to adapt to the changing climate and extreme weather events. Here are some measures that can be taken to deal with extreme weather and skyrocketing utility bills in Alberta:

Heating and Cooling systems are referred to in many ways. "Mechanical System", "HVAC", "The-thing-that-heats-the-air", and "Furnace Room" to name a few. No matter what you call it, a properly designed and maintained Heating and Cooling system in your condominium is paramount to keeping you comfortable, safe, and having peace of mind.

Condominium heating and cooling systems are not the same as a typical standalone house. Designing condominium spaces to maximize every usable square foot in a suite requires specialized heating and cooling systems. These systems vary from being hidden in the ceiling, to being all crammed together in a tiny room in the condo, or even on the deck.

Pictured: Ceiling-mounted fan coil that is found under the ceiling tiles.

This difficult access is common.



One thing is for certain: These systems are packaged small, are very technical, and vary significantly in their design. These systems come in types that all have names you may not be familiar with, but these are most common, and here is what you need to know:

FAN COIL UNIT (FCU)

A fan coil unit (FCU) is a device that uses a coil (like a car radiator) and a fan to heat or cool a room using hot water. Indoor air moves through the coil, which heats or cools the air, before a fan inside of the unit pushes it back out into the room.

The coil is heated by means of hot water from a central boiler in a condominium. When the thermostat calls for heat in the space, a valve opens, letting hot water flow through the coil. This in turn also sends a signal to the fan to turn on and circulate the heated air.

The coil is cooled in residential condominiums a few different ways,

the most common is through an independent air conditioner for the suite. The outdoor air conditioner (called a condenser) sends cold refrigerant through the indoor fan coil. The second is by a cold water “chiller” central to the main building. The third is by utilizing a specialized water cooled condenser, located in the suite.

Fan coils come in numerous designs and configurations, to accommodate installing them in suites, using as little room as possible. It’s common to find them buried in the ceiling, above a washer/dryer, in a closet, and so on. Access for servicing these units is often very difficult, and changing your air filter in these systems is very challenging to do. Many condo owners may not know there is anything in their suite at all, let alone any regular maintenance requirements, including changing a hard to access filter regularly.

PACKAGED UNIT, “MAGIC PACK”

A packaged unit is a system that contains either an electric or natural gas heating component and an air conditioning system - all in one small enclosure. The most

common of these is commonly known as a “MagicPack”. These units live in a small mechanical room, most often accessed off of a balcony. These are specialized systems that are not easily serviceable, but work well – until they don’t.

Because of the tight packaging of these units and traditional service parts missing, they are expensive to repair. In addition, many units need replacement parts no longer made or supplied by the manufacturer.

No matter the type of heating and cooling system you have, it’s important you know where it is and the required maintenance to keep it running at peak performance and extend its life cycle. Oftentimes older specialized heating and cooling systems in condominiums have obsolete parts, are very inefficient and expensive to repair when they fail. When it’s time to invest in a new heating and cooling system, consult with a specialist



that can provide solutions based on experience and have in-depth knowledge of this type of system.

Owners can maintain their indoor air quality through:

- regular maintenance on their heating and cooling systems
- the regular changing of air filters
- using higher efficiency air filters
- keeping doors and windows closed during poor air quality days

- using an experienced professional when replacing their heating and cooling systems

Building owners and managers can adapt to the changing climate and extreme weather events through properly maintained HVAC systems that play a crucial role in maintaining indoor air quality, and ensuring the health and well-being of building occupants.

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ALBERTA CONDO EXPO

CCI NORTH ALBERTA

A bustling crowd of over 400 filled the NAIT Innovation Productivity Centre for this year's Alberta Condo Expo (ACE), held over a day and a half on April 28th and 29th.

This was our first year at a new venue, a sunlight-filled space on the NAIT campus.

The unofficial start of ACE happened on Friday evening, where our exhibitors and attendees had an opportunity for some casual networking during our Pre-Conference Social. It was a beautiful spring night, but we weren't able to take advantage of the NAIT patio with views of downtown due to a pair of nesting Canada Geese!

The official conference day, April 29th, was a jam-packed day for our conference attendees, with a full agenda and our biggest trade shows yet, with over 60 exhibitors representing all-things-condo, including condo insurance, engineering, reserve fund study planning, safety, and electric vehicle charging.

Our session agenda complemented the diversity of our trade show exhibitors. Attendees had the choice of nine breakout sessions, as well as a special stream for new condo owners. And we can't forget our conference grand finale, the ever-popular Legal Panel.

We kicked off the morning with



breakfast and a first look at the ACE tradeshow, followed by our opening plenary, including greetings from Councillor (and condo dweller) Anne Steveson, on behalf of the Mayor and City of Edmonton Council.

And then we got right into breakout sessions.

To meet the demands of our keen condo learners, we increased the number of breakout sessions from our 2022 conference from six to nine.

Our sessions covered the full breadth of condo learning. Our breakout sessions included:

Let's Talk Building Envelopes, Billy Huet (Wade Consulting) and Jamie Murphy

(RJC Engineers) walked through the life and times of capital projects, including the identification of problems, options for solutions, project planning-pre-design and design and procurement.

Condos Going Green, (the third in a series of previous webinars), Teresa Nguyen (Converge Condo Management) and Glen Gordon (Unico Power) looked at the implications of condos "going green". They shared their perspective as a Condo Manager and Smart Energy Solutions company on the opportunities and realities of making energy improvements to your condominium.

When Disaster Strikes – A follow-up to last year's popular session, panelists Dawn Mitchell (HUB International), Morris Blatz (T&L Adjusters), Rod Donahue

(Complete Care Restoration), Mike Rees (Anderson Associates Consulting Engineers, and Moderator Hugh Willis (Willis Law) discussed the realities of aging buildings and extreme weather, showing all the components of disaster recovery for condos.

Aging in Place - Victoria Archer (Archer Law) and former City Councillor Scott McKeen (McKeen Consulting) examined the new challenges as people age and condo boards learn to adjust their amenities and resources for an aging boomer population. Attendees were able to learn more about what's available for seniors thinking about aging in place and living with dignity.

Financials – It's Accrual World - Jeremy Dalglish (Converge Condo Management) and Edwin Radke (Radke Professional Corp.) unraveled the mystery of condo finances.

Condo Contract Considerations - Melissa Stapler (Willis Law), Justin Tudor (Keller Engineering), and Jack Kent (RMRF) explored the new legislation around Prompt Payment and Construction Lien Act (PPCLA), and took attendees through all they needed to know, including an overview of PPCLA, and a decision checklist and contracts 101.



The Real Impacts of Reserve Fund Study Planning -

Shantel Kalako (Wade KH Reserve Fund Planners Ltd. and Alex Zovighian (KDM Management Inc.) explored the requirements of a reserve fund study and how condominium corporations can prepare for the practical applications and real impacts. In this session attendees learned about the restrictions surrounding the type of expenses a reserve fund can be used for, along with best practices to keep in mind to make sure that their respective funds are adequately funded.

Bylaw Dos and Don'ts - Condo bylaws veteran Hugh Willis (Willis Law) and Helena Smith (HRS Consulting took attendees through practical examples and solutions to common condo dilemmas in bylaws and rules. Learners left with practical do's and don'ts to apply to their bylaws to help condo board manage more effectively.

Running a Successful Meeting – Todd Shipley (RMRF) and Heidi Besuijen (RMRF) tackled a foundational condo skill about running an effective meeting. Preparing for condominium's meetings can cause a lot of stress for your management company, board, and unit owners, especially if past meetings have not gone so smoothly. This session covered practical skills that can assist in running a smooth meeting, including topics such as proper notice, registration and use of proxies, rules of order, and dealing with contentious issues.

We also held a special two-part stream for new condo owners, including presentations on a **Condo Buyer's Guide** with panelists, Todd Shipley (RMRF), Carrie Plett (Condo Management Solutions Inc.) and Sheldon Johnston (Liv Real Estate). The second session in this

stream. **Condo Owner Essentials**, was presented by Amber Nickel (Willis Law) and Maurice Perrault (Blue Line Condominium Document Reading Service). These introductory sessions were designed for condominium owners to understand their rights and responsibilities, starting from the initial purchase to their role as part of an owner and potential board member operating within the province of Alberta.

After this full day, we ended our 2023 ACE sessions with a **Q&A Legal Panel** from our team of experts, Victoria Archer (Archer Law), Todd Shipley (RMRF) and Hugh Willis (Willis). As always, Victoria, Todd and Hugh (with a little help from our Chapter President Anand Sharma) provided helpful advice and humorous anecdotes to our full crowd of conference attendees, ranging from topics of dealing with difficult owners or nuanced situations with condominium contractors and vendors.

The day flew by, and before we knew it we called our 2023 Alberta Condo Expo to a close.

A huge thank you to all of our presenters and exhibitors for sharing their expertise with our conference crowd. We are also grateful to our volunteers and NAIT Events staff who worked with our CCI Admin team to pull together the details both before, during and after the conference.

And finally, thank you to our conference sponsors, especially this year's Title Sponsor, Hub International. Without your collective support, events like ACE would not be possible.





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NATIONAL LEADERS' FORUM

DAN NIELSEN

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CCI NORTH ALBERTA CHAPTER

CCI National hosted delegates from across all chapters in sunny Saskatoon for the 2023 National Leaders' Forum.

The start of June saw the chapters from all across Canada congregating in Paris of the Prairies, sunny Saskatoon, for the annual Spring National Leaders' Forum.

It was a great time to gather and discuss some of the pressing issues that are impacting the condominium community across the country, such as dealing with increasing mental health impacts to condo buildings. We also heard about the successes different chapters are experiencing, one of which was CCI NA's own president Anand Sharma speaking to our ongoing advocacy efforts to the different orders of government.

A highlight of the forum was the keynote speech given by Lyndon J Linklater, a traditional knowledge keeper and storyteller, who spoke

about building community, and the role of truth and reconciliation. It was a moving talk on the generational trauma of residential schools, and how we can work together to make improvements in our communities, and how we all have a role and responsibility to do this work. The CCI NA chapter has committed to the work of reconciliation, and this is why we continue with our cover art collaboration project with young indigenous artists.

Outside of the important education sessions, we had a great time socializing with our colleagues including an evening riverboat tour on the mighty South Saskatchewan river, and a lot of rooftop patios. It's safe to say that the CCI family is always ready to learn from each other, and most definitely ready to socialize together.



Photo Credit: Drone Operator & CCI Board Member Jayson Wood



Photo Credit: Drone Operator & CCI Board Member Jayson Wood



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APARTMENT AND CONDO WASTE CHANGES

VAHID RASHIDI - PROGRAM DIRECTOR, COMMUNAL WASTE TRANSFORMATION
WASTE SERVICES, CITY OF EDMONTON

Answering the six biggest questions about changes to Edmonton's apartment and condo collection.

Apartment and condo waste collection is changing. Over the next four years, the City of Edmonton will work with apartments, condos and some row houses to introduce food scraps and recycling collection. Collection containers for all three streams of waste must be “co-located,” or located near each other and equally accessible.

The first phase of this rollout will begin in southeast Edmonton. If you manage a building in this area of the city, account holders will receive information letters in late 2023 or early 2024—

before your new bins are delivered—as well as some resources to help residents adjust to the change.

If your property is located in another part of the city, visit edmonton.ca/ApartmentandCondoCollection to find out when you can expect to see this change.

We sat down with Vahid Rashidi, Program Director, Communal Waste Transformation at the City of Edmonton, to help answer some of the most common questions we've been hearing from property managers.

Why are apartment and condo residents being asked to sort their food scraps and recycling?

Rashidi: “In 2021, the City rolled out three-stream collection for over 250,000 households receiving curb-side collection. Giving residents the ability to sort into three-streams has helped reduce the amount of food scraps ending up in our landfill. Providing three-stream access to the nearly 170,000 households in apartments and condos is another necessary and major step forward to further reducing waste and emissions.”

Why do bins and carts for all three streams need to be in the same location?

Rashidi: “Ensuring that all three types of waste containers are accessible in the same location is a decision that helps both residents and our waste staff. Ensuring residents can easily access recycling, garbage and food scraps containers eliminates a major barrier to sorting, and will make collection for waste staff more efficient.”

My property doesn't have room for three bins. Can I get an exemption?

Rashidi: “The recently passed Waste Services Bylaw requires that food scraps, recycling and garbage be collected from all properties. The City is currently assessing sites to develop a plan to fit equally convenient food scraps, recycling and garbage containers at each disposal location. The plan will be shared with the property managers who will be able to request a review of the recommendation.

We understand there's no one-size-fits-all approach and we will provide different sizes and styles of collection containers. In some cases, we will also adjust collection frequency. We are confident that by working with property managers to address the issues unique to their property, we can find solutions that make garbage, food scraps and recycling disposal possible at all multi-unit properties in Edmonton.



Are we losing capacity for garbage service?

Rashidi: “Each unit will still have a similar amount of space for their waste—the difference is that waste will be divided into three different containers. To help residents as they adapt to sorting their waste, we are developing an excess waste program for exceptional circumstances.”

Am I responsible for educating residents?

Rashidi: “We’ve worked closely with property managers to prepare for this rollout, and understand the challenging work you do on a daily basis and that the extra work we’re asking you to do may seem intimidating. The City has taken the lead by creating educational materials and tools, as well as planning marketing campaigns and in-person outreach to communicate with residents.

However, property managers are in a unique position in that you have a direct line of communication with your property’s residents. As such, you will be asked to use the tools provided by the City to help build awareness before the program begins and as new tenants

move in. These tools are also available at edmonton.ca/ApartmentandCondoCollection.

You can also help by providing site access to City staff to visit residents; informing the City if additional visits are needed; displaying posters or distributing information handouts provided by the City; answering resident questions about the program or referring them to edmonton.ca/Waste; and, ensuring that waste disposal locations are clean and clear of any obstacles.”

What resources are available to help me to prepare?

Rashidi: “Educational tools, videos, a rollout timeline map and information for residents, property managers and developers are all available on our website, edmonton.ca/ApartmentandCondoCollection, and will be updated as the roll-out continues.”



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NAVIGATING DIFFICULT SITUATIONS (& BOARD MEMBERS)

ERIN BERNEY - CONDOMINIUM LAWYER
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Condominiums are special types of communities with all the benefits and potential problems that can come from living in close proximity to other individuals. From time to time, conflict will inevitably arise between unit owners, unit owners and the board, and even between board members. But there are simple communication tools and strategies that may help avoid or minimize conflict and manage difficult situations when they occur.

Difficult situations may create “difficult” people

Identify whether the difficulty stems from a situation or an individual. Reasonable people can act in ways that may be perceived as difficult or unreasonable when in a stressful situation where they feel threatened. Remember that everyone has a right to quiet use and enjoyment of their homes and the right not to feel harassed or at risk in their home. Board members should question if the

individual is truly being difficult, if the situation is just difficult, or if the problem might actually come from the board or condo manager.

Education and perception of bias

We all have unconscious biases and it's important to self-assess to make sure we're not adding to or even creating the problem. It's important for board members to continually educate themselves on the law, the bylaws, and their duties to the corporation, but also on their communication processes and methods, so that they can better understand and educate owners.

Empathy and compassion are key

Remember that emotions tend to run high when dealing with people in their homes. Board members should attempt to put themselves in the owner's shoes. If dealing with a violation, is



this a first-time issue or a repeat violation? Ask whether there may be a cultural, language or religious component to which the corporation may need to be sensitive. If mental illness is suspected, try embedding community resources in notice letters, and offer other forms of support. Every condo likely has at least one owner that has at one time struggled with a mental illness. People need to feel that they will not be judged by disclosing their challenges. Understanding what might be driving or contributing to an issue is halfway to solving the problem.

Be responsive and don't make decisions on the spot. Not all requests or complaints are either inherently reasonable or unreasonable. The Board

owners first, and where necessary, secure voluntary compliance. Remember that owners don't always know what the rules are. While every owner is deemed to have accepted and agreed to be bound by the bylaws, often they haven't even read them.

Respond within a reasonable time. Thank the person for their suggestion or for notifying the board of a complaint in writing and advise that it will be included on the board's agenda for consideration and response. The first meeting, interaction or communication can set the tone for the entire relationship.

Be responsive and don't make decisions on the spot. Not all requests or complaints are either inherently reasonable or unreasonable.

has an obligation to review, investigate/gather additional information, and make unbiased decisions about all requests and complaints.

Clear and simple communication

Keep communications simple, accessible, courteous, clear, and conciliatory. Incremental escalation may be appropriate, depending on the situation, but the goal should be to educate

Avoidance strategies (prevention is better than the cure)

Avoid "us" and "them" thinking. Boards that too tightly control their corporations by keeping information to themselves and not consulting owners run the risk of owners viewing the board as separate and apart from the owners. Be transparent in decision-making and in releasing documents and records, so owners understand

what decisions are being made and why. Sometimes it's also necessary to remind everyone that board members are also owners. Board members and owners are all in this together and have the same fundamental interests to protect.

Consult with and get a mandate from owners on important issues. The board should demonstrate that it listens. Owners often just need to feel that the board hears their concerns. If the board is considering a large construction project that requires a special levy or financing, convene a town hall or information meeting so that this information can be shared in advance.

Hold regular board and owner meetings, and keep accurate minutes describing who attended, what issues were discussed, what votes/decisions were made and what actions were or will be taken. Remember that owners are generally entitled to this information, and if they think the board is holding something back, they may become suspicious and "difficult". Make use of available technologies, such as online communication platforms, bulletin boards, and meeting hosts. Maintaining a single or limited channel for communications from and to individual owners will make it easier to preserve these records.

Establish clear communication boundaries to manage shared expectations for both owners and board members. Board members should refrain from engaging in hallway or elevator business meetings with owners, and owners should be discouraged from contacting board members directly at their homes. Managers should clearly communicate policies for responding to owners' written requests and may also communicate that neither the manager nor the board will respond to rude communication or tolerate harassment.

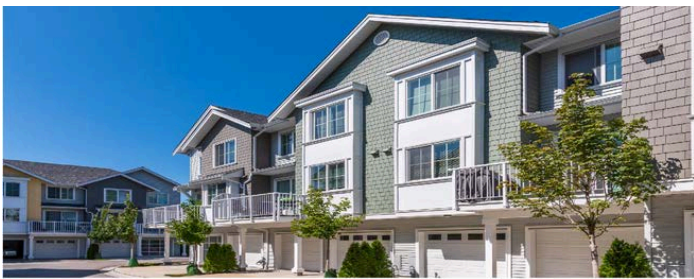
Encourage owners to send all requests or complaints in writing to either the board or manager, as the case may be. In some cases, scheduling an informal meeting or chat to gather more information is appropriate. Set a time limit and agenda and communicate this in advance, then document the outcome in follow-up communication with the owner.

Legal as the last resort

Engaging legal counsel should always be a last resort, after all attempts at prevention and resolution have been made. Once it goes to the lawyers, it's much more difficult to pull things back. Be mindful of how, when, and how far you escalate based on the circumstances and the individuals involved. The board should ask whether it has done everything it can and should do before taking the next step. This is particularly important as if legal expenses are eventually incurred, it will help demonstrate that the costs were reasonable and increase the likelihood of recovery.

In summary, condominium boards need to focus on educating and working together with their owners to prevent and resolve difficult situations from arising in the first place, inviting input and recommendations from the owners whenever possible. Difficult situations and people cannot always be avoided, but sometimes a difficult person is in fact created by the situation, and everyone can have a role in this. There are at least three sides to every issue, so it's always important to try to find common ground. When faced with a difficult situation or a difficult person, remember that a condominium corporation is first and foremost a community in which all owners are not only neighbours but also shareholders, with the same fundamental interest at stake – preserving the community as a nice place for everyone to live.





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What does a Reserve Fund Study include?

- ⇒ **Site Inspection** ~ assess condition of common property components by appropriate personnel familiar with components.
- ⇒ **Report** ~ component descriptions, conditions noted, specific recommendations, complete with photographs
- ⇒ **Spreadsheets** ~ common property components requiring major repair/replacement with current estimated repair/replacement costs.
 - ✓ **Present Course** ~ illustrates current funding practices and factors in interest & inflation.
 - ✓ **Reasonable & Sufficient** ~ illustrates future funding recommendations/scenarios and factors in interest & inflation.
 - ✓ **30-Year major repair/replacement schedule.**
- ⇒ **Upon completion of draft report, meet with Board to discuss report, spreadsheets, findings and next steps.**

~FREE QUOTES~

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BUSINESS DIRECTORY

SUMMER 2023



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COMPANY NAME	FULL NAME	PHONE	EMAIL
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