

NEWSLETTER ISSUE 20 APRIL 2016

In this edition we look at a number of topics that everyone who lives or owns a strata property will find valuable and interesting.

UPDATES AND REMINDERS

Smoke Detectors

The statistics are now out on accidental fire deaths in homes in NSW alone – in 2015 there were more than 4070 fires, 17 resulted in deaths. In 2016 so far there have already been 50 fires. So now as much as ever it is important to not only ensure your property has a smoke detector, but also that it is working. If your property doesn't have one in each unit it is in your interest to install one. The FRNSW Assistant Commissioner Mark Whybro said...it can take just 3 minutes for a fire to take hold, but only seconds to prevent one. Simple things like turning off electrical appliances before you go to bed and keeping a close eye on pots and pans when cooking or cleaning the lint filter on the clothes dryer..... people assume it will never happen to them. But I assure you it can. These figures speak for themselves.

If a detector starts to chirp then the battery – which ensures the detector will still work if there is a power failure – is expiring and needs to be replaced. If you are handy you can carefully do this yourself, but if it is too high you may be injured in the process – it would be better to call out a person with the appropriate ladder/equipment. Ensuring the detector isn't taped over when painting is completed or damaged is just as important. A detector that doesn't work protects no one. *(Article courtesy of ERMA Group)*

Hot water control

Hot water control in most new or recently renovated units and homes, is achieved by installing tempering valves. These valves are installed to ensure that the maximum water temperature delivered to bathrooms is less than 50°C. It is an Australian Standards requirement to avoid serious burns (which can occur in 1 second at 60°C). These valves can be a source of inconsistencies in hot water delivery, which become more obvious in winter months. Most manufacturers of these valves recommend replacement after 5 years, however an annual inspection would be prudent. *(Information courtesy of MES Consulting)*

State Government levy

After much lobbying by insurance companies/groups, a fairer system of State Govt levy - imposed on each insurance policy held in NSW – has been achieved. Gladys Berejiklian in the Government's December announcement noted "This fairer model for funding fire and emergency services will reduce the cost of insurance and encourage more people to insure their properties". *(For more information on this see the full article provided by Strata Community Insurance on our website under the posting of Newsletter 20).*

“Terrorism Insurance Act 2003”

Unfortunately, almost simultaneously the Federal Govt in its 2015 review of the “Terrorism Insurance Act 2003” which was enacted by the Commonwealth Govt following the withdrawal of terrorism cover by insurance companies after the 2011 attacks in New York, have increase the terrorism levy which is applicable to all participating insurers. The changes will take effect from 1 April 2016. (*Information by CRM Brokers*)

Maintaining Your Asset

Have you ever walked passed a property and noticed that the footpath grass isn't mowed? What impression of the house owner would you have if it was a foot high? For a small cost this area can be trimmed back, even if it is every 2 months. If your scheme doesn't have any other lawn to cut regularly, a deal may be made with someone to do a few properties along your street keeping this fee down. Whilst it may not be noticed when it is done – it is very noticeable when it isn't.

We now have contacts at Waverley Council who are happy to work with scheme's where the dumping of items for collection on the footpath (on none collection days) is a common problem. The Councils' first step is no longer to fine the scheme when this occurs. Waverley Council is aware this is an issue for schemes with so many backpackers in their constituency, and so they are happy to assist with education etc to reduce this eyesore to all who drive or walk past your property. Let us know if this is an issue for your scheme. If you are not in under Waverly we can contact your local council and see if they have similarly trained people who can assist.

Bearing this in mind, when was the last time you walked into your property and took a look at it from the perspective of being a purchaser? What impression would you get – would you still buy a unit in your scheme based on aesthetics? What un-addressed repair issues would stand out – particularly small ones that could be so easily is remedied without blowing this year's budget?

We want to work with your committee to maintain your asset, so contact us regarding issues that will improve the value of your property.

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