

Condo Agreements Can Restrict Renovations



Often, condominium owners plan changes to their units that may seem, on the surface, within their range of prerogative as the property title holder. However, despite the apparent self-contained nature of some upgrades to a unit, they may be considered to be substantial renovations according to your condo board's definition, and therefore require the board's approval before you proceed. For example, some condominium agreements prohibit certain changes to any new unit within a defined number of months or years. Such regulations may seem unfair, but they are likely intended to protect the integrity of a building to help maintain its market value for the collective ownership. So, before you roll up your sleeves, be sure to read the fine print of your condo contract.

Clean or Replace Air Filters and Fan Screens

It's advisable to clean or replace your home's air filters and screens at least once a year to help keep your indoor environment safe from mould, dust mites and other allergens. But don't stop at your heating, ventilation and cooling/air-conditioning systems. Think of all the other filters and screens that need cleaning, such as those in humidifiers, range hoods, bathroom fans, and windows. Unfortunately, homeowners often neglect to clean or replace their range hood filters. This can lead to a thick buildup of greasy residue that could easily compromise the important function of removing cooking gases, odours and humidity from the stovetop area. The



result can be unhealthy air trapped in your kitchen, not to mention an accumulation of a thin film on your walls, ceilings and countertops. Likewise, bathroom fans and window screens can trap layers of dust over time that will hinder the free flow of air to and from the rooms you want to have well ventilated.

Does Recycling Make Sense for Your Condo?

When population densities intensify in urban areas, governments get more serious about looking for ways to reduce the cost of directing trash to landfill sites. Often, the most obvious cost savings come from increased recycling and composting programs in high-rise buildings. These programs can create opportunities for condominium corporations that are prepared to change long-established habits, but certain conditions need to be in place. To find out if there is potential for your building, consult with municipal authorities and determine whether government incentives are available for buildings and condo corporations that participate in recycling and composting programs in your area. Next, ask about any companies in your



region that are contracted to collect and/or sort recyclable materials, as well as any non-profit organizations that are supportive of such initiatives. Once you have gathered enough information to move forward, request that your condo board approve a feasibility study to launch a recycling program in your building or complex.

Carpet Cleaning Tips

If you have carpets, you're bound to have carpet stains, either now or in the future. Although most of us don't keep professional grade carpet cleaning solvents or equipment at home, there are a number of basic steps you can take to combat sudden stains, by utilizing common household products that are readily available. Remember, the quicker you act on a stain, the better chance you'll have of removing it. Always dab or blot the stain towards its centre with a clean cloth, but don't rub or scrub. If a cleansing agent is necessary, start with something basic, such as soda water, or a 50/50 solution of vinegar and water. You could also try making a paste with baking soda and water, or salt and vinegar, and then working it gently into the stain with an old toothbrush. Allow it to dry before vacuuming. If you need to escalate your efforts, consider a gentle soap solution, such as shaving cream, dish detergent or hydrogen peroxide. Always pre-test any solution on an inconspicuous area first.

