

COVID-19 Information for Strata Owners

This information is current as of March 25, 2020. As the situation continues to change rapidly, please visit [RECBC's COVID-19 and Real Estate](#) pages for the most up-to-date information.

During this pandemic, many strata management companies are under significant pressure in working to maintain services and are implementing enhanced hygiene measures to prevent transmission of COVID-19 and protect the safety of residents in the strata corporations they manage.

RECBC recommends that strata managers prioritize the health and safety needs of strata residents. For residents in strata buildings, this may mean that non-urgent matters will be lower priority, and your strata management company may request that you use email or telephone to communicate with them, rather than in-person communication. We ask all British Columbia strata owners to have patience as strata management companies focus on protecting health and safety.

We recognize the additional pressures on strata managers during this crisis, and we will continue to work with brokerages to help ensure continuity of service in these challenging times.

PAYING STRATA FEES

Some strata owners have asked whether there will be financial aid to assist with payment of strata fees. At this time, there has been no announcement of government relief for strata fees.

It is important to remember that your strata fees cover all areas of your strata corporation outside of your unit. A sudden drop in funding, should people withhold payment, could cause significant disruption in:

- Cleaning and sanitizing common areas
- Utilities such as water, electricity, gas
- Provision of strata management services
- Payment of strata insurance premiums

At this time, all strata owners are expected to continue to make payments of strata fees in accordance with the terms of the *Strata Property Act* and their strata's bylaws.

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Strata owners are strongly encouraged to utilize online payment methods to pay balances on their account. Many strata managers are sending owners reminders for how to set up a pre-authorized debit program or other online banking options.

ACCESSING STRATA MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Strata managers must follow government directives to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Staff members may be working remotely or self-isolating. This may mean that non-essential services will take longer than normal, as strata managers must continue to prioritize health and safety issues for strata corporations.

As many strata management brokerages are forced to limit access to their offices, strata owners may receive requests to help facilitate access to buildings for services and maintenance if there is not already a contact person on site.

AGMS AND SGMS

When holding an Annual General Meeting (AGM) or Special General Meeting (SGM) would conflict with the government's advice to limit meeting size and maintain physical distancing, RECBC recommends that stratas discuss alternatives to in-person meetings with the strata manager. The [Condominium Home Owners Association](#) (CHOA), and the [Vancouver Island Strata Owners Association](#) (VISOA) have also provided resources on their websites that may assist you. Where a meeting cannot be conducted safely, a deferral may be required. Strata corporations looking at this as an option may wish to seek legal advice.

PREPARING IN CASE OF FURTHER DISRUPTION TO SERVICES

Strata managers are expected to communicate clearly and transparently with their clients about their operations and service levels as this crisis continues. Respectful communications are critical to ensuring continuity of service and managing expectations.

Strata councils and residents should consider documenting and sharing information on how their property systems function and the measures to take to continue operations in case of emergencies.

OTHER RESOURCES

For additional information and resources for strata owners across British Columbia, visit the Condominium Home Owners Association of BC website at www.choa.bc.ca, the Vancouver Island Strata Owners Association website at www.visoa.bc.ca, and the provincial governments strata housing website at www.gov.bc.ca/strata