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## Condo Smarts

Headline: Electric Vehicle Charging

Topic: Electric Vehicles

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Written by: Tony Gioventu

**Dear Tony:** Our strata corporation installed 6 charging stations in secured common property a year ago to accommodate and encourage electric vehicles. Three owners have since purchased 4 vehicles, but they are refusing to use the charging stations because they can trickle charge their cars from their current parking spaces and they avoid paying the cost of the charging. They claim their limited common property parking spaces entitles them to the exclusive use of the electrical outlet adjacent. At the time of installation, we introduced a charge back system so users within the secured parking lot pay as they consume. We would appreciate any suggestions on how to resolve this without a confrontation with the EV users. Many owners in our building are now questioning why we ever installed stations, covered the cost, and why we would ever consider electrifying our parking garage.

*Marilyn W. Vancouver*

**Dear Marilyn:** Whether a strata corporation adopts and approves charging stations or an owner is trickle charging next to their parking spaces, it involves the use of a common utility and common expense of the strata corporation. The only exception would be a separately metered service.

The *Strata Property Act and Regulations* permit a strata corporation to adopt a rule or a bylaw that permits the reasonable recovery of operating costs and electricity from the users who charge their vehicles. In most situations strata corporations adopt rules for this application as they only require a majority vote at a general meeting, and they are not filed in the Land Title Registry so they are easily amended at a future general meeting. A rule is first adopted by majority vote at a strata council meeting, but a rule that applies a user fee may only be enforced once the rule and the fee has been approved by majority vote at a general meeting.

Simple solution, adopt a rule that requires anyone using a trickle charge method to pay a monthly fee for electricity, or they may choose to use the charging stations on a user pay system. The rates of the user pay system must also be established in a rule or bylaw to enable the strata corporation to recover the reasonable operating and electrical costs.

Your strata corporation should also retain a certified electrician to review the electrical capacity and distribution to ensure there are no risks to using the single outlets for trickle charging. An electrified parking garage that has managed charging during non peak hours and reduces the capacity of electrical demand may be the best alternative. Contact your EVSE service provider to evaluate your current capacity and use. Demand for charging will only increase in the coming years.