

Condominium Home Owners Association

A non-profit association serving strata owners since 1976

Bulletin: 300-120

Condo Smarts

Headline: Rover did it, but you are responsible

Topic: Damage caused by pets

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Last Christmas, condo owner “Bob” gave his partner “Janet” a lab/digger cross named “Rover”.

Since then, Rover has refinished their flooring and cool retro interior carpets, and reupholstered their classic Art Deco furniture. Thinking they had a simple answer to what they considered a destructive force of nature, they decided to isolate Rover onto their roof-top deck during the day. There, his barking couldn't be heard by the neighbours. As well, he had a safe covered area outdoors and a retreat that would keep him from destroying any more furnishings. However, during this last weekend's rainstorm, Bob, Janet and their dinner guests were suddenly showered with ice-cold water pouring from the ceiling light fixtures. It turned out dear Rover had remodeled the roof deck and pulled up the decking materials near the drains. The costs are yet to be determined, but Bob and Janet are anticipating the insurance will cover the damages. If not, they will have to pay.

Strata Law: Whether you like it or not, as an owner you are responsible and liable for any guests, children, visitors, tenants, pets, employees and clients you invite onto the strata property. If there is damage to common property or common assets, in this case the roofing and decking, the strata may do whatever is reasonably necessary to repair the damage and may require

the reasonable costs to be paid. By allowing Rover to destroy common property Bob and Janet were in violation of the bylaws, and are facing the repercussions.

Tips: Before you rent out your unit to a tenant, buy a new pet or start a home based business, ask yourself: “Am I prepared for the costs that may be incurred?” Take into consideration the potential financial risks and the disruption to your lifestyle and that of your neighbours. It may not be worth the change if you suddenly find you're in condo hell. Seasonal pets for holiday gifts, in particular, are a common case of poor judgment. At times such as Easter, seriously try to answer this question: “Does a chicken or a rabbit really belong in a condo?” Think before you buy.

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