

## Strata Living

Headline: What is stored in our lockers?

Topic: Storage Lockers

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**Dear Tony:** Our council recently did an inventory of our lockers to determine who is using them, how they are allocated and what is stored within them. In a 27 year old building it was no small task, and the new regulations disclosing parking and storage allocations in 2014, have forced us to do a job we have neglected for far too long. Here was our finding. Three owners had no lockers, two owners have two lockers each, and one locker appears to be twice it's original size with a wall removed. While inspecting lockers, we were shocked to discover significant amounts of fuel stored in containers, most of it quite old and one locker has four, five gallon cans of gas. Several of the owners have advised they own these lockers and there is nothing we can do about the contents. One owner has even threatened legal action if we force him to give up his second locker. Now that we know what we know, could you help us figure out what to do next to ensure everyone has 1 locker and we do not have any safety issues.

*Gillian Crawford, Burnaby*

**Dear Gillian:** The first step is always to review your strata plan and your bylaws and determine how the lockers are designated and what conditions your bylaws regulate. In your strata corporation, the locker areas are common property and the strata plan shows 64 lockers for 64 units. That should

be your map to create an inventory, and it will be helpful in resolving the issue over the double allocations or the joined locker. The bylaws of your strata corporation in 1987, as registered by your owner developer show that there was one locker for each strata to be designated by council on a first request/owner basis. This information, in addition to an absence of any assignment documents in the original disclosure statement, assists in understanding that the owner developer did not assign additional lockers to anyone and that the lockers are in fact common property on the strata plan, and no one owns their locker. Each locker under the current bylaws is assigned by the strata corporation. Your bylaws and rules do not limit or prohibit the contents; however, local municipal and fire safety bylaws and regulations will limit the volume and type of fuel that may be stored on a residential property or location at any time. To resolve the current conflicts, your strata corporation will be required to enforce its bylaws regarding 1 storage locker per strata lot, and that may require some legal enforcement as well if the owners do not cooperate. This would also be a good opportunity to review your bylaws and rules, and determine if there is a need for stricter limitations on the contents permitted in lockers. Your local Fire Marshall is also a great ally when it comes to large volumes of unlawfully stored fuel.

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