



## ASK MARIA

By Maria Bartolotti

# WHAT TO DO ABOUT DOG POO

Pet ownership in condos can be a smelly subject

**Q:** Maria, I'm thinking of buying a condo, I do have a pet Maltese Shih Tzu that I cannot bear to live without. Any advice in condo ownership for dog owners?

**A:** You've heard me say it a dozen times: "No condominium corporation is alike." Yes, there is a unique set of condominium rules and regulations and bylaws that governs every condominium. Some condos may be very strict when it comes to enforcing certain sections of the bylaws, while other condos may be very lenient with those same rules. It's really dependent on the culture of the condominium you are purchasing.

Some say — and I tend to agree — that multi-residential living may not be the ideal place for some pets to live. In most condos, space is limited and pets do not have the freedom to roam as much as they could in a single detached house. Townhomes do offer a bit more space and some have yards for pets, but a pet owner's responsibility is the same in all cases.

Yet, many people living in condos, or who are thinking of moving into one, consider their pets to be family or a best friend, and living apart from them is not an option.

So, if you're a pet owner thinking about

buying a condo, be sure to read the governing provisions on pets first, and any pet policies that the corporation has developed for that particular condo. Many have pet size restrictions to begin with.

The stickiest subject with pet ownership in condos, indeed the smelliest, is dog poop. It may be a silly topic, but it is a serious problem. I was just reading an article that some Condo Boards in Canada have decided to adopt a Dog DNA Registration Program... Yup, that's what I said. So watch out CSI Miami here comes CSI 123condo corp.

To my understanding, the program is designed to match waste to the offending pooches and to make residents aware that they can be caught and held accountable for not being responsible pet owners.

Lets admit it, picking up after your pet is not an easy task. I get it. we come home from work were tired, and your beloved pet dog, Silvio, needs to go for a potty break and the last thing we want to do is pick after them.

But, not picking up after your pet and leaving doggie-doo-doo outside your unit is unacceptable under any circumstance.

The Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) has stated; dog waste is toxic, and the viruses, bacteria and parasites found in dog waste can cause disease. It can contain

worms, it smells bad and lets face it; it's a terrible mess to get off your shoes, your children or worse, your dog's fur (how many of us have seen our beloved "Silvio" rolling happily in the snow and grass, only to find that he/she decided to coat themselves with another dog's poop? It's gross, but it happens all the time). Yuck!

Being a responsible pet owner means; picking after your pets mess immediately after they defecate outside the unit, and taking your beloved pet for a walk outside the complex. It truly does not get any easier then that.

Condos are ruled by bylaws. If you are not willing to follow the bylaws of the corporation you may want to consider if condo living is right for you. Thumbing your nose at the rules is not an option or choosing to ignore the rules because you disagree with them will not make them go away. Consider the social atmosphere before purchasing into a condo.

Folks, moral of this story — be a respectful neighbour and please pick up after your pets.

Until next time... **CL**



*Editor's note: Maria Bartolotti is a board member of the Canadian Condominium Institute - Southern Alberta chapter (CCI-SA). CCI represents all participants in the condominium community.*

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