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MODERN URBAN LIVING IN CALGARY

Editor's note: Readers are encouraged to ask their most confounding condo questions to our resident condo specialist: Maria Bartolotti.

ASK MARIA

By Maria Bartolotti

BURNING QUESTIONS

Fire Safety dos and don'ts in a condominium building

Q: How important is it to have the Annual Fire Inspection completed in a condominium and can you offer some helpful tips in keepig our condos safe?

A: Condominium Buildings can present special fire safety concerns. When strictly enforced, local fire and construction codes can ensure that condos are designed to minimize the likelihood of a major fire.

Fire alarm systems in Condominium Buildings are required to be tested annually according to Alberta Law. The reason these inspections are mandatory is regular testing and maintenance of your fire alarm system can ensure that it operates correctly in the event of an emergency and can save lives.

It is important to ensure that alarms, emergency lighting and sprinkler systems are kept clear and accessible for maintenance and regular inspections both inside the individual units and the common property. Signs of damage or malfunction should be reported to the management company.

Never lock fire exits or block doorways, hall, or stairways. Fire doors not only provide a way out during a fire, they also slow the spread of fire and smoke.

Be prepared and know the building's evacuation plan. This will give you the tools you need to exit the building safely and quickly.

Condominiums who choose not to have their fire systems properly maintained can put their insurance at risk. Also, the Fire Department takes public safety seriously and can penalize condos that do not comply with Alberta Fire Codes.

Fire Safety equipment represents a major life investment in a condo as such, it is important to hire the right company who can provide full transparency in regards to governmental compliance, professionalism and knowledge when it comes to your fire alarm systems. Choose wisely.

The above is just the tip of the iceberg, to learn more about the rules and regulations regarding Fire Codes and Regulations visit www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca.

Until next time CL

Maria Bartolotti is the owner-manager of New Concept Management Inc. She has developed a strong reputation for rendering timely and efficient services to the condominium industry. Maria believes that her company's success hinges on her hands-on approach to condominium management as well as maintaining open lines of communications with her clientele. Maria is actively involved in her industry. For more information, visit **www.newconceptmanagement.com**