As Seen in Condo Living Magazine | condoliving
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

SAFETY FIRST

Here's some tips to keep you and your neighbours safe in a condo

Q: Can you provide us with some security tips for our condominium?

A: Living in a condo is very different from living in a single-family home and although some safety tips are the same, there are a few different considerations that should be taken when living in a multi-family setting. Please keep in mind that these are simply suggestion.

HAVE YOU MET THE NEIGHBOURS

- I get it, were all busy, but getting acquainted with your neighbours will give you a better sense of whose coming and going in the building. Also, taking the time to create a sense of community in your building can go a long way towards increasing security. Residents are also more likely to report any incidentals or strange behavior that they see to the condominium management company.

EXTERIOR OF THE BUILDING

- As a condo manager, I always review the exterior of the building with my boards to tackle any areas that might pose a concern. Are hedges and trees trimmed back as to not cause a safety concern or a hiding place for strangers.
- Is the exterior of the building well lit? What type of lights do you have at your entrances? White or light-coloured exteriors can also go a long way to enhancing visual levels.
- Check the area around the overhead garage door. Is there places thieves can hide and wait for vehicles to enter and exit the parkade. Are you able to add more light in this area? Put up mirrors or some sort of chain link fence to keep strangers out of this area.
- Are there broken windows that need to be repaired around the building. Believe it or not, broken windows attract crime. Ensure the exterior and interior of the building is well maintained.

PARKADE AND UNDERGROUND LOTS

- The most common problem in buildings is parkade break-ins. We've all seen the signs "Wait for the overhead door to close securely behind you" and yet, the one that get's ignored the most. Always a good reminder to ensure that you wait for the overhead door to shut completely before proceeding to your destination. You never know who can be lurking behind you.

- Always a good idea to never leave valuables in plain sight in your car. Secure your vehicle from thieves by using "The Club" or similar devices. Visit the Alberta Motor Associations website www.ama.ab.ca for more safety tips.

EXITS AND STAIRWELLS

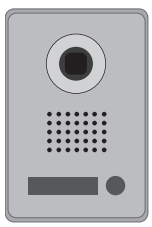
- Know the location of all fire exits and stairwells in your building; this includes indoor parking and storage areas. If your buildings garage is equipped with panic buttons knowing the locations of those buttons can help you respond quickly in an emergency.

GRAFFITI PREVENTION

- A common occurrence on condominium exterior surface walls and I've been told, it is a sign to criminals that your building may be easy to break into. Never leave graffiti too long, clear it off at the first possible chance.

INTERCOMS

- Do you know whom you are letting into your building? If not, why are you buzzing them in? This is one of the biggest complaints we get: people being let into the building without residents knowing who they are. Remember, you could be letting a criminal enter your home.



I hope the above will give you a few helpful tips, and remember using common sense will go along way in keeping you and your condominium community safe. Until next time... CL

Maria Bartolotti, ACCI: Managing Director and owner 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**