

10 YEAR MAINTENANCE PLANS

The Three Benefits that Keep YOU Covered

10 Year Maintenance Plans are a requirement for all prescribed Owners Corporations in Victoria; yet smaller complexes are making them a priority on AGM agendas due to the huge advantages they provide...

The following three points explains how having a 10 Year Maintenance Plan benefits your building.

1. Maintenance and Replacement of Common Property Items

A prescribed Owners Corporation must prepare a maintenance plan for the property for which it is responsible. A yearly inspection will determine the current condition of the building and common property, and a report will advise approximately when the maintenance needs to be carried out. A *10 Year Maintenance Plan* must include in the report:

1. *The major capital items anticipated to require repair and replacement within the next 10 years. Major capital items include: Painting, Scaffolding, Lifts, Air Conditioning Plant, and Heating Plant.*
2. *The present condition or state of repair of those items.*
3. *The estimated cost of the repair and replacement of those items or components.*
4. *Estimated cost can be supplied only by quotes from the professionals in their trade.*
5. *The expected life of those items or components once repaired or replaced. Expected life of items can be estimated by supplying warranty documents from a supplier of the product.*
6. *Property's age, location, construction and the past maintenance program.*
7. *The existing bank balance, interest earned, tax payable, estimated replacement cost, recommended years of life and yearly contributions.*

*Victorian Owners Corporations ACT 2006,
Division 3—Maintenance Plan*

2. Helps to Eliminate the Need for Special Levies

Many owners corporations choose to wash their buildings because they can't afford to repaint - but this can cause further issues as the water seeps into the concrete; making it porous. So; due to inaccurate or little planning a simple paint job that would cost approximately \$2,000 could turn into a \$1,000 000 bill where the building has to be stripped back to replace the original structure.

If there are insufficient funds in the Maintenance Plan, or no funds in place at all, the owners of the units within the building will have to pay special levies to repair the building. Not a bill that anyone wants to be hit with!

3. Gives owners a sense of security

Apart from living in an attractive environment, by budgeting effectively and utilizing their 10 Year Maintenance Plan, members of an Owners Corporation will feel secure that their building is being maintained. This also allows owners to control their personal budgets effectively.

In the future, when owners are looking to sell their units, a well maintained building is far more likely to impress a potential buyer than one falling apart at the seams. Also, there are a number of court cases where owners and committee members are suing previous owners or committee members for not budgeting adequately for maintenance needs. The implementation of an effective Maintenance Plan will lessen the possibility of this happening in the future.

If your Owners Corporation has budgeted properly, you can go to a meeting in five years time and instead of arguing about where the money is going to come from, you can discuss what colour the new paint is going to be.

10 Year Maintenance Plans are an effective tool and essential in keeping buildings maintained, keeping owners happy and helping to eliminate the need for special levies.

Is Your BBQ Explosion Proof?

Safe Handling, Storage and Disposal of LPG Gas Cylinders

This article will outline what you as a strata manager have to do in order to avoid dangerous explosions occurring on your common property and avoid hefty compensation pay outs.

They're an item you don't give a second thought to but LP Gas Bottles have the potential to start fires or small explosions. As barbeques are often located in common property areas of buildings it is essential that proper care is given to these highly flammable items.

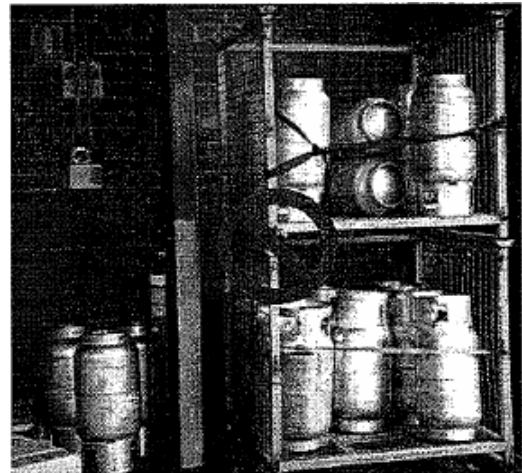
According to the New South Wales Fire Brigades website a large amount of fires involving barbeques are due to leaking gas bottles. You need to be sure that a garden hose or other continuous supply of water is nearby at all times and the barbeque needs to be located within 20 metres of a permanent private dwelling.

Some other handy tips for Small Gas Cylinders include...

1. Position the Cylinder so the pressure relief valve is in the vapor space of the cylinder – ie. Stored in an upright position so that the safety relief device is able to vent.
2. When storing, secure the Cylinder as low to the ground as practical.
3. Dispose of empty Cylinders on a regular basis.
4. Cylinders must be handled carefully and not allowed to fall upon one another, or be subjected to undue shock.
5. Cylinders can only be recycled when they have been degassed, devalued or punctured to indicate their 'gas free' status.

Options for safe disposal of small gas cylinders that have not been de-gassed include;

- Gas cylinder exchange facilities in selected service stations and hardware stores
- Cylinder refilling depots that are usually owned by major gas suppliers
- Local dealers of the gas cylinders



Cylinders should be stored in an upright position so the pressure relief valve is able to vent

Some handy tips for Large Gas Cylinders (for use in house holds)...

Generally;

- These cylinders are usually found in rural areas, come in pairs and are stored outside the home.
- LPG piping must be installed and/or removed by a licensed gas worker.

In regards to refilling they can either be;

- Refilled where they stand by a delivery truck, or;
- The gas supplier collects the empty cylinder and exchanges it with a filled cylinder.

Be sure to keep these cylinders clear of obstruction and try to limit contact with them, particularly with fire.

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