



Yaletown condo owners take preventative action now, to avoid potential headaches later

“The owners were smart,” says Bunny Porteous, Senior Strata Manager for FirstService Residential Property Management. “The Strata Council took preventative action now to avoid problems later.”

Porteous is referring to the Peninsula, a high-end waterfront condominium building in Yaletown managed by FirstService Residential. The moment second-hand smoke problems began, Council got proactive.

“When the Strata Council first asked for help implementing a no-smoking bylaw, I suggested they propose a smoking ban on limited common property (balconies), but they decided to propose a ban that prohibited smoking throughout the entire building and grounds, homeowners’ suites and balconies included,” continued Porteous. “Council sensed owners would be supportive and they were right. Seventy-five percent voted yes.”

Porteous suggests more buildings should follow the Peninsula’s lead and seek support for a similar bylaw before smoking complaints start. A 10-year veteran of the strata management business, she confirms smoking issues can eat up a lot of time and short of a no-smoking policy, are seldom easy to resolve.

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. If a Council believes ownership would be supportive of a 100% no-smoking bylaw, I say go for it,” she continued. “Besides avoiding smoking complaint headaches, a no-smoking bylaw reduces risk of fire, clean-up costs and I expect could make units easier to sell.”

Health advocates including the BC Lung Association and the Heart and Stroke Foundation are keen to move the issue forward and help increase the availability of smoke-free housing options in apartments and condos.

“We regularly receive calls from property managers and residents looking for help to address second-hand smoke,” says Sharon Hammond, Manager of www.smokefreehousingbc.ca a valuable resource for Strata Corporations exploring the idea of going smoke-free.

“Not everyone knows it’s legal to adopt a 100% no smoking bylaw. “We want to promote smoke-free building success stories, like the Peninsula’s, to educate strata corporations on the growing number of buildings becoming 100% smoke-free.

Plus, we want to get the word out that while smoke-free buildings protect residents from a known health hazard, they can also increase marketability, reduce conflicts among residents, protect against litigation and human rights complaints, save money on maintenance and eliminate a leading cause of residential fires.”

“It’s win-win. What’s good for resident health is also good for the bottom line.”

For easy-to-use info on how to implement a no-smoking bylaw visit:

www.smokefreehousingbc.ca.

The [Heart and Stroke Foundations \(B.C. & Yukon\)](#) and the [BC Lung Association](#) work together to raise public awareness about the serious health risks of exposure to second-hand smoke and to advocate for smoke-free environments for all workers and the public.