

Strata Council recently commissioned a review of internal water and piping systems to assess their condition and identify any systemic problems that might require attention. Appropriate follow-up action has been initiated by the Strata Manager and Council. The review also highlighted issues that require the attention and cooperation of individual owners or residents.

### **Washing Machines**

Leaks and overflows from washing machines have been a frequent cause of flooding in the Venus. Residents should check connections and couplings regularly for leakage. Inflow and drainage hoses can deteriorate with age. Hoses that begin to become brittle or show cracks should be replaced. Even a small amount of water can cause extensive – and expensive – damage. NEVER leave a running washing machine unattended.

USE LESS DETERGENT -- Overuse of detergents causes excessive amounts of soap suds to be released into the drainage system (and eventually to city wastewater treatment plants), as well as leaving a soapy residue to discolour clothes and irritate skin. Because the city water supply comes from snowmelt and surface water sources in the mountains, Vancouver has the softest water (i.e., water with the lowest amount of dissolved calcium and magnesium) in Canada – a small fraction of the average of other Canadian cities. Soft water needs far less detergent to generate suds and to clean clothes. The amount of detergent recommended by manufacturers is based upon average or moderate water hardness, and is generally much greater than needed for Vancouver water. The Greater Vancouver Regional District recommends beginning with just *half* the manufacturer recommended amounts and adjusting if necessary.

Reduced detergent use means less money spent, and clothes look and feel cleaner due to less detergent residue. Washing machines operate more effectively and efficiently. Waste water treatment plants don't have to process excessive amounts of suds (surfactants) in wastewater, making the plant more effective. And fewer surfactants finding their way into the ecosystem have long-term environmental benefits.

### **Dryer Vents**

Residents should clean exterior dryer vent screens and have the dryer venting and ducting professionally cleaned regularly. A poorly maintained dryer vent can lead to moisture problems and staining of ceilings within the building. Where accessible, exterior vent covers should be vacuumed by residents quarterly, and professionally cleaned annually. Dryer lint traps should be cleaned regularly to help minimize the build up of lint in the ducts and avoid overheating.

### **Insurance Coverage**

The Strata Property Act requires that each Strata Corporation obtain insurance covering common property and assets (furnishings, equipment or other items owned by the Strata Corporation). The Strata's insurance policy does not cover the contents of a strata lot, such as furnishings and other personal items belonging to the owner, tenant or occupier, or upgrades to a strata lot (including alterations and upgrades made by prior owners).

If an owner or resident is responsible for damage to common property or to other units (for example, by failing to adequately monitor or maintain laundry equipment or dishwashers resulting in water damage), the Strata will claim against you for the deductible (currently \$25,000) and the insurers of other strata lot owners may bring a claim against you for any amounts the insurer is required to pay to repair or replace damaged property in another suite.

It is important owners and residents are aware of their potential liabilities and ensure that their individual homeowner insurance provides adequate coverage and protection.