

RESPONSIBILITIES OF OWNERS AND RESIDENTS

This letter is to point out some responsibilities of both owners and residents, to prevent extra costs due to damage to property. Some people assume these would be paid for by the Owner's Corporation or our common insurance, but this is incorrect in many cases.

This list is not exhaustive and does not admit any liability by the Owners Corporation in any way. Preventative maintenance not only protects your own property value but helps to preserve the overall condition and amenity of our building for all residents.

It is often much cheaper to repair issues soon after they are seen, than to repair them later. Neglecting these responsibilities can also result in damage that affects neighbouring apartments and common property. In many cases, costs from such damage must be paid by the original responsible lot owner. If you're ever unsure whether an issue is your responsibility or that of the Owners Corporation, please don't hesitate to contact L. R. Reed.

VISUAL CHECKS – INSTANTANEOUS.

If any of the following happen, tenants must report them immediately to the owner or owner's agent. Owners must immediately take action to stop any of the following issues and fix them.

- Water leaks of any sort, or damage to anything caused by water. This includes water coming from any of the following, or paint or wall or floor degradation:
 - hot water system (there is one in each apartment, which can be hidden)
 - window
 - external door
 - air conditioning systems
 - any ceiling or roof damage (which may be caused by water coming from apartments or roof above)
 - water pipes, particularly flexible hoses
 - internal plumbing (e.g. taps, toilets, pipes, fittings)
 - drainage systems
- Slow drainage of water through any drainage system (balconies, toilets, showers, sinks etc.)
- Cracks or other damage to window glass, door glass, windows, external doors, walls or other internal structures.
- Poor extraction fan performance, or mould appearing on internal surfaces. This is for fans for the cooktop and for the bathroom. If these do not operate well, moisture can accumulate within the apartment, causing mould or other moisture issues.

VISUAL CHECKS – ROUTINE.

The following should be checked at regular intervals by owners or their agents. Owners or their agent must take action to address any discovered to be faulty.

- All visual checks in the previous list.
- Check that any windows or external doors with drain holes in their frame, have those drain holes clear and free of any dirt or buildup, to allow free drainage of any rainwater.
- Check any flexible hoses (water and gas) for signs of wear or corrosion.
- Check no shower or bath floor tiles or balcony tiles are cracked
- Check there are no gaps in the grout in shower tiles or balcony tiles (for those balconies with grout)
- Check air conditioning systems water drainage systems

To illustrate, here are some fictional examples:

Example 1: Balcony Waterproofing Failure

Situation:

Jenny, the owner of apartment 3B, is informed of water stains on the ceiling of her downstairs neighbour's living room after heavy rain. The Owners Corporation is contacted to investigate.

Finding:

A building inspection finds that the waterproof membrane under Jenny's tiled balcony has failed due to age. Water has been slowly seeping through for months, but this has only just become obvious.

Responsibility:

The membrane is part of Jenny's lot, and the tiling and membrane were not part of the original building but installed by a previous owner. Jenny is still responsible for the failure and must cover the repair to both the balcony and the water damage caused to the downstairs neighbour's ceiling. As she has acted promptly, she may be able to claim this on her content's insurance (if she has some: if she was renting it out, she may be able to claim on landlord's insurance).

Example 2: Flexible Hose Burst Under Vanity

Situation:

Raj leaves for the weekend. While away, a flexible braided hose under his bathroom sink bursts and floods the unit below.

Finding:

The hose, over 10 years old, had visible rust and wear signs. Raj had never replaced it or had it inspected.

Responsibility:

The hose is wholly within Raj's lot. Raj is responsible for the damage to his apartment and liable for damage to the ceiling and carpet of the unit below.

Lesson:

Flexible hoses should be replaced every 5–7 years or at the first sign of fraying, bulging, or rust. As Raj has not monitored this issue, it is unlikely insurance will cover it.

Example 3: Blocked Window Track Causes Leak

Situation:

During a storm, water leaks into Michael's unit through his closed aluminium window. He believes the window must be faulty and calls the Owners Corporation.

Finding:

A handyman discovers the window's drain holes and track were full of dust, leaves, and spider webs, preventing proper drainage. Water overflowed the track and entered the room.

Responsibility:

Because the internal face of the window and its drainage track are part of the lot, Michael is responsible for keeping them clean. This is not a failure of common property. And, as Michael has not monitored nor cleaned the window tracks, insurance is unlikely to cover this.

Example 4: Noisy Bathroom Fan Leads to Mould

Situation:

Sophie notices a musty smell and mould spots forming in her bathroom ceiling. She suspects a roof leak and contacts the Owners Corporation.

Finding:

There is no leak in the ceiling. The exhaust fan in Sophie's bathroom is old and no longer effectively ventilates. Steam from her showers has caused mould growth.

Responsibility:

Ventilation fans are part of the lot. Sophie is responsible for maintaining or replacing the fan. She is also responsible for cleaning the mould and ensuring proper ventilation moving forward. Insurance is unlikely to cover this.

Example 5: Hot Water System Fails

Situation:

Eli's hot water unit, located in a laundry cupboard, suddenly fails and leaks water into the unit below.

Finding:

The system had rusted internally and failed unexpectedly. Water leaked through the floor and damaged a neighbour's ceiling plaster and flooring.

Responsibility:

The hot water unit is inside Eli's lot, and its maintenance is his responsibility. He is liable for both replacing the unit and repairing the damage it caused.

We appreciate your attention to these matters and your continued cooperation in maintaining a safe, pleasant, and well-functioning building.

Kind Regards,

The Owners Corporation Committee