

# Information Sheet For Owners considering renovations and improvements

1. Building Permits. It is the owner's responsibility to determine if a building permit is required for the project. Information on building permits can be found online at: <https://www.esquimalt.ca/business-development/building/building-bylaws>. If permits are not taken out for work that requires one, there are serious repercussions and liabilities from both Strata and the municipality.
  
2. All construction projects need to be sent to Council prior to commencing work (See Bylaw #9). Surface work including painting, panelling, wall tile, replacing carpets or lino with similar product, bathroom fixtures, and interior doors are sent to Council mainly for information purposes. Please note that the textured product used on walls and ceilings in our units is asbestos containing and projects where these finishes are disturbed need to be managed safely. Changing of appliances, curtains or blinds does not need to be sent to Council.
  
3. Plumbing and electrical. Any work done to plumbing and electrical systems will likely involved going into the wall. This takes the work into the scope of strata property. Where original electrical fixtures, outlets, or switches exist, a certified electrician will need to address the aluminum wiring to bring the improvement up to current code. These systems need to be carefully managed from a building perspective as well as a unit perspective. All plumbing and electrical work needs to:
  1. Be done by a licensed contractor, and
  2. Needs to be pre-approved by Council. A scope of work should be sent to Council prior to the work being done and a statement of work from the Contractor should be submitted to Council for inclusion in the unit maintenance file.
  
4. Kitchen and bathroom cabinetry. The cabinetry and millwork itself is considered surface work (see point #2) however, electrical and plumbing is nearly always involved so the guidelines in point #3 must be included in your information to strata about this work being done.
  
5. Flooring. Flooring is generally a surface improvement, however, there are two major exceptions. One is when the subfloor requires repair. The other is when changing from carpet or lino to hard surface flooring including laminate, hardwood or tile. The concrete subfloor on

the first and third levels must remain and, in most cases for upper units, will require repair when flooring is upgraded. Please note that, though the Strata requires this concrete floor to remain, repairs are at owner's expense due this deterioration being considered normal wear and tear for the age of the floor. When changing to hard surface flooring, sufficient noise dampening product must be used on the third floor (lower level of upper units). (See Bylaw #9) The product being considered must be preapproved by Council prior to installation and Council strongly recommends using a professional installer. Tile installed on the third level in some units has increased noise transfer to the lower unit because there is no available dampening product available for underneath tile. Council will be sending out a survey with some proposed bylaw changes and one of these will be whether to allow tile on the third level for any future improvements.

6. Envelope (exterior doors and windows). Envelope improvements require Council pre approval and installation by a qualified contractor. Requests need to include the product being considered, the name of the installer, and, for upper units, specific information on how the installer intends to maintain the flashing detail on the walls beside and under the existing sliding glass door. Exterior doors must be a similar colour to the existing doors. Second and fourth level fire exits must be replaced with a door or window appropriate for a fire exit. Please refer to the building code or contact the fire department for further information.
  
7. Structural changes and stud exposure. Any changes that require removal or repositioning of walls or half walls requires engineering approval prior to being sent to Council for project preapproval. Anytime that a wall is opened up for plumbing, electrical or other purposes, photos of the exposed studs should be taken and sent to Council for inclusion in the unit maintenance file. Any discovery of rot, including dry rot or rot from prior water damage must be immediately reported to Council. Owners planning improvements should be prepared for expenses relating to structural deterioration as this is frequently caused by previous or current owners and, as such, becomes an owner expense to remediate

Indemnity agreements. The purpose of an indemnity agreement is to place responsibility for future impact to Strata property on the owner who undertook the work that caused the impact. To date, Strata 40 has not required owners to sign indemnity agreements for electrical, plumbing, envelope or structural improvements or repairs. Council reserves the right to require an indemnity agreement at any time.

Insurance considerations. Owners should be aware that any improvements to the unit by previous and current owners are not covered by Strata insurance in the event of flood, fire, etc. It is important that owners discuss their improvements with their insurance providers to ensure that they have adequate coverage in the event of loss.

Noise. Recent construction projects in the building have generated complaints about duration and timing of construction noise. Esquimalt's noise bylaws, similar to our bylaws, are based on "quiet enjoyment" that does not apply only to overnight hours so please take this into consideration when planning your work. The municipal bylaw can be found online at:

[https://www.esquimalt.ca/sites/default/files/docs/municipal-hall/bylaws/bylaw\\_no.2826\\_maintenance\\_of\\_property\\_bylaw\\_revised\\_may\\_2014.pdf](https://www.esquimalt.ca/sites/default/files/docs/municipal-hall/bylaws/bylaw_no.2826_maintenance_of_property_bylaw_revised_may_2014.pdf). For owners using their patios or balconies for equipment, building material storage, or cutting, please note that Bylaw 4 (1) h states that owners must not allow patios and balconies to become "untidy and unsanitary". Also, patios and balconies are considered fire exits so they cannot be cluttered to the point of impeding exit. Breezeways cannot be used for material storage, cutting, or any other construction related use.