

STRATA & COMMUNITY LIVING

WINTER 2019

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



BEING WATER WISE

Winter is the perfect time to start thinking and acting on saving water. Why? Because before the hot Summer comes back we can already have mastered some good habits.

NSW is suffering through drought and our dams are at levels lower than the rest of the country. Keepit Dam north west of Tamworth ran dry at the end of 2018 and other dams in NSW country areas are at around 3 percent.

In Sydney our metropolitan dams are also low. Warragamba Dam is at around 55 percent and Woronora Dam is at less than 45 percent capacity.

With Sydney and surrounding areas increasing in population growth we need to make sure there is enough water for everyone, and this means reviewing how we use this very valuable resource.

There are lots of water saving tips. Some might already be in place in our homes so here are some tips that may not have been thought of but can be implemented right now and for low cost:

- It's winter so reuse your hot water bottle water on plants or the lawn
- Cook food in as little water as possible, which helps retain nutrients, by popping on a lid to create steam
- Wash fruit and vegetables in a bowl rather than under a running tap and then reuse that water on the garden

- Keep your shower to four minutes
- Wait until your dishwasher or washing machine is fully loaded before you turn it on
- Turn off the tap while you brush your teeth or shave

Make sure you maintain all your water outlets – fix dripping taps or running toilets, install a water saving showerhead and only water gardens or balcony plants in the cooler parts of the day to prevent evaporation.

Sydney Water has water saving tips on its website www.sydneywater.com.au

The NSW Government has introduced some water restrictions for Sydney, the Blue Mountains and the Illawarra, and fines for breaches may apply. The restrictions are:

- Watering is allowed before 10 am and after 4 pm on any day - to avoid the heat of the day
- All hoses must have a trigger nozzle
- No hosing of hard surfaces, such as paths and driveways, but washing vehicles is allowed
- Fire hoses may only be used for fire-fighting activities

Details of these restrictions in other areas of NSW are available at www.environment.nsw.gov.au/questions/information-on-water-restrictions



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

A lot of SCA (NSW) owner members contact us with questions. We bring to you some of the most frequently asked questions and the answers. This is for general guidance only and SCA (NSW) always recommends that professional advice be sought in relation to specific situations.

Q: Is a Special By-Law required if a lot owner removes existing carpet and replaces with timber floor boards. An owner has submitted a minor repair as a motion in the upcoming AGM for their lot. If the motion is approved are there any further steps that have to be taken?

In this case Section 110 of the Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 applies. A resolution at a general meeting is required with special attention to Section 110(4)(a, b, c & d). Attention should be given to how the floor is to be installed. In the event that the floor is glued or affixed to the common property (i.e. battens) consideration should be given to a by-law to enable the responsibility for repair and maintenance to be passed on to the respective owner. No by-law would be required for a 'floating timber floor'.

Q: What happens if the Secretary declines to call a Strata Committee meeting?

Section 39 of the Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 is about convening meetings and says that:

- (1) The secretary of the owners corporation may convene a meeting of the strata committee at any time.
- (2) The secretary of the owners corporation, or any other member of the strata committee, must convene a meeting of

the committee if requested to do so by at least one-third of the members of the committee.

- (3) The meeting must be held:
 - (a) in the case of a large strata scheme, not later than 28 days after the request is made, or
 - (b) in the case of any other strata scheme, not later than 14 days after the request is made.

Q: An owners shower floor requires re-sealing or water proofing and the owners corporation has received quotes to do this work. However, the owner is rejecting the quotes as they don't like the colour of tiles that the company use. Where does the owners corporation stand here? Is it up to the owners corporation to match the tiles or pay for the owners choice of tiles or is it the responsibility of the owners corporation to just re-seal the water proofing?

The owners corporation should take all reasonable attempts to restore the common property to its original condition. In the event that the owners corporation cannot source the original tiles then an alternative must be used. The respective lot owner should meet the additional cost of a more expensive tile in the event that the tile suggested by the owners corporation is not acceptable or the original tile cannot be sourced.

NSW GOVERNMENT UPDATE

BE AWARE, THERE'S A NEW TRAM THERE

You may need to obtain a Permit to Work if your property is located along the new Sydney Light Rail line running from Circular Quay to Randwick and Kingsford.

Hazard zones are established during the testing and commissioning phase to help identify areas of increased risk including electrical hazards and tram movements. For strata committees intending to do maintenance or remedial work around their buildings a **Permit to Work** near the rail corridor is required before proceeding. Make sure your strata service provider is aware of this requirement.

There are live overhead wires along the alignment, except for the section from Circular Quay to Town Hall, and there is a three-metre hazard zone around the wires. The following are examples of the types of activities that may require a permit when working in or near a hazard zone:

- Erecting ladders or scaffolding
- Tree pruning
- Delivering equipment/goods from large or oversize vehicles

Consider if there might be maintenance such as window washing, exterior painting or other remedial works that might require an elevated work platform, cherry-picker or crane and please contact the project team before proceeding. The project team will assess the works to determine whether a **Permit to Work** is required.

For more information, including how to get a Permit to Work, visit the Sydney Light Rail website: <https://sydneylightrail.transport.nsw.gov.au/safety>

NEW MINISTER APPOINTED FOLLOWING NSW STATE ELECTION

Following the 2019 NSW State Election, as expected a new Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation, the Hon Kevin Anderson, MP, has been appointed.

The Minister is the Member for Tamworth and has been in NSW Parliament since 2010. According to his biography he has a strong interest in community issues and has spent time as a Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Roads and Transport. The Hon Matt Kean, MP, has moved into the Energy and Environment Ministry and we continue to have strong support from Minister Kean from his extensive experience and exposure to strata during his time as Minister.

SCA (NSW) has written to the new Minister congratulating him on his new portfolio. A meeting has been sought as soon as possible to enable SCA (NSW) to detail its five-year vision for the NSW strata sector.

On behalf of members SCA (NSW) continues to reinforce that it wants to see the NSW Government deliver dedicated policy on priority issues affecting millions of residents during this next term.



YOU MAY NEED A PERMIT TO WORK IF YOUR PROPERTY IS LOCATED ALONG THE NEW SYDNEY LIGHT RAIL LINE

UP-TO-THE-MINUTE WITH SCA (NSW)

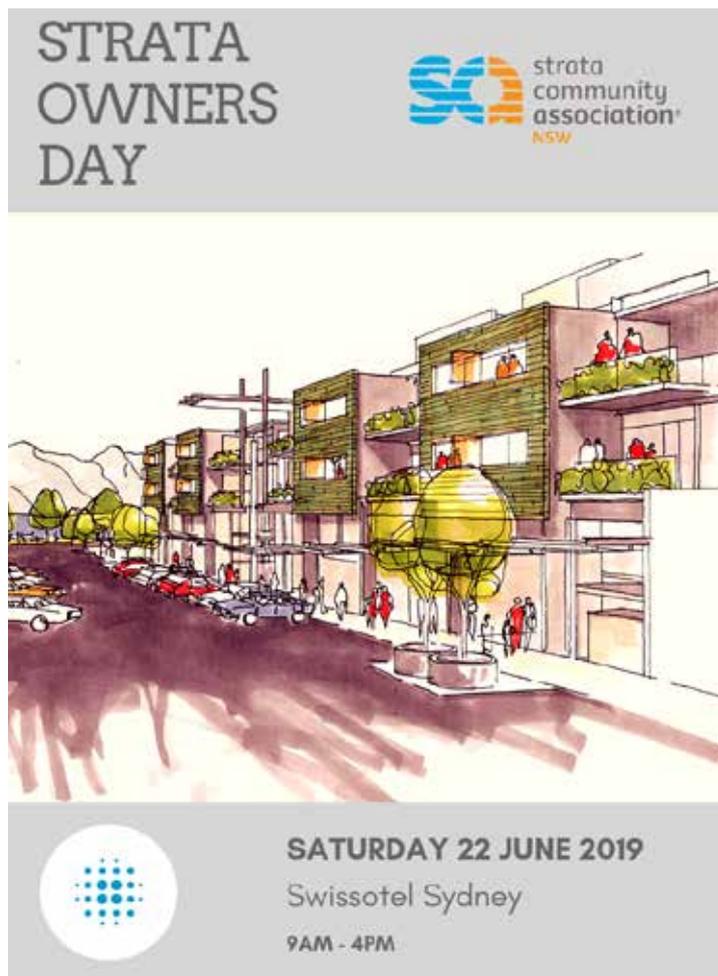
Annual Strata Owners Day Saturday 22 June 2019

Come along to the Annual Strata Owners Day at the Swissotel in Sydney's CBD. A day for all strata owners and those interested in buying into strata, to be educated, updated and to have your queries answered.

Our range of speakers will cover topics such as: Owners and Tenants Rights, Common Property, Strata Manager Selection, Performance Management and much more.

With up to 17 trade exhibitors showcasing the latest products and services combined with an exciting program, this is a day not to be missed.

Find out more and register via the SCA (NSW) website nsw.strata.community <https://nsw.strata.community/2019-owners-day/>



Strata Owners Committee Training

Not everyone is an expert in strata laws especially if you have just volunteered to be on your strata committee.

SCA (NSW) runs a training course specifically for strata owners.

The course is available either online or face-to-face providing all the essential tools needed to be on a successful strata committee.

Topics include:

- Governance and Ethics
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Strata Plan Interpretation
- Administration Matters
- Communications

Go to the Strata Owners section on the SCA (NSW) website for more details or to register for an upcoming training course.

nsw.strata.community

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