



Wilson, Blanchard Management Inc. – *Your Solution to Property Management*

www.wilsonblanchard.com

Utilities & Education

By Karen Reynolds & Jeff Lack, Co-Editors

The WB Condo Connection is a newsletter intended to highlight Ontario condominium related articles and educational items that may be of interest to Boards of Directors and condo owners.

Our feature article in this edition focuses on issues involving Solid Waste Management Fees in Toronto. During the last quarter we presented two educational seminars and have provided summaries of both – please watch our website for announcements of further such events.

Our newsletter is published online and available on our website (www.wilsonblanchard.com) as well as in hard copy format to the President of

Utilities Out of Control (in Toronto)

By David Blois, Sr. Property Manager

In July, 2008 the City of Toronto began implementing its aggressive plan to divert 70% of all garbage from landfills. The City planned to collect upwards of \$54 million annually to fund this very environmentally responsible, yet over-ambitious plan, by introducing a complicated billing system as an augmentation to the City’s existing water and sewer billing. Toronto taxpayers were still reeling from the ongoing annual 9% increases for water and sewer charges imposed by the City (to fund the aging infrastructure repairs and replacements) when the

Inside This Issue

Utilities Out of Control (in Toronto)	1
Condominium Matters	3
Energy Conservation & Facility Improvement	3

each of our Boards of Directors.

As always, we hope you enjoy this edition and we welcome your comments. Please direct any comments, suggestions or article topic requests by email to newsletter.editor@wilsonblanchard.com or by mail to:

Editor – WB Condo Connection
101-701 Main Street West
Hamilton, ON, L8S 1A2



new garbage levy was introduced, with these staggering annual increases for water/sewer expected to last well into the year 2014.

The City’s new billing model for the “solid waste management fee” proved to be even more daunting

Utilities from page 1

than the 70% waste diversion. A legal decision determined that the City could not credit the property tax bills for a portion deemed attributable to garbage collections (in order to permit the City to then bill taxpayers separately for garbage collection), so a decision was made to add the garbage credits and charges to the City's water and sewer billing. This resulted in the (complicated) introduction of the solid waste management fee billing plan. The City's website confirmed that over 100,000 calls were fielded by staff to answer questions and concerns about the new program for both single family and multi-residential garbage collection.

The new billing was to commence in July, 2008, but the implementation proved to be problematic (at least for multi-residential buildings) and was delayed by months for the inaugural billing and then by several months for the second round. Faced with new and high fees, many multi-residential buildings started scrutinizing and questioning the City's combined water/sewer and waste management bills, according to at least one

"Faced with new and high fees, multi-residential buildings started scrutinizing the City's combined water/sewer and waste management bills"

major condominium law firm in Toronto, including a site that I manage in Toronto with close to 700 suites in two towers. The charges levied by the City for this site were challenged over a period of one year, resulting in a total site credit that is anticipated to exceed \$15,000. The challenge was made successfully on the basis that the City overcharged for the number of compacted bins collected and as well for the size of each bin. By keeping daily counts of compacted garbage bins collected ("lifted") and ensuring that the City has a proper record of the size of each "regular" garbage bin at each site, other building operators/managers will be in a much better position to audit solid waste management fees and to challenge them should it become necessary. Informing and encouraging building residents to recycle diligently should also result in fewer regular garbage bins to be collected and a corresponding reduction in solid waste management fees.



Educational Events

By Karen Reynolds, ACCI, FCCI, R.C.M., A.I.H.M.

Condominium Matters

On November 19, 2009, and with the help of Cindy Basilio our office administrator, Ray Wilson and Karen Reynolds took our Kitchener office on the road to the Delta Kitchener-Waterloo and teamed up with Mark Shedden, Atrens-Counsel Insurance Brokers Inc. and Robert Mullin, Smith Valeriotte Law Firm LLP to provide local board members and owners with an evening seminar.

The evening was a huge success in spite of the rainy weather and we were all very pleased with the number of interested registrants.

Those in attendance were provided a presentation by Ray and Karen on what boards and owners could expect from professional management, Mark Shedden gave insights into the confusing world of condominium insurance and Rob Mullin spoke to the attendants on governance in a condominium.

Once the formal presentations were complete a lively question and answer period was enjoyed by everyone as were the refreshments.

Thank you to Mark and Rob, Cindy Basilio, all of our Kitchener office staff and to everyone who attended for making the evening a success! Watch in local news publications and our website for future similar events!

Energy Conservation & Facility Improvement

In an effort to assist our boards and managers in making important decisions to optimize the operation, comfort and value of their buildings, Wilson, Blanchard Management Inc., teamed up with Johnson Controls this past October for an Energy Conservation and Facility Improvement Conference.

Together we hosted several board members at an information filled evening at the Renaissance Banquet Centre in Mississauga. Speakers included representatives from Johnson Controls who provided information on types of conservation strategies that could be incorporated into buildings. Natural Resource Canada and local utility representatives spoke with respect to the availability of energy grant incentive dollars and some of our board members and managers who had personal experience with the implementation of an energy saving plan provided testimonials on the process.

After the presentations, board members were treated to refreshments and were free to visit a number of trade booths to obtain additional information on some leading edge products such as Solar Thermal technology, Building Automation and the latest in Speed Drives, to name just a few.

With so much information out there regarding the reduction of energy costs, sustainability and green initiatives it was a great opportunity to get answers on where to start and how to implement these innovative strategies to improve and optimize our facilities while at the same time reducing costs.

Status Certificates Now Available Online!

As of December 1, 2009, Status Certificates can be ordered and paid for online and delivered directly to your email address.

Status Certificates have never been so easy! Visit www.statuscertificate.com.



Reminder – Paperless Financial Statements

Each year we produce over 22,000 Financial Statements for our Boards of Directors – that’s about 400,000 pieces of paper. If we can send even half of these electronically, we can save a lot of trees.

If you, or any of the members of your Board, would like to receive your monthly Financial Statement package by email in PDF format, please speak with your property manager and help us help the environment.



101-701 Main Street West
Hamilton, ON
L8S 1A2

Phone:

905-540-8800

Fax:

905-540-4450

Email:

info@wilsonblanchard.com

206-16 Four Seasons Place
Toronto, ON
M9B 6E5

Phone:

416-642-2807

Fax:

416-642-2810

Email:

toinfo@wilsonblanchard.com

15A-842 Victoria Street North
Kitchener, ON
N2B 3C1

Phone:

519-743-7667

Fax:

519-571-5083

Email:

kwinfo@wilsonblanchard.com

Newsletter Editor Email:

newsletter.editor@wilsonblanchard.com

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.wilsonblanchard.com