

Wilson, Blanchard Management Inc. – Your Solution to Property Management  
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## Neighbourly Relations

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.

One of the recurring themes in all condo living is relationships with ones neighbours, and while most are positive, we are often contacted as the property manager to deal with the not-so-positive situations. With that in mind, we have turned to our property managers this month and have asked them to provide us with stories & solutions of how to deal with Nuisance Neighbours.

Our newsletter is published online and available

## Nuisance Neighbours

Introduction by Jeff Lack, BAcc, CGA  
Individual Content Attributed within Article

One of joys of living in a condominium is the opportunity to live in a close knit community setting with other likeminded individuals – the chance for social interaction, common reasons for choosing the condo lifestyle and common interests (if none other than the best interests of the corporation to which you all belong). Unfortunately, as in every part of society, there are cases where individuals do not always see eye-to-

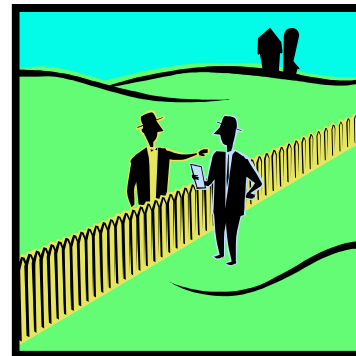
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on our website ([www.wilsonblanchard.com](http://www.wilsonblanchard.com)) as well as in hard copy format to each of the members of our Boards of Directors.

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](mailto:newsletter.editor@wilsonblanchard.com) or by mail to:

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eye and quite simply do not get along. These cases are sometimes magnified by the close proximity of condo living. In extreme cases, the behaviour of an individual owner will become so outlandish that they will become known as a “nuisance neighbour”.

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*Nuisance Neighbours* from page 1

With that in mind, and in an effort to help other Boards of Directors deal with such situations, we recently turned to our Property Managers and asked them to submit their experiences related to “nuisance neighbours”. It is our hope that their insights and/or humorous anecdotes will provide our board members with useful advice while also letting them know that they are not alone in experiencing these frustrating scenarios – lots of other Boards are faced with similar experiences!

From the desk of: David Blois

Paying a high price for a luxury condominium doesn’t guarantee there will be no noise. This was the case when a top executive decided to set up his own home/condo exercise room in a high end condominium, without any regard for the neighbour below and what noises from the exercise equipment might be heard. To make matters even worse, the equipment was often used in the very early morning hours when most people, including the neighbour below, were asleep.

Initial letters from management were not taken seriously and then a final warning letter was sent indicating that the condominium Corporation’s lawyer would be contacted in order to effect compliance with the building’s rules and regulations.

After a period approaching three years since the initial complaint was received, a court order (with costs) was obtained on behalf of the condominium Corporation – after the mediation process failed to rectify the problem and after a lengthy adjournment was obtained by the offending resident owner.

In the end, the unit owner paid the price for setting up a home gym and being a noisy and inconsiderate neighbour – to the unusual and very expensive tune of almost \$20,000!

From the desk of: Brad Wells, RCM

Insight: One difficulty in dealing with nuisance complaints is first determining if the complaint is legitimate before proceeding with enforcement. I always request that the complaining party start a log of the nuisance activities/noises keeping track of the date, time and duration of the offensive action. This can either lead to the complaint disappearing because it is not frequent or serious enough to put in writing, or the completed log can be used as evidence in pursuing enforcement of the offending party.

Humorous Anecdote: One owner wrote to the Board with a nuisance complaint about frequently hearing bedsprings and moaning at night from the neighbouring unit. Luckily, after some sound transmission testing of the walls between the units, it was found to be a building deficiency. The wall insulation was improved, thus ending the complaints, rather than having to speak to the offending suite about their lifestyle.

From the desk of: Steve Galaczi

Once upon a time in the west (Burlington) there was a unit owner who regularly yelled and cursed when calling in to the office. All the employees and her neighbours were terrified around her. She called me one day also screaming and yelling, so I hang up the phone, jumped into my car and drove to the site. I knocked at her door and with a big smile I told her “Hi I am Steve, the guy you just yelled at, so I came to see how I can help you?”

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From that day on she was a changed person. If contractors came to the site she took orange juice to give them, never called the office again and baked cookies for me for Christmas.

From the desk of: Tobi Scott-Conacher, RCM

A new owner who was in breach of the rules had received several letters reminding them that rules go hand-in-hand with condo living. This new owner was adjusting to condo life and the rules that went with it, add to that some major changes in her personal life and she was having difficulty adapting. I was patient and kind with this new owner and convinced her that once she got settled into her new lifestyle she would enjoy all that condo living has to offer. The new owner did adjust and now appreciates the need for rules and enjoys condo living. Two years later this owners' son in-law became my son's soccer coach and I see her regularly. We are able to laugh about her early experiences and adjustments to condo living and she has nothing but good things to say about her condo life style. You never know when a condo owner may be part of your world outside of work.

From the desk of: Robert Tilson, RCM

A corporation I manage had a problem with a rental unit. The owner rented the unit to a family that moved in with two pit-bulls. From the day they moved in, we had problems with these tenants. The dogs got away from their owners and attacked two other dogs in the complex. There was a muzzle by-law in Town and the dogs were never muzzled and often ran loose. On top of this, the police were attending this unit almost

on a weekly basis. We followed up with the owner on these rule violations almost immediately. We also had the owners whose dogs were attacked contact the Animal Control with the Town to investigate the attacks. Over time, the Animal Control came in and removed the pit bulls as they were also breeding them. Constant communication and paperwork to the owner finally led to the tenants being evicted and the situation returning to normal. A quiet townhouse complex had been turned upside down with tenants who were in violation of a number of rules and regulations. Strong persistence and follow up with the owner led to the tenant being evicted and the problem being resolved.

From the desk of: Juliana Lee, RCM

On a cold winter night in February, a dog was heard continuously barking in a suite on the 15th floor, disturbing the quiet enjoyment of the neighbours. The security guard went to the unit and knocked at the door but there was no response. Instead, the next door neighbour came out and informed the guard that the unit owner had just left for a month long vacation out of the country. He advised that another resident in the building had been asked to visit regularly and tend to the dog.

The barking, and the complaints, continued and the neighbour threatened to contact the humane society to have the dog taken away if the barking did not stop. Due to the urgency of the situation, management contacted the pet owner on his vacation, explaining to him that his dog was suffering and disturbing the quiet enjoyment of the other owners, which is an infraction of the Rules of

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the Corporation. The pet owner initially felt he was being bullied and harassed by the office and neighbour.

After spending time explaining to the owner that he would have to make better arrangements to control the situation, he finally agreed to ask a relative to stay in his suite to provide companionship to his dog. Having someone stay with the dog calmed him and because of this extra effort, he was able to also calm the owners who lived around his suite.

Living in close proximity with neighbours in a condominium setting requires a great deal of consideration to allow everyone to have “quiet enjoyment” of their homes. We believe a good communication forum is essential to bring harmony to the community.

## All Under One Roof

By Cindy Basilio

Wilson, Blanchard Management Inc. was proud to be the Diamond Sponsor for the 2011 CCI Golden Horseshoe Chapter Conference and Tradeshow that was held at the Hamilton Convention Centre on Saturday, April 9, 2011.

This Conference was a great success with their largest turnout of approximately 500 attendees, comprised of about 85% condominium board members and owners.

This conference is an invaluable source of information as it brings together leading experts from all entities from the condominium industry.



Wilson, Blanchard Management Inc. is a large participant in this conference not only with sponsorship, but high staff attendance, a booth in the exhibitor area and some of our senior staff involved in many of the program sessions, including:

- Ray Wilson, President - “Why Can’t We Just Get Along”
- Karen Reynolds, Director of Property Management - “Running an Effective Meeting”, as well as ACO Sponsored Session - “A Summary of Professional Condominium Management”
- Mike Mullen, Manager of Business Development and Training - “Landscaping Matters”.

We would like to thank the many clients and colleagues who stopped by our booth. We hope everyone who attended learned some valuable information and had the chance to network with other Boards, professionals and trades.

We would also like to acknowledge and thank all the presenters for their time and effort in sharing their knowledge and experiences.

If you did not have a chance to attend the conference this year and would like to learn more about the services, courses and seminars the Canadian Condominium Institute can provide for you, please do not hesitate to ask your property manager or visit the website at [www.ghcci.org](http://www.ghcci.org).

## Welcome!

Wilson, Blanchard Management would like to welcome our newest managed properties:

- Halton Condo. Corp. #100
- Toronto Standard Condo. Corp. #1655
- Waterloo North Condo. Corp. #128
- Wentworth Common Element Condo. Corp. #476

## Nationally Published Articles

Two of our previous WB Condo Connection articles were recently published nationally in the Spring 2011 Edition of CCI Review:

- Bedbugs – Karen Reynolds, ACCI, FCCI, RM, AIHM
- How to Combat Large Accounts Receivable Balances – Jeff Lack, BAcc, CGA



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