

NB! Geysers - be pro-active!

Recently, AULA had to deal with complex insurance being cancelled due to the claims history. These claims often result from burst geysers and resulting damage. The claims history have an impact on the monthly premiums, excess or even the cancellation of the insurance.

AULA thought it necessary to look at a more aggressive and pro-active approach towards the management and maintenance of geysers.

According to Section 68 of the Prescribed Management Rules, it is the responsibility of the owners to maintain the hot water system of their units.

It is suggested that owners and trustees approach the maintenance of the geysers as follows:

- * Appoint a plumber to investigate all geyser installations and we suggest that the following measures and standards should be compulsory upon such appointment and investigation:
 - * *All geysers must be issued with a drip tray;*
 - * *The outlet pipe of the drip tray must be a 50mm PVC-pipe. No poly-cop piping should be used, when this pipe is exposed to heat, it sprays the water, causing additional damage;*
 - * *The temperature of the geyser should be set at the prescribed temperature of 60°C;*
 - * *A 22mm copper pipe should be connected to the geyser safety valve.*
- * Only Kwikot geysers should be installed, as there is a guarantee of 5 years on the shell of the geyser.
- * It is suggested that each geyser should be issued with a geyser blanket. Although this is not compulsory, it saves energy and proofs to extend the lifespan of the geyser and is not expensive.
- * Inspection costs should be carried by the Body Corporate and the plumber must supply a full report on the geysers.
- * The plumber should provide quotes on any additional repairs to ensure that the installation is correct. These costs must be for the account of the owner.
- * After investigation, the plumber certifies that the installations are correct and supply the complex with a compliance certificate.
- * Photos of the geyser, drip tray and pipes should accompany the invoice to AULA.
- * It is advised that a register should be updated with all the dates the geysers are installed.

AULA is assisting the complexes in managing this process and is in the process of sending letters to owners in this regard.

Owners must please assist in notifying their tenants about this project and to help gain access for the abovementioned inspections.

Trustees... and the decisions they make

The necessity for having trustees arise from the unavailability of co-owners in sectional title complexes, often seen by the poor attendance of meetings. Owners are too often reluctant to attend AGM's and are therefore not available for vital decisions or even routine, day to day decisions. For this reason a smaller group of trustees are responsible for everyday management of the complex.

However, there are some decisions that trustees can't make. Trustees cannot make any decisions that is required to be taken by resolution at a general meeting. The body corporate (collective name for all owners/members in the scheme) is the policy maker and makes the final decisions in a sectional title scheme. The members must take all the important decisions. Some of these decisions are so important and affect the scheme so fundamentally that the Act even allows them to be made outside a meeting, by written resolution.

There are decisions that can only be taken by trustees. Important issues like consents for consolidating and subdividing sections and special levies - and controversial ones like keeping pets or erecting TV antennas! But whatever the trustees decide, it must be decided by the trustees together, either at a meeting or taken as a written resolution - a trustee cannot make decisions on his / her own. It is possible for the trustees to delegate responsibilities for specific tasks to individuals. It is required that two trustees, or a trustee and the managing agent - must sign any document that creates an obligation on the part of the body corporate. Those individuals can't by themselves make and implement important decisions.

The trustees are also specifically and personally required to act in good faith and for the benefit of the scheme as a whole. They are required to avoid material conflict of interest between themselves and the body corporate and may not take part in any decision concerning a body corporate contract or litigation if they have any personal interest in the matter.

-Anton Kelly

HOT ELECTRICITY SAVING TIPS

- * A geyser uses 39% of all household electricity. Cover it with a geyser blanket and insulate water pipes as this will help the water to stay hot for longer. Reduce the maximum temperature setting for your geyser / thermostat.
- * Use energy saving globes (CFLs) instead of incandescent bulbs.
- * Don't leave TVs, DVD players and other electrical equipment in stand-by mode but rather switch them off completely.

- Eskom

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