



NEWACTON /// SOUTH

NEWSLETTER

JULY 2024

Welcome to the second edition of the NewActon South newsletter for 2024.

As always, I extend a warm welcome to all new owners and tenants who have recently joined our community. I encourage those who have not yet had the chance to attend our social evenings to please do so and use it as an opportunity to meet your neighbours and immerse yourself in our vibrant community.

Time continues to move quickly and as you will read throughout this newsletter, the Executive Committee and its sub committees have been working hard to continue to build a vibrant, well informed community, maintain the building to the high standard we have become accustomed to and to work within the budget to ensure we are delivering the most cost effective and efficient practices to maintain NewActon South's reputation as the most highly prized residential dwelling in the Canberra region.

There has been considerable work, maintenance and upgrades to the building since the beginning of the year. A key upgrade is the availability of Wi Fi in the carparks. The lack of Wi Fi especially in the basement has been a major safety concern for many occupants and we are glad to now have this work completed. There is more to learn about this in the newsletter.

General maintenance and upgrades throughout the building are a daily occurrence with numerous contractors onsite either carrying out work, quoting on work or highly specialised trades investigating solutions to rectify some of our more complex issues. The most significant item to date, is the ongoing need to rectify the combustible cladding which is firmly entwined with our insurance claim to repair the hail damage acquired from the January 2020 hail storm.

I would like to take the opportunity to again recognise the ongoing work by the EC members who generously volunteer their time. I encourage any other owners who also have an interest in contributing to one of the sub committees, to please reach out to a member of the Executive Committee.



Chair, NewActon South Executive Committee





Social events

One of the best ways to get to know other residents in NAS Community is to spend some time socialising with them. To make that easy we organise a Happy Hour between 6:00 and 7:30 pm on the last Wednesday of every month. Bring along a beverage and some snacks and get to know your neighbours in a convivial atmosphere.

As a bonus several members of the Executive Committee usually attend so it's a great way to find out what's going on in the building or to raise any building issues with them during the evening.

In addition to the Happy Hours we usually have a dinner function towards the end of the year. Last year, rather than going to a restaurant, we catered for dinner in the building foyer. This proved popular and attracted a good crowd, so, in the Mortein tradition, when on a good thing, we'll stick to it.

Keep your eye out for notices in the lifts and common areas advertising the next Happy Hour and other functions throughout the year.



Maintenance committee

The newly-formed maintenance sub committee has been working hard in conjunction with our Building Manager and Grady Strata and Facilities staff to identify and record maintenance items so they can be managed, monitored and resolved in a timely and cost-efficient way.

The sub-committee is bringing greater discipline to our past maintenance management arrangements, and also allows us to better identify and address potential whole-of-building issues.

Many of our maintenance issues are extremely complex given the size, fit-out and age of our building. Some recent maintenance or remedial works have included:

- Patching and repainting the main foyer and passageway walls prior to the installation of the new artworks
- Ongoing concrete crack repairs in the carparks
- Water leak identification and rectification
- Car park deep clean
- Footpath deep clean (Marcus Clarke Street)
- Common area carpet deep clean
- Resealing the rock gardens to prevent leaks
- Glass replacement above rotunda door
- Level 4 passageway repair and repaint
- Fire safety integrity checks
- General repairs and upgrades to lighting systems throughout
- Replacement of major pieces of engineering plant

If you see any maintenance issues please report it to the Building Manager or Grady Strata. Contact details are on the notice boards. Everybody's help in reporting maintenance issues is much appreciated.

Art sub-committee



Hopefully, residents have enjoyed exploring the new artworks that are now hanging on the ground floor! There are about 10 new pieces to enjoy, among existing pieces which have been moved around for a different look and feel. The walls were painted in between the artwork changeover and we are now making use of the hanging system.

Sadly, we do have serious concerns about the condition of the artwork carpet at the entry door by Heather B Swann, which is a custom piece for the building. It has been damaged by sunlight, spills and wear. We are looking into how to re-home it in the building to protect its value and ensure its longevity.



Levy obligations

The next levy instalments are due for payment by 1 August 2024. Please put that due date in your diary.

Registered owners may also access their levy notices and check their balances at any time through the 'Levy Notices' menu on the Grady Strata portal <https://gradystrata.app.smata.com/building-profile?id=SP3488>

Levies provide the Owners Corporation with the income required to maintain our building and, in turn, promptly pay mandatory costs and outgoings such as building insurance, as well as our suppliers and contractors for the goods and services provided for the benefit of all residents.

Simply, paying levies late is to the detriment of the Owners Corporation's cash flow and earnings, and to the majority of owners who have paid their levy instalments on time.

If an owner does not pay their levies by the due date an interest fee will be charged at 10%. If levies remain unpaid for an extended period, the Owners Corporation may seek formal debt recovery or possibly start legal proceedings. Costs associated with these actions are also recoverable from the owner.

Owners with overdue levies, and who are not in a position to settle immediately, should speak with Grady Strata regarding possible arrangements that may be put in place to bring their account up to date.

Owners may also wish to consider pre-paying their levies in regular instalments on, say, a monthly or fortnightly basis should that best suit their financial circumstances. Simply set this up through your online banking website or application, making sure you quote your latest DEFT payment reference number.

Investors who have a real estate agent to manage their property - and pay outgoings such as their levies from rental income - should check their statements to ensure that their agent is paying the levies when due. While insufficient rental funds might delay an agent in making a payment, owners retain their obligation to make the levy payments by the due date.



Lift maintenance

The Executive Committee recently commissioned an independent report to assess the current performance, maintenance and serviceable state of our lifts (elevators), including a replacement schedule to inform our revised Sinking Fund Plan. The report recommended that some work be undertaken progressively given recent breakdowns. Otherwise, the report confirmed our lifts were being maintained to a high standard.

A near-term maintenance requirement is to replace the brake callipers within each lift car. The current braking equipment is now obsolete and cannot be repaired or replaced with like-for-like parts. The EC therefore decided to start a program to have each lift's existing brake callipers replaced now with the latest standard of equipment, rather than replace them on an ad hoc basis upon failure. This will maintain lift serviceability and operation.

This important project will cause some disruption to residents as lifts will be out of service while each one is upgraded. For example, only one lift would be available in a tower while the second lift was being upgraded. Residents using the Podium lifts would need to use the tower lifts for floors 1 to 3.

The EC is working with Grady Strata and our contractor regarding the replacement program and to determine dates when individual lifts will be out of service for the upgrade. Further advice and notice will be given once the program is fully established.

Fire door integrity

The front doors of our apartments are fire doors. They have been designed to protect you to the extent possible if there is a fire outside your apartment, including ease of exit and evacuation, and to protect other residents if there is a fire inside your apartment. Providing a physical security barrier is a secondary function.

The fire doors meet Australian fire and building code standards for fire resistance. They must not be modified or new hardware installed unless any work is undertaken by qualified tradespeople. Any door hardware such as locks, closers and peepholes must also meet the fire regulations otherwise the door will no longer comply with the fire regulations and pose a risk to all residents.

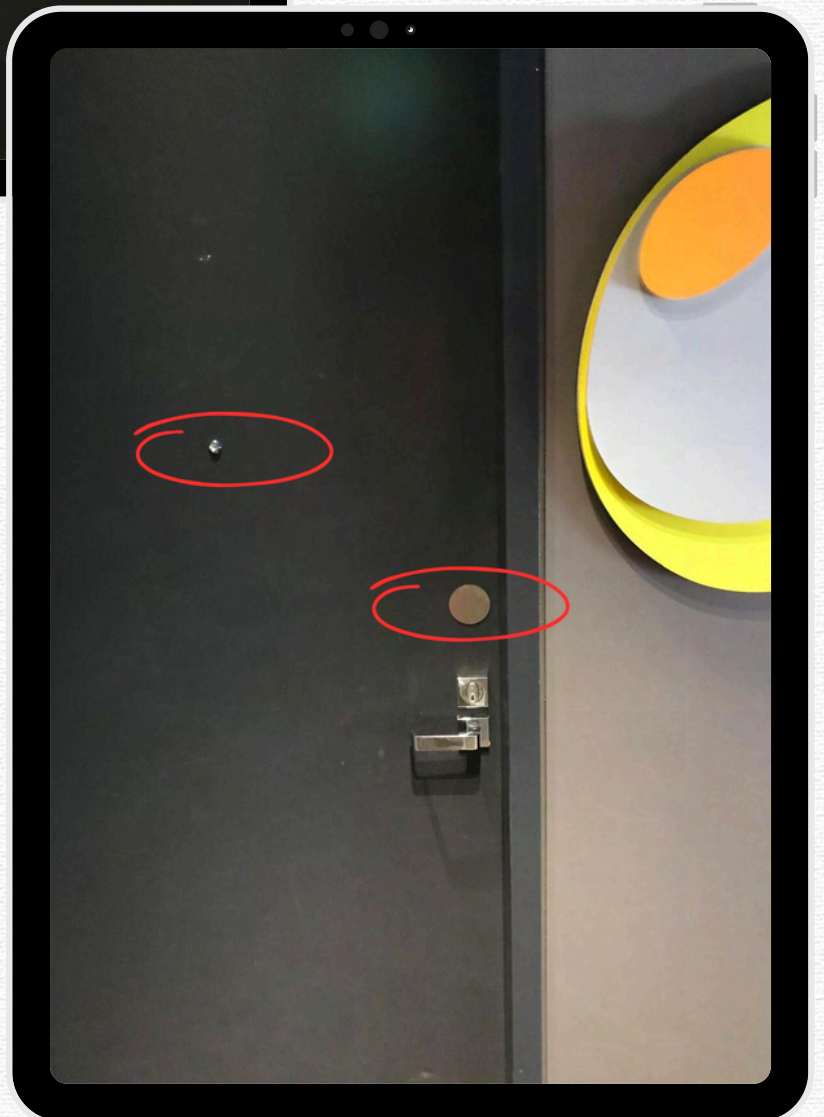
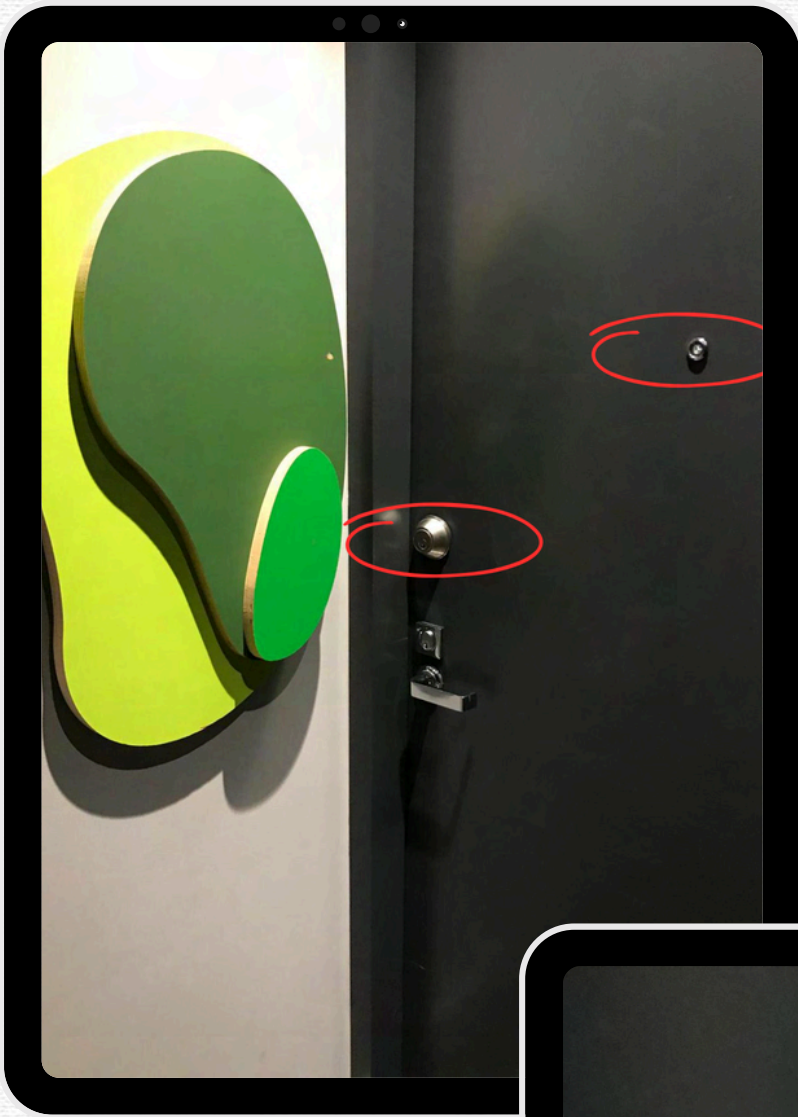
The integrity of our building's fire doors is paramount and maintaining the fire resistance standard is an owner's responsibility for their own apartment. Non-compliant modifications may also have insurance ramifications.

Some residents have installed peepholes or changed their door hardware (locks and closers) without approval. If these items are not fire rated they negate the fire integrity of the door and may impede a safe exit. Simply, in the event of fire, unauthorised and non-compliant modifications may put the resident and others at risk.

A visual audit of non-standard door hardware will be undertaken in coming months. Owners of any apartments with peepholes or non-standard locks will be asked to demonstrate that their alterations meet fire door compliance standards. If not, the doors must be replaced with compliant fire doors and hardware at owner expense.

Owners seeking to instal fire rated peepholes and locks should lodge an alteration request with Grady Strata, along with certification of compliance, for the Executive Committee's consideration.

CLASS Locksmiths <https://www.classlocks.com.au> in Fyshwick are the Owners Corporation preferred contractor for locks.





Combustible Cladding!

Insurance Update

The Executive Committee has been working with Grady Strata and our project managers Build& for an extended period to resolve the outstanding insurance claim to replace the hail-damaged cladding with compliant non-combustible products. The second project element is to replace the remaining, but undamaged, combustible cladding that is the OC's responsibility.

Delays to the original project were brought about because of the need to better define the scope, particularly to ensure that a 'whole-of-building' approach was taken. The EC's aim was to include the replacement of undamaged combustible cladding as part of the overall project, which was not part of the original, insurance-focussed, brief. The EC's belief was that a composite project would achieve economies of scale, and effectively reduce the extended disruption to residents were two separate projects to be commissioned.

Another critical consideration was to ensure that the Owners Corporation met the mandatory eligibility criteria set by the ACT Government for its cladding replacement concessional loan scheme. Should the OC be eligible for the concessional loan, it will give owners the opportunity to later consider total project funding either by a special levy, or by the OC entering into a concessional loan that would be recovered from owners over an agreed period. A non-binding loan application was lodged with the ACT Government before the scheme closed in February 2024.

A revised Request for Tender process was subsequently conducted by Build& to incorporate the OC's additional requirements. Some difficulty was experienced in having compliant tender bids submitted given the size and complexity of the project, noting also that respondents had to be registered as a supplier under the ACT Government's cladding loan scheme. One responder was identified as the preferred tenderer based on meeting the tender's selection criteria, its competence and ability to undertake the work, and on proposed cost.

Since May, project manager Build& and Grady Strata have been working with our broker and the insurance company and its loss adjusters to resolve queries and justify the extent of the remedial works that have been attributed to the insurance claim. The overall cost of the combined project is in order of \$4 million (plus), and the value of the insurance contribution will later determine the OC's remaining liability.

The EC will continue to work closely with Build& and Grady Strata to resolve the insurance claim, mindful of the ongoing delay and its likely impact on costing assurance and the timing and ability of the preferred tenderer to start the works. The EC has also commissioned an additional assessment of the extant cladding required by the ACT Government as part of the concessional loan application process.

As indicated previously, once the EC has the available information, briefing sessions for owners will be held ahead of the OC deciding the basis of funding for its cladding remediation costs. Representatives from Grady Strata, Build&, our insurance broker and the ACT Government will participate.

Community garden



Located on the grounds at the western end of the building is the flourishing community garden. The garden consists of many raised garden beds and four very large compost bins. The garden is there for everyone's enjoyment. Please feel free to contribute. Only take what you need and please be respectful of other people's plantings.

Other updates

SKIP BIN AND BULKY WASTE

The date has been set for Saturday July 13th 2024. Keep an eye out on the notice boards for more updates.

The skip bin will allow residents to dispose of bulky items that must not be placed in the refuse room or stored above storage cages, or in car spaces. So, if you have unused objects such as furniture or broken items lying around, this is your chance to dispose of them easily. If anything is recyclable, such as cardboard packaging, please break it up and place it in the refuse room recycling bins.

This skip day also seems to turn into a “trash and treasure” hunt where many people’s trash is recycled and put to good use by other members of our community.

GENERAL SECURITY

While currently there has been a decrease in security incidents and thefts from within our building, we still ask everyone to remain vigilant. Report any suspicious behaviour or entry to ACT Policing, or the Building Manager, Grady Strata or a member of the Executive Committee.

Please also try to prevent cars and people ‘tailgating’ you to gain entry into our building.

SPILLS, DRIPS & DROPS

If you spill anything in the building’s common areas, please ‘do the right thing’ and be responsible for immediately cleaning up any spill, dribble or drop. Do not leave your mess for someone else, or simply expect that our cleaners will attend to it later.

Damage has been caused to the common areas particularly through milky coffee and takeaway food container spills. Apart from damaging the surface of the foyer and lift tiles and staining the carpet, these types of spillages create a slip hazard for other residents.

Feel free to grab some hand towels from the gym bathrooms to assist you in cleaning any liquid spills on the ground floor.

Please also ensure that common areas and lifts are clear of any rubbish, polystyrene debris or other residue following deliveries or removals to/from your apartment. Large boxes should be removed by your contractors or taken to ACT Government recycling depots rather than placed in the building’s rubbish room.

CAR PARK WIFI

A WiFi network has been installed in the basement and upper car parks as a safety, security and connectivity measure, particularly given the poor mobile signal reception in the lower levels of our building.

The WiFi coverage provides our Building Manager with Wi-Fi calling and reception capacity so that he can fulfil the responsibilities of his primary duties (connectivity, liaising with residents and contractors). The WiFi will also support the future installation of additional security monitoring cameras.

WiFi also enables Committee Members and residents to volunteer in emergency and out-of-hours situations, giving mobile connectivity to liaise and coordinate with Fire Services/Responders, contractors, etc.

Extending Wi-Fi connectivity to residents mainly allows for personal safety and security, including any personal health emergencies and reporting unauthorised people present.

Access to the carpark WiFi network requires a code as does access to the gym WiFi. If you have gym WiFi access, the same code can be used for the car parks. If you require a code, please obtain one from the Building Manager.

Please note that WiFi calling must be enabled on your mobile device. Not all providers offer this option depending upon the mobile plan selected.

PARCEL COLLECTION

The EC in consultation with Grady Strata is considering how best to manage the volume and collection of parcels being delivered to our residents.

Parcel management is taking up an inordinate amount of our Building Manager's time. This is to the detriment of his primary role and responsibilities for the management and maintenance of our building, doing his 'rounds' to identify any issues and liaising with contractors and verifying that scheduled works have been completed satisfactorily.

One option being considered is to subdivide the existing foyer office to create a separate parcel 'post office' with its own swipe access and security camera. This would allow residents to collect their own parcels at their convenience once notified by their delivery agents that a delivery has been made, rather than waiting for the Building Manager to be available during working hours. The Building Manager would continue to sort parcels received and place them in the parcel room on designated shelves according to floor numbers and parcel size.

Further information and procedures will be advised once the best methodology is decided.

PUSH BIKE AUDIT

The push bike audit will be carried out throughout the month of September. Keep an eye out for notifications on the notice boards. A tag will be placed on every push bike stored in the common property areas including the bike racks and the bike storage room. The owner will have three weeks to remove the tag prior to completion of the audit. At the completion of the audit, any push bikes with an unremoved tag will be considered discarded and will therefore be removed and disposed of. This will free up space for others to store their push bikes.

WINDOW CLEAN, SPIDER SPRAY & LEAK REPAIRS

Various external façade works will be undertaken over July/August. This includes a pest spray, window clean and rectification of previously identified window leaks. The proposed schedule of works are below, but the actual dates depend upon safety factors such as favourable weather conditions:

- Pest/Spider Spray: Wednesday 3rd July - Thursday 4th July
- Hard Water Stain Test: Tuesday 2nd July
- Facade Inspections: Monday 1st July - Tuesday 9th July
- Window Clean: Wednesday 3rd July - Friday 26th July (weather permitting)
- Repairs of Identified Leaks: Monday 5th August - Friday 16th August (may be extended depending upon the extent of the leaks)

All inaccessible areas will be sprayed for pests/spiders. Residents are asked to keep all windows and external doors closed until the work is complete to ensure full coverage of all areas. If windows or doors are left open, the contractor will not be able to apply pest spray around those areas.

Please also ensure that your pets remain indoors off your balcony or courtyard during the scheduled days for pest spraying, with access doors and windows closed. Any aquatic life will need to be removed from balconies during this time as well.

Windows may appear streaky following the pest spray, and will likely remain this way until the window cleaning is completed.

To ensure your privacy, please ensure blinds and curtains are drawn when needed when the work is underway.

Please also note that your own balcony windows, doors and balustrades that are accessible to you will not be cleaned during this process as they remain an owner's responsibility.

All residents are also asked to dust and de-cobweb their own balustrades and the underside of their balcony ceilings before the pest spray where it is safe to do so. You may also care to spray your balcony's inner surfaces for pests and spiders.

Your cooperation and assistance during this time is much appreciated.

Please contact Grady Strata & Facilities should you require further information.
Gradys will also provide regular updates to the schedule should the proposed dates change.



Tips & Hints

Recent apartment leaks are a timely reminder to review your contents insurance and to do some preventative maintenance. It is important that all residents are aware of the location of the water isolation valves in their apartments.

The cold water and hot water shut off valve locations vary between apartments but are always located in a wet area (bathroom or laundry).

The shut off will be located in the ceiling of the wet area. The shut off valves are accessible through a hatch in the ceiling (see later section on opening the hatch). The stop cock for the water is generally a green lever.

BASIN TAP MIXERS AND ISOLATION VALVES

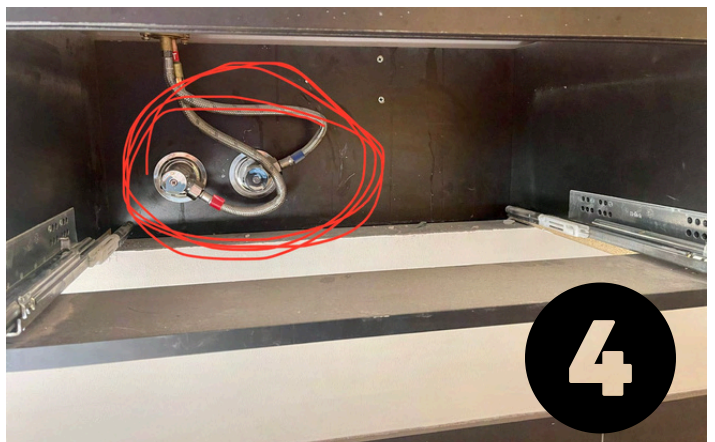
Recent leaks have been caused by drainage blocks and faulty tap mixers. If your tap begins leaking, it should have its inner cartridge replaced immediately to prevent a serious flood incident. If one tap cartridge has failed, it is quite common for the other tap cartridges to be in a similar condition.

Therefore, if a plumber is coming to attend to one tap it would make good sense to have them all attended to at the same time. If you do have a leak from your tap or if the tap fails completely and water starts to flood there are isolation valves under the sinks.

In a recent case when the tap failed, unfortunately the isolation valve had also failed, so water had to be isolated to the whole of the apartment. (Notes below on how to completely isolate the water from an apartment.)

As all the building fittings and fixtures are now 13 years of age, certain items are nearing the end of their life span. These include the tap like isolation valves and the flexible hoses in figure 4.

Here are some instructions on how to access these isolation valves. Every apartment is slightly different. Therefore, the valves may not be behind the centre drawer as pictured. These tap type valves and flexible hoses are also found in all the toilets (Figure 5), under the laundry (Figure 7), kitchen and bathroom basins and sinks (Figure 4) and some apartments have a tap in the fridge cavity. Especially if these outlets are not being used, they should be checked for correct operation or capped in case it fails.

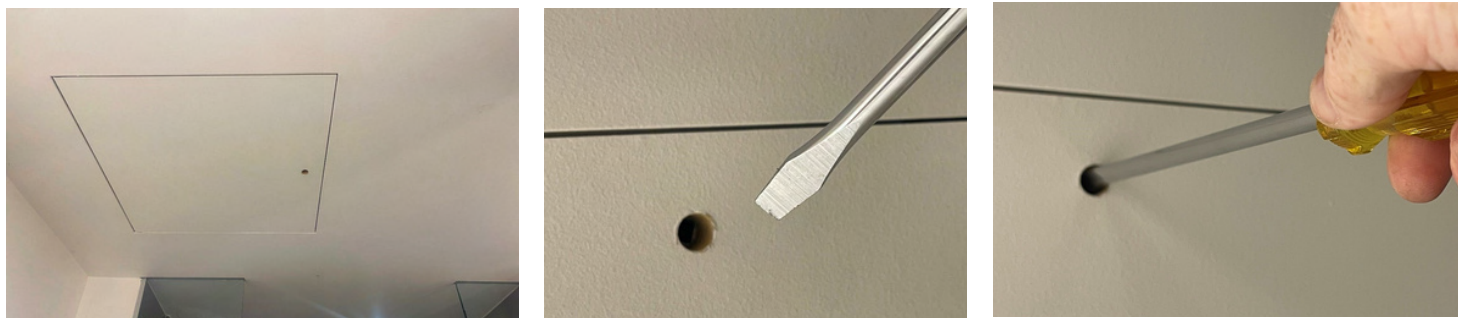


HATCH KEY:

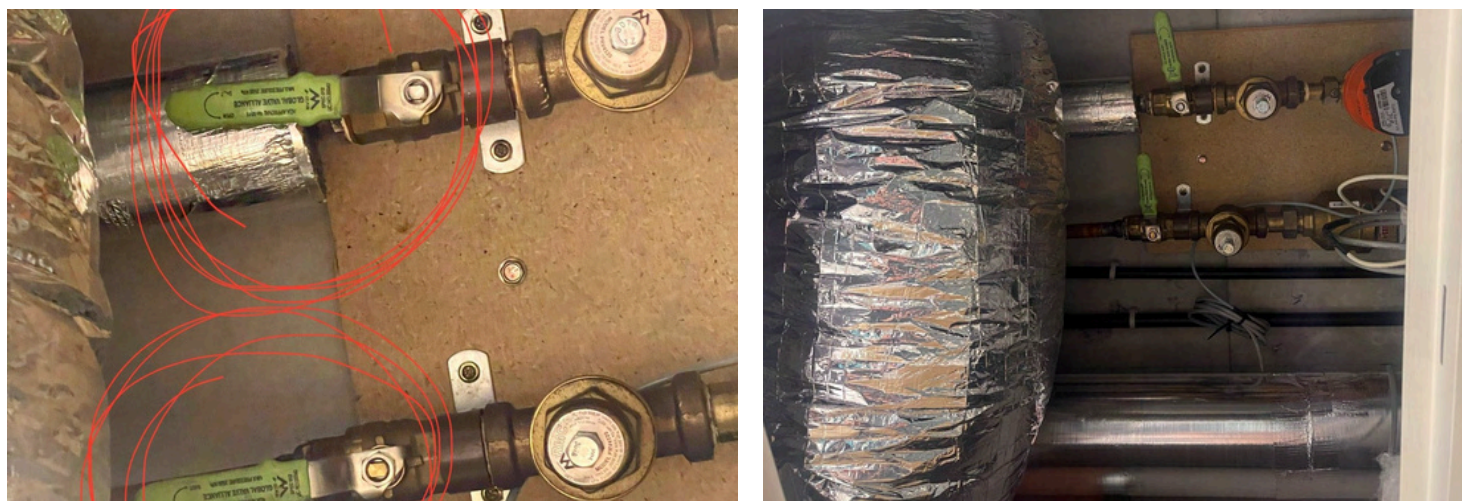
Some access hatches have a flat head screwdriver type latch to unlock, most however require a square "Key".

If you do not possess a hatch "key" they can be sourced from an internet supplier. A large screwdriver will serve the same purpose in the 8mm square hole if you do not wish to purchase a hatch key.

There are multiple vendors selling these items and an internet search for "square drive door latch" will lead to multiple options with varying prices.



The cold and hot water shut off valves are shown below. They are located in the bathroom or laundry ceiling space behind a hatch. In an emergency rotate the green levers 90 degrees to shut water off.



The toilet has an individual shut off tap which is located inside the lid of the cistern (Figure 5). These taps are often seized through non-use and it is suggested that in the event of a flexible hose burst that the water is turned off, via the cold and hot water shut off described above, prior to removing the cistern lid.



FRIDGE PLUMBING

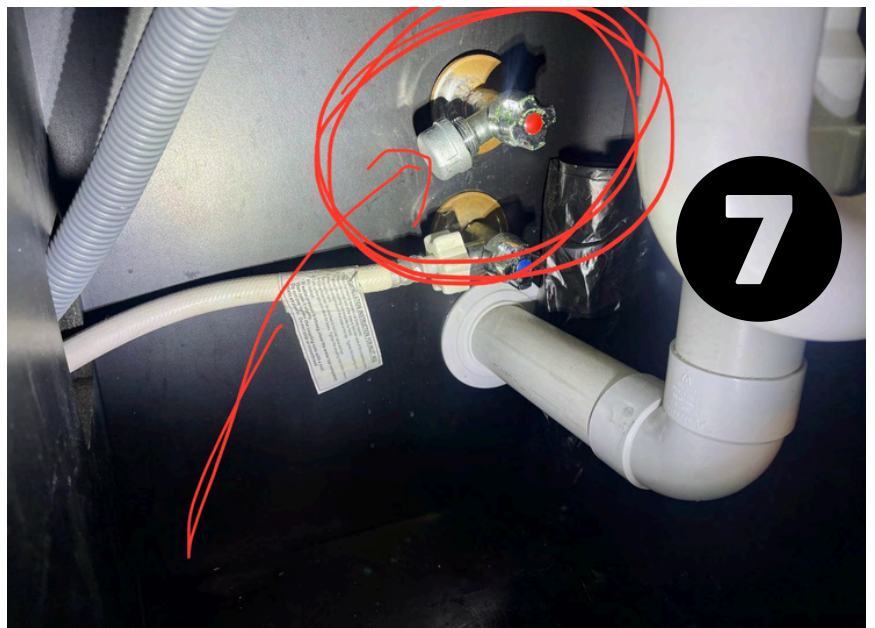
Some apartments have had plumbing installed to enable a water supply to their fridge. Because of the time since this installation many of these valves (Figure 6) are now reaching the end of their life and are subsequently failing. This has caused substantial flooding to apartments.

Please check this tap and any fittings that connect your fridge. If the tap is not used, it should be capped-off.



WASHING MACHINE PLUMBING

Another tap that might fail is the washing machine hot water tap located in the laundry cupboard under the sink. (Figure 7) This hot water tap should also be capped-off if not used or connected to your washing machine. For example, some washing machines only draw cold water (and then heat the water if needed). (Figure 7)



CAPPING-OFF TAPS

Washing machine taps need a 20mm cap. Other types of mini-taps generally need a 15mm cap. Especially if these outlets are not being used, they should be checked for correct operation or capped in case it fails.

CARPET MOTHS

Be vigilant for the existence of the tiny Carpet Moth in your apartment. This tiny Moth, if left unattended to, will not only destroy your woollen clothes, but also the woollen carpets which were originally installed in most apartments. In particular, look behind your furniture, corners of each room and behind the curtains. They are not always evident in the high traffic areas

<https://safeguardpestcontrol.com.au/blog/carpet-moths-how-to-get-rid-of-carpet-moth-and-restore-your-carpet/>



SUMMARY:

- 1) Know where to turn the water off in your apartment.
- 2) Check if your apartment fridge has taps etc (many people are unaware, and it is the taps that are not connected that are causing the biggest issues).
- 3) Think about getting a plumbing health check of your apartment.
- 4) If you are going away for an extended period, ensure that you inform Grady Strata with best contact details to reach you in case of an emergency or if access is required to your apartment. Also consider turning-off your water while you are away.
- 5) Review your insurance policy to ensure what you are and are not covered for.
i.e Are you insured for resulting damage to other apartments?

***** Make sure you update your details with Grady Strata to ensure you receive community notices.***

Scan the QR code to report a maintenance issue



For any other building or maintenance issues, please contact:

Building Manager
Monday – Friday
Charles Peereboom
0402 791 214
newactonsouth@gradystrata.com.au

Strata Manager
Monday – Friday 09:00 – 17:00
Ysabella Gills
02 6251 1214
ysabella.gills@gradystrata.com.au

Grady Strata and Facilities Office
02 6251 1214
office@gradystrata.com.au

After Hours

Calls outside of office hours are for BUILDING EMERGENCIES only





Reminder: Lithium-Ion Batteries Pose Serious Fire Risks

Lithium-Ion (Li-Ion) batteries are used in a wide range of home equipment – from eBikes and eScooters to mobile phones and many domestic appliances. If not properly handled, Lithium-Ion batteries can pose a serious fire risk, especially whilst being charged. Already many fires and several fatalities have been associated with the charging of eBike and eScooter batteries.

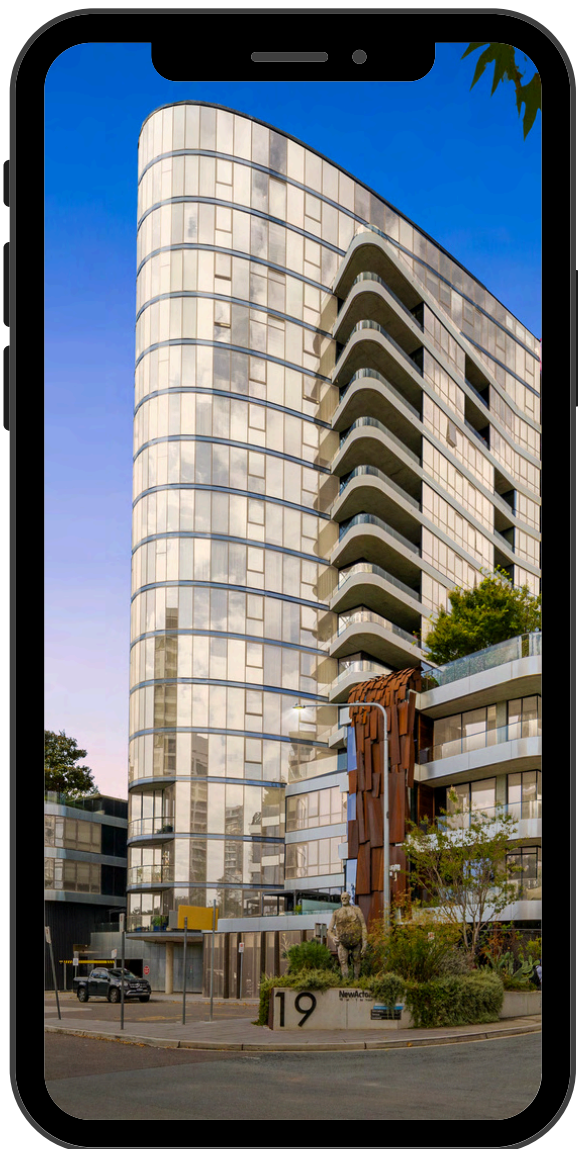
Risk minimisation practices include (amongst other things):

- using only the original charger designed for the batteries;
- charging in a ventilated location away from combustible materials;
- not leaving batteries on charge any longer than required;
- understanding things that increase the risk of fire/explosion; and disposing of batteries correctly.

You are responsible for the proper handling of the Lithium-Ion batteries in your possession.

Fires in an apartment complex pose serious risks to you, your property, other residents and the Common Property. Under S.31 of the Unit Titles (Management) Act, you can be found liable for consequential damages if you wilfully or negligently ignore sound practice in managing Li-Ion devices. Please heed the advice and avoid a catastrophe!

NewActon South website



Our web site at www.newactonsouth.com.au is used to provide important information about our building and community. It advises upcoming social events and it holds copies of all EC and AGM minutes since day one, together with other official and casual documents. There is a password required for viewing owner related documents - just ask the Building Manager. The Site Administrator would welcome content ideas for the site.

Scan to view the website

