

# ELEVATION

## Welcome

I'd like to introduce you to the first edition of Ernst Body Corporate Management's (EBCM) quarterly client newsletter – Elevation. EBCM has introduced this publication to help educate and inform our clients of current issues and future trends which affect the caring for and protecting of properties.

Elevation will keep you informed of issues relevant to your property, with tips to help make the management of your property hassle-free and ensure you are up-to-date with company progress and industry news.

In addition to the introduction of Elevation, EBCM is proud to present our new website. We invite all our clients to visit [www.ernstbcm.com.au](http://www.ernstbcm.com.au) and explore some of its exciting new functions and features.

Thank you for your time,

**Patrik Bruhlmann**  
Chief Executive Officer



**ERNST**

**BODY CORPORATE  
MANAGEMENT**

Setting the Standards in Strata

## In the News

EBCM has launched a new "In the News" section on our website to keep you up-to-date with current strata-related issues in the media. Visit [www.ernstbcm.com.au](http://www.ernstbcm.com.au) and view a range of articles relating to strata title management.

### Green bins grow in suburbs:

About one in 12 Brisbane houses have taken up a user-pays option for green bins, which sees garden waste recycled rather than being taken to a council dump and ending up as landfill.

[READ MORE ON THE EBCM WEBSITE.](#)

### Townsville apartment complex sees insurance premiums triple despite no Cyclone Yasi damage:

A Townsville apartment complex left virtually untouched by Cyclone Yasi has had its insurance bill trebled, along with hundreds of other body corporates in north Queensland taking similar hits.

[READ MORE ON THE EBCM WEBSITE.](#)

### Holiday homes not always so restful:

When it comes to a holiday home, it pays to buy with your head, not your heart.

[READ MORE ON THE EBCM WEBSITE.](#)

### Would you pay for underground power cables?

In many new areas, powerlines are going underground. But if you live in an older area, would you fork out for the privilege? A paper released last year by the Crawford School of Economics and Government at the Australian National University found that underground powerlines could increase a home's value by 3 per cent. That doesn't sound much, but on a \$500,000 property, it equates to \$15,000.

[READ MORE ON THE EBCM WEBSITE.](#)

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### Question

*I heard about an amendment to the Body Corporate and Community Management Act dealing with levies and lot entitlements. How does this amendment affect me?*

## Legislation Changes – Levies and Lot Entitlements

### Answer

The introduction of the Body Corporate and Community Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill introduces a system for working out body corporate fees and levies. In summary the amending Act:

- Puts an end to any review of lot entitlements which is currently before a court or tribunal
- Removes the ability of owners to challenge existing body corporate lot entitlements.
- Enables an affected owner to require the reversal of any lot entitlement adjustment by a court or tribunal since 1997.

The Queensland Government has reported that it is expected that the revised lot entitlement legislation may help promote affordable housing because levies and fees can be allocated on principles such as market value, and a disclosure regime will mean that buyers can be assured of what fees and levies they are committing to when they purchase a property.



## All Queensland homes require smoke alarms

Queensland law requires all homes and units to be fitted with smoke alarms. Owners of all houses and units in Queensland must install at least one 9 volt battery-powered smoke alarm as a legal minimum requirement.

This alarm must be installed between any area containing bedrooms and the rest of the house or unit, such as hallways; or on a storey without bedrooms which contains the most likely evacuation route from the storey. If your home was built before 1 July 1997, and you don't already have smoke alarms installed, you will need to buy and install at least one 9 volt battery-operated smoke alarm.

Since 1 July 1997 in Queensland, it has been mandatory under the current Building Code of Australia (BCA) Law for new homes and units to have hard-wired (240 volt) smoke alarms installed. This also applies to any homes or units that have been extensively renovated after this date. These alarms must meet all requirements of Australian Standard (AS) 3786.

The Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) strongly recommends that people check the smoke alarm they are buying complies with Australian Standards. For further information about verified smoke alarms, visit [www.activfire.gov.au/smokeAlarms.asp](http://www.activfire.gov.au/smokeAlarms.asp). QFRS is aware that some smoke detection systems incorporated into home security systems may not be fully compliant; should you suspect this to be the case, you should contact the Regional Manager Community Safety for advice.

QFRS fact sheets about smoke alarms are available at [www.fire.qld.gov.au/communitysafety](http://www.fire.qld.gov.au/communitysafety)