

## RESPECT FOR MONIES IN TRUST

It is easy to take the trust of our clients for granted. This is no more apparent than when dealing with their money.

Over recent months many of our new clients have come to us having had problems with the management of their money. There have been unauthorised works amounting to \$1,000s, financial statements that did not add up, missing funds and disputes over accounts for works.

There will always be some misunderstandings between managers and their clients however there are ways to minimise the risk and improve the level of trust.

- Have the committee check the specification for any major works before going to tender
- Get approval for special works/accounts by the management committee before paying them
- Send a monthly ledger of the accounts to the Treasurer
- Send a copy of the Audit report to the group

These precautions keep managers on their toes and have the owners sharing the responsibility.

Trust should not be taken for granted, although intangible it is precious and underpins our job as managers.



gjruss@senet.com.au

Cheers

Gordon Russell CREI

ps: Do you have any friends who need to read our newsletter? Give us a ring and we will post one out.

### emergency numbers

Service	Name	Contact Number
Plumbing & Gas	Unitech	0412 420 544
Roof Leaks	Unitech	0412 420 544
Electrical	Men at Work	0411 195 275
Glazing	Hartley	8347 2211
Police to attend - noise/robbery etc		11444
State Emergency Services		8204 2999

**Unitcare Fleurieu Peninsula Local plumber:**  
Fawcett Plumbing **0414 835 566**  
see main list for other services



## viewpoint

# www.unitcare.com.au

## ACTIVITY REPORTS

Our Activity Report is proving to be very popular with our clients. They are telling us that they appreciate the details of what has been going on at their group over the previous year.

UnitCare clients started receiving a detailed Activity Report with their annual meeting notice in 1997. This report lists phone calls, tenders called and work organised along with a summary of correspondence.

The report informs all owners of what has been going on during the previous year. Owners have told us they value the report as they often have been unaware of some problems during the year or been unable to attend the annual meeting for a verbal report. The Activity Record is useful in our office for tracking problems with particular tenants and building related issues. It has also proved useful in Court cases.

During Winter we recorded some 2000 activities per 100 groups managed.

This report is part of our continuing commitment to transparency and accountability with our clients.

U630 UNITCARE STRATA MANAGEMENT SPECIALISTS  
ACTIVITY REPORT FOR CORPORATION XXX BETWEEN 01 JUL 1999 AND 30 JUN 2000  
PAGE 1, PRINTED 01/07/2000

CORP CODE	DATE	ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION
xxx	01/08/99	Posted AGM Minutes, Insurance Summary and Owner list to all
xxx	16/08/99	work order to replace the cold water pipes
xxx	20/08/99	tender out for roof repairs.
xxx	16/08/99	tender for fence post repairs
xxx	16/08/99	w/o to clean gutters
xxx	01/09/99	Pay lawn contractor - 0281

Sample Activity Report

## NEW OFFICES & PHONE NUMBERS

We have moved offices (southern office unchanged).

Our business has expanded and we have moved to offices near the City.

Our new address is 146 Fullarton Road, Rose Park.

You can contact us on **08 8364 0022**, fax 08 8364 1438,  
web site [www.unitcare.com.au](http://www.unitcare.com.au), email [unitcare@senet.com.au](mailto:unitcare@senet.com.au)



**UnitCare Services**  
phone **08 8364 0022**  
southern **08 8386 0699**  
fax **08 8364 1438**  
web site [www.unitcare.com.au](http://www.unitcare.com.au)  
email [unitcare@senet.com.au](mailto:unitcare@senet.com.au)  
P.O. Box 195, Belair 5052

after hours emergencies - phone 8364 0022

*This is a publication of UnitCare Strata Management Specialists and is offered as information only and is not intended as a substitute for professional advice.*

## Auditor's Report - what they had to say

Every year strata managers such as UnitCare must have their Trust Account audited. This has been required by legislation since November 1996.

The audit is carried out by a recognised and qualified auditor. In our case this is Messenger Zerner. The auditor not only checks the balance on the books but also systems for authorising work payments and record keeping. They also check our business account to ensure we have not banked any client cheques.

They have given us the all clear apart from not listing all details on the cheque stubs. This is not practical and we believe the Strata Act is at fault in not acknowledging the computer records that detail the payments. At UnitCare we have posted the Audit report to the Treasurers of all our strata groups in August this year. This along with a monthly statement of accounts ensures that our clients are kept up to date on the state of their funds and given the opportunity to query the records.

If you are thinking of having us as your manager and would like a copy of the Auditor's report please give us a call. Our thanks to all our clients who have trusted us with their Corporation's funds and business.

## Working Bees Pay Off

Some of our clients have organised working bees over recent months. These events see owners coming together to clean up the grounds, prune the bushes, install or fix the irrigation and so on.

The value of the working bees is two fold. 1. It saves money on maintenance. 2. It brings owners together.

Usually lots of work gets done and owners have some fun whilst making a real contribution to the look of their group.

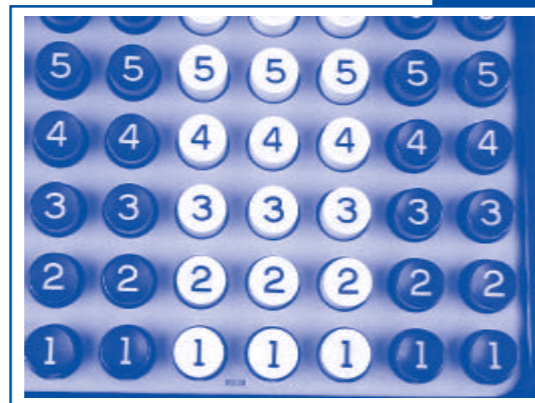
Those who cannot make it usually are charges a special levy of around \$20 - \$30. This helps towards costs for materials and dumping.

If you would like to arrange a working bee at your group we can help with a flyer to all owners.

Spring is a great time for a working bee.

## Branch office in the South

UnitCare has a branch office to look after unit owners in the Southern suburbs. Roger Hunt is the local UnitCare manager. His office covers the Fleurieu Peninsula starting at Reynella/Hallett Cove in the north. You can call him on **8386 0699**.



audit report



## Postal Voting - How to get it right

Some strata managers and self managed groups have owners vote on important issues through the use of 'postal voting slips'

This practice is dangerous as it in no way binds the Corporation or its members to any decision made in this fashion.

A recent example is an average group where a variety of works were needed prior to painting. Tenders were issued and when the quotes where in the manager sent them to owners with a 'voting' form. The form gave owners a choice of contractors and quotes. Not all owners responded and there was some controversy over one contractor and their previous work at the group.

The cheapest quote just got over the line. There have been problems with the work and payment of the bills. Owners could have argued that they were not bound to pay the special levy.

The Strata Titles Act only allows for decision making at general or committee meetings. There is no provision for postal voting other than through the use of a proxy for a general or committee meeting or an absentee vote for a general meeting.

### Voting rights at general meetings

34. (3) A vote may be exercised as follows:

(a) it may be exercised (subject to

paragraph (b)) by the unit holder or a proxy of the unit holder;

34. (4) A unit holder may exercise an absentee vote on a proposed resolution by giving the secretary written notice of the proposed vote at least six hours before the time of the meeting

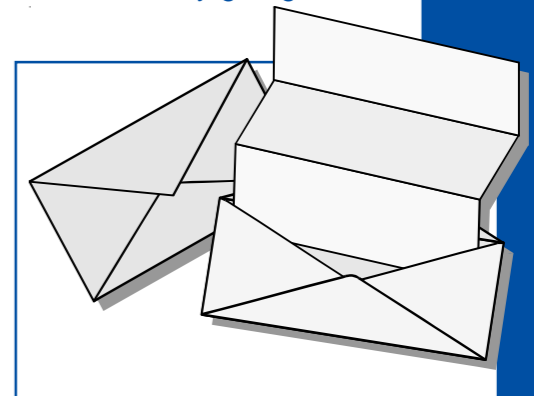
### Management committee

35. (7) A member of a management committee can

appoint another person (who must, unless all of the units comprised in the strata scheme consist of non-residential units, be a unit holder) to act as his or her proxy at any meeting of the committee that the member is unable to attend.

The Strata Act is set up to ensure owners get an opportunity to discuss the merits or otherwise of an issue.

An option for Corporations is to call a general meeting and circulate sufficient information with a proxy form that enables the owner to submit an absentee vote. Owners can of course still attend the meeting however if the issues are clear and well argued they may well lodge a 'postal vote'. In this case it will be legally binding.



illegal postal votes

free checkup

We have been able to save money for many of our clients through insurance premiums, after hours maintenance and preventative works.

Examples include savings on insurance and fees - \$1200 for a group of 14 and \$700 for a group of 19.

If you are not one of our clients, give us a ring and we can review your group's costs to find possible savings.

This service is free and with no obligation.

Call us on **08 8364 0022** or **08 8386 0699** in the South