Dear

Welcome to the latest Subscriber Update. A lot is happening in strata reform and OCN is an active participant on a range of topics on behalf of members.

We will continue to bring you information through our website and our webinars. For example, the newly established peak body, eMobility Australia, warn of the dangers of devices that have been affected by flooding. This is mportant information for members affected by current and future weather events.

Share this poster with your community!.

And we will advocate on your behalf to government and industry for better outcomes for strata owning and living. Our website contains lots of valuable resources to help you navigate the complexities of strata living and management.

PS Don't forget to share this newsletter with your OC and if you find it useful we urge you to join! You can also download and share our flyer about the benefits of membership here.

Cheers
Karen Stiles
Policy Director

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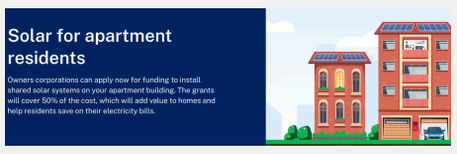
Join OCN

As a subscriber, you're missing out on access to the member portal where you'll find a **wealth of resources**.

Aside from the Member Forum, past webinar recordings, a growing suite of special member offers and discounted pro-forma by-laws, your membership fees enable us to advocate on your behalf to improve outcomes for those of us living in strata.

Membership starts at just $66pa so why not join today?



NSW Solar for Apartments (SoAR) Open!

OCN delivered a webinar to help NSW members apply for the recently announced solar grants for apartments.

Members can catch the webinar on demand here or download the slides here.

The SoAR program funding is $25m, with 50% co-funding capped at $150,000 per scheme.

Applications close 1st December 2025 or **when funding runs out**. Strata schemes of 3 – 55 lots are eligible. Successful applicants must demonstrate the effectiveness of the system,

that it is value for money, the method is sound, and the scheme is capable of completing the project by March 2026. Essential meter board upgrades can be included, as can waterproofing work directly under the solar system.

Conditions include payback needs to be under 10 years, the scheme hasn't had any solar system installed in the last 10 years, cost has to be borne by ALL owners (on unit entitlements basis) so can't be for a subset of owners. Plus it can't be financed via a power purchase agreement.

The grants don't include batteries but you can apply for NSW Peak Demand Reduction Scheme for batteries which you want to incorporate one.

More information can be found here

QUICK READS

Register now

Committee rights, responsibilities and obligations

Webinar Details:
📅 **Date:** Thursday, 17th April 2025
⏰ **Time:** 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM AEST
📍 **Where:** Online via Zoom

Sign up to attend our next webinar and gear up your committee education on the new duties for strata committee members.

In this webinar you'll leave with a better understanding of who does what, when and why. Plus we'll explain how to implement effective communication, transparency, and procedural excellence as a committee

A key piece of the newly passed NSW legislation requires Committee members to complete training, as prescribed by the regulations.

While these new laws apply to NSW strata schemes, there are key areas of commonality that committee members should be aware of regardless of where they live or own.

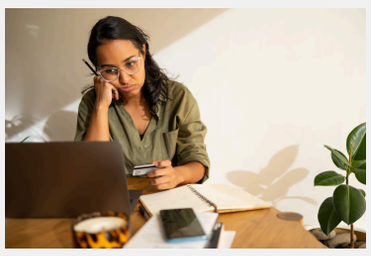
Register now

NSW Committee Training

OCN is in dialogue with NSWFT re development of committee training as required under recent strata law reforms.

NSW Strata Management Disclosure requirements

As we head into the AGM season, OCN wants to hear about your experience with strata management conflict of interest disclosures. From 3 February 2025 strata



Financial distress

Elsewhere, calls to the National Debt Helpline have soared due to mortgage, rent and levy stress.

Read more here

"Chairing a Strata Committee can be very difficult if you don't have good strata management to guide you. OCN has already helped me to take better care of both our property and the community who lives there." Jane, Randwick

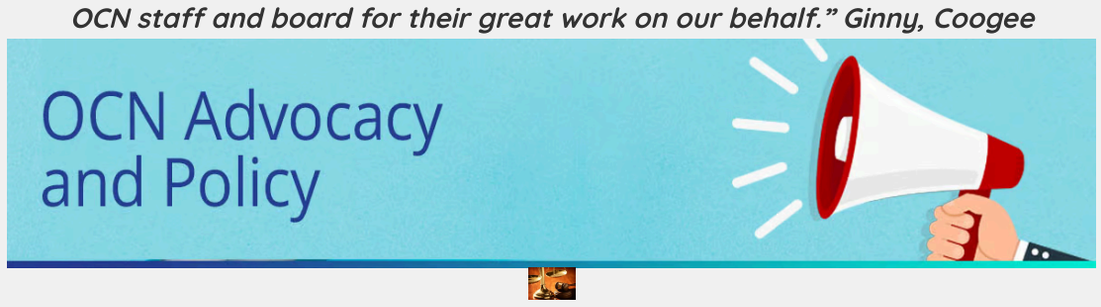
managing agents have increased disclosure obligations.

Strata managers must comply with the new disclosure obligations. If you suspect a strata manager has breached the laws, you can report them to NSW Fair Trading by making a complaint.

Missing something?
Join today, and once you're a member you can catch up on previous webinars and other valuable recordings on topics as diverse as the Design & Building Practitioners Act. "Tired of Strata Negativity - what good looks like", mould prevention and removal, shared solar, changing your strata manager, electric vehicle and e-bike charging, and emergency preparedness.

We encourage you to join and access the Member Portal to browse recordings and FAQs

"I think OCN offers a huge bang for the buck as a member, and thank all the OCN staff and board for their great work on our behalf." Ginny, Coogee



OCN continues to advocate on a range of matters for its members and this includes keeping a watching brief on the proceedings following last year's ABC Strata Trap program into a range of strata related matters.

OCN has implored the NSW governments to make sure there is certainty and confidence in the management of the strata industry. Currently there are a range of matters currently in legal proceedings or under investigation.

OCN has been invited to participate in Queensland Government's Community Title Working Group and the NSW Government's Fire Safety Industry Reference Group.

e-Scooter Battery Fire
Charging e-scooters or lithium-ion batteries at night, is a big danger in apartments. If they do ignite, malfunction or go into thermal runaway, they will cause an intense fire really quickly.

For an example of what not to do, see the ABC news story about how a man decided to place a lithium ion battery in his freezer.

Queensland Short Term Letting & CCTV

Based on legislation, the body corporate cannot create a by-law that restricts the use of a residential lot that is being used lawfully for residential purposes. This is supported by decisions of the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) and adjudicators. Read more here

Read more here

NSW Fair Trading has relaunched *Strata living: A guide to the essentials for strata owners*. This guide aims to help strata owners and residents better understand how strata works in NSW and their rights and responsibilities. You can view and download the guide here

NSWFT has prepared a toolkit of ready-to-publish content including copy for social media, eNews and websites. You can also download their social media tile to use when advising your community about the new guide.

City of Sydney Sustainability News

In their recent Newsletter, the City of Sydney shared some useful links and info on grants available for apartments

- Apply for a green building grant
- How an Erskineville apartment complex cut emissions, saved on power and future-proofed itself for electric vehicles
- Energy guide
- Waste guide
- Water guide
- Drop unwanted items at Recycle It Saturday

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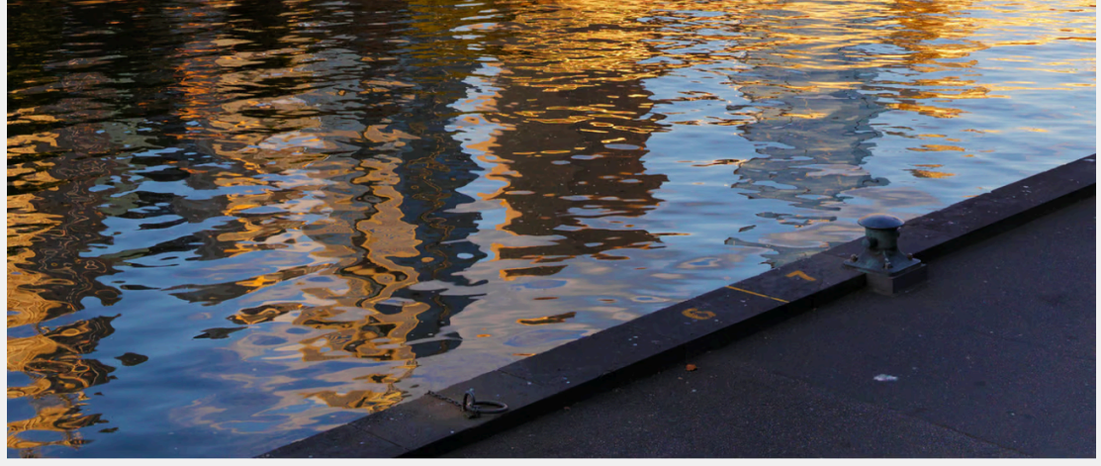

City of Melbourne

Approximately 83% of City of Melbourne residents live in apartments. These vertical communities pose a different set of challenges for owners and renters looking to reduce their energy and water use, and to better manage their waste.

Did you know?
Each year apartment living contributes to:

- 22% of the city's water usage
- 9% of greenhouse gas emissions
- more than 20,500 tonnes of waste.

The City of Melbourne has dedicated resources to help you optimise your community living experience. Read more here

Discover the proposed strata changes in Victoria for 2025, including governance updates, sustainability initiatives, and pet ownership rules. Learn how these reforms could impact you and how to prepare.

The proposed changes represent a significant step forward in modernising strata laws and addressing the needs of a growing urban population. By enhancing governance, promoting sustainability, and improving livability, these reforms aim to create a fairer and more efficient system for all stakeholders.

It's essential to stay informed and proactive. Whether you're an owner, tenant, or developer, understanding these changes will help you adapt and thrive in Victoria's evolving strata landscape.

For more information on the proposed reforms, visit the Consumer Affairs Victoria website

https://www.vba.vic.gov.au/consumers/a-new-regulator-with-new-powers

Keep up-to-date with the latest developments by following official government announcements and consulting with strata management professionals.

- Victorian Government Strata Reforms

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