

The Proline Pulse

COMMUNITY EDITION



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Contact Us:

Email:

proline@prolinemanagement.com

Website:

www.prolinemanagement.com

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How to Live Longer, Healthier & Happier

By Andy Spurling

This is something all of us want, right? Or at least the vast majority of us. If you are reading this, you almost certainly own in or live in a strata community. What if I told you that this presents a unique opportunity for you to live a longer, healthier and happier life? Given the stories we see circulating in the media based on the “horror stories” of notoriously difficult and unreasonable owners, you might think I am crazy. Or uninformed. Or naïve. Or some combination of the three. And maybe I am. But that’s for another day.

Today I am here to suggest that your involvement in a strata community provides you an opportunity (albeit not an easy one) to live a longer, healthier and happier life. Volunteer to serve on the strata council. Not for your own interest. Not out of guilt or shame or a desire for control. But from a genuine desire to serve your community and its interests. That’s all. Volunteer. To help others.

We have been hearing for years from our departing council member surveys that one of the biggest challenges facing strata communities is a shortage of strata council volunteers. The same groups of people are asked or expected to continue to volunteer year after year after year. We have worked to try and demystify the council member experience by changing up our AGM notice packages to try and entice new

volunteers. We created the Proline Academy to offer education and training to council members, new and seasoned, to help manage the complexities of strata council service.

But another approach occurs to us. What if serving your strata community on council was actually good for you? In more ways than one? Turns out it is! Study after study after study is proving the same thing. That volunteering to serve others improves our physical and mental health. It lowers mortality rates. It increases our wellbeing. Oh, and it helps those around us! In our homes, in our communities, everywhere. Volunteering for all the right reasons is also a demonstration to others in your community of the myriad of benefits that arise from the act of volunteering.

As more and more studies on the impacts of volunteering emerge, it appears that the act of volunteering improves life satisfaction, self-reported health quality, social interactions, the adoption and retention of healthy behaviours and lifestyles, increased self-esteem, lower rates of depression, and lower incidences of stress, burnout and exhaustion. Not so bad. And it appears that these outcomes are common regardless of geographical, demographic and socio-economic differences. Amazing.

Other studies demonstrate that rates of loneliness and social isolation are increasing. Somewhat counterintuitively, they are higher in multi-family communities than in single family dwellings. The result, at least statistically, is that residents in multi-family communities trust their neighbours less than they do in single family neighbourhoods, are less likely to interact with each other and are much less likely to do favours for the multi-family neighbours. The types of social interaction that volunteering can inspire could work to shift these statistics and create stronger relationships throughout your communities.

Don't get me wrong. Volunteering to serve on strata council isn't for everyone. For some the timing simply won't work. For others, the inevitability of having to deal with a potentially troublesome owner/neighbour will outweigh the potential benefits. And as mentioned above, the benefits listed above all go away if you are volunteering for council to serve your own interests. And given the linkage between the act of volunteering for council and protection of your home, which is generally your primary source of safety and security, it can be incredibly difficult for some to keep the best interests of the entire community at the forefront when your own interests in your home feel threatened.

Happily, there are many other ways to volunteer in your strata community. Some communities have committees, such as grounds committees, that might be in your areas of interests and generally avoid the more challenging aspects of council service. In others there are social events that require time, effort and energy from residents. Some communities have work bees or work parties to accomplish specific tasks that can be wonderful at bringing people together for social interaction and to save some money for other projects or essentials!

And if strata volunteering isn't your thing, as the nature of the pandemic continues to evolve, we understand from our own community partners that volunteering programs are ramping back up and looking for our help, so there are no shortages of opportunities for any of us to get more involved in our communities.

I hope it is clear from everything above, that we are not trying to guilt or shame anybody into anything. Only to provide a little bit of information and awareness of the things we have learned as we explore the impacts of service for our own team and for our communities, both from a research perspective and anecdotally, and wondering whether altruistic service to your community might just be something that provides benefits to yourself and your communities that creates a better space for everyone.

Industry Insights

Speculation & Vacancy Tax Changes

As you may have heard, there are changes to the speculation and vacancy tax that applies to owners of residential properties that are located in a [designated speculation and vacancy tax region](#).

Here's a quick summary of what you need to know:

The temporary property with rental restrictions exemption for the SVT will phase out at the end of the 2021 declaration period. **The exemption will not be available for the 2022 declaration period that will start January 2023.**

This temporary exemption was originally put into place for four years to give strata owners time to work with their strata to change their rental restrictions, rent their strata property, sell their strata property or use their strata property as a principal residence.

What does this mean:

- Property owners may still be eligible for an exemption from the SVT. Go to gov.bc.ca/spectax for information on exemptions.
- If the owner is not eligible for an exemption they will be liable for the tax.
- The tax rate varies based on whether the owner is a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada, or a [satellite family](#).
- The SVT tax rate is:
2% for foreign owners and satellite families
0.5% for Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada who are not members of a satellite family.

If you have questions about your property and this exemption, you can call:

- 1-833-554-2323 toll-free
- 1-604-660-2421 if you're outside North America
- 711 across B.C. for Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD) services for the hearing impaired from 8:00am to 5:00pm PST, Monday to Friday.



Welcomes

New Team Members

In April **Anastasiia Balashova** joined our administrative team on a permanent basis, and both **Ryan Scherr** & **Tammy Dumont** joined our operations team. May saw **Sheri Olsen**, an experienced strata manager, come on board as well as two new additions to the administrative team, **Arielle Anderson** and **Anais Isford**, in an intern position. So far in July, we've welcomed **Jenn Ordze** as our newest accounting team member.

New Community Members

We welcomed stratas **The 881** in Victoria on April 1st, and **Little Qualicum River Village** in Qualicum Beach on May 1st. As of July 1st, **VIS2720** in Victoria, which includes **Churchill Place** and **Hampton Court**, and **Rose Bank Gardens**, also in Victoria, will be joining us.

Photo by Nadine Marfurt on Unsplash

Seasonal Considerations




Summer Vacation

It's vacation season! With all the rushing to pack and prep for going away, there are a few things you can do before you leave to help make your time away more relaxing and your return to home smoother. Let a trusted neighbour or two know that you'll be away, and if you're away for an extended period, make sure someone local has a key to your home and can check in from time to time. If you live in a multi-family building, provide your keyholder information to the management company or council, as appropriate, in case of emergency. If possible, you might also want to shut off the water to your unit. If you're in a single-family dwelling, consider having someone pick up mail & newspapers, mow your lawn, and otherwise help make your house appear occupied. If you're a tenant and you're going away for a significant period of time, let your landlord know that your home will be vacant.

Stay Cool

As the weather starts to warm up a bit, we are reminded of the impacts of extreme heat as experienced last summer. Vancouver Island Strata Owners Association (VISOA) has a number of resources that they share through their website here: <https://bit.ly/3Pvm1nH>. The District of Saanich has also created a handy poster (below) to remind people of what steps they can take to mitigate the effects and stay safe in extreme heat conditions. (Photo by Vicko Mozara on Unsplash)

BE PREPARED AND ADAPT IN EXTREME HEAT



1

INFORM

- ☒ Check the weather: weather.gc.ca/warnings
- ☒ Heat safety information: islandhealth.ca/learn-about-health/environment/heat-safety
- ☒ Share this brochure with family, friends and neighbours, and follow @SaanichEP on Twitter.

2

PLAN

- ☒ Be prepared: saanich.ca/prepare and saanich.ca/homecooling.
- ☒ Have a plan to check in on family, friends and vulnerable neighbours.
- ☒ Have a plan for someone to check on you, especially if you are a senior or have a pre-existing medical condition.

3

ADAPT

- ☒ Spend time in an air-conditioned space.
- ☒ Reduce high energy activities, especially outdoors.
- ☒ Drink lots of water.
- ☒ Stay in the coldest room in your home.
- ☒ Wear loose clothing and have a misting bottle.
- ☒ Walk pets in the shade and off hot pavement.

Energy-efficient home upgrade rebates and programs:


saanich.ca/heatpumpfinancing

saanich.ca/rebates

betterhomesbc.ca

bringithome4climate.ca (free virtual home energy check up)

nrcan.gc.ca/home (Canada Greener Homes Grant)



*Live in the sunshine, swim the sea,
drink the wild air.*

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Maintenance & Moves

Seasonal Maintenance Items

Did you know that the spring sprinkler startup process includes repair and maintenance of any broken or damaged sprinkler heads? If you notice any broken sprinkler heads or issues with your irrigation system at any time, please reach out to your strata council so any leaks or issues can be addressed promptly.

You'll see many different trades on-site over the summer. If you see any great work that you thought was notable, please feel free to notify your council. Your elected strata council has been appointed to oversee the community operations, which includes coordinating with many trades, especially during the spring & summer months. In order to ensure that your feedback is incorporated into the community plan, please provide it directly to your strata council. Aside from passing compliments on any work you see being done, all feedback should go directly to your strata council for review and action as necessary.

When window cleaning is coming up, remember to close your blinds (for privacy), close your windows, and remove any patio furniture to protect it from suds or if it's blocking access to the windows. If window cleaners need to return for a follow-up service, it can be helpful if residents identify any areas that have been missed by putting a sticky note on the area. If you think your window has been missed, remember to check the interior of your windows to make sure the dirt isn't on the inside!

Photo by Sebastian Staines on Unsplash



Making a Move

Do you have a move coming up? Here are some tips to help the process go smoothly!

- Book your moving truck or movers, carpet cleaning and other services well in advance as they book up early, especially for moves at the beginning and end of the month.
- Leave yourself more time than you think you'll need to complete the move as well as any clean up that might be necessary.
- If you're moving into or out of a strata, make sure to follow the building procedures for booking moves, like notifying the strata, picking up an elevator key (which will likely require a refundable deposit) and ensuring your moving truck is parked in the right location. Never prop open exterior doors, or if you do, ensure you have someone monitoring the doors at all times to keep the building secure. If you're using an elevator to move, make sure you are following the correct procedures for the elevator. Forcefully propping open the elevator doors can cause a shutdown.
- Generally tenancies end at 1pm on the last day of the month, and your new tenancy might not begin until 1pm on the first of the next month, so you may need to find a place to stay for one night. Be sure to ask your landlord or property manager about this, if you think it might impact you.

Learning Station

CHOA 2022 Fall Education Program

This fall CHOA will be offering a new series of educational sessions, both in-person throughout BC and online via Zoom. These sessions will tackle the following topics:

1. Council Meetings: Understanding the governance models for decision making, record keeping, bylaw enforcement & implementation.
2. The BC Human Rights Tribunal, The Civil Resolution Tribunal, and The Accessibility Act
3. Alteration requests for: Heat pumps and air conditioners, electric vehicle charging stations and accessibility to common areas and strata lots.

In addition, CHOA is hosting a comprehensive one-day conference in Langley on November 5th.

Go to <https://choa.bc.ca/seminars/> to learn more about the fall education program.

If you are looking for more resources, there is also an extensive collection of archived webinars and seminars on a broad variety of topics available on CHOA's website: <https://choa.bc.ca/resources/webinars/>.

Proline Academy

We are excited to kick off a new component of the Proline Academy in September with regular Lunch & Learn sessions for our clients. These sessions will be held virtually once every two months, and we are also working on an option that will also allow a small group of people to attend in person. If you are interested in attending in person, email events@prolinemanagement.com. As part of the Lunch & Learn series, you can anticipate hearing from engineers, lawyers, insurance professionals, water system experts, and more. We will share specific session information as we get closer to September, and are excited to be able to facilitate learning and connection through a new hybrid approach to our Proline Academy sessions.

*Part of the team that
participated in the
Oak Bay Half Marathon
on May 29th in support
of*



Community Corner

Community Highlight – The United Way

Here at Proline, we support our communities in a variety of ways, including an employee matching program which has Proline matching monthly donations from team members to certain local organizations, one of which is the United Way. As we recover from the pandemic and rebuild, United Way Southern Vancouver Island is providing innovative solutions to connect local needs with local hearts and transform lives right here, right now. [Use the interactive map](#) to look up your neighbourhood, learn about the barriers your neighbours are facing, as well as the United Way funded programs and services they rely on. Your community needs your support, and we believe that when you can see the change, you are more inclined to make it.



Our Place Bottle Drive

Please save up all your bottles and cans this July!

Our Place is the July charity of the month at Bottle Depot. Drop your recyclables off inside any of their charity bins and the money goes directly to Our Place. You can also drop them in the Bottle Depot bin outside of Our Place's View Royal location at 94 Talcott Road.

Last year, thanks to your support, they were able to raise \$15,000 through the generosity of the community while eliminating bottles and cans from the landfills.

This year, all money raised will go directly to their food security program so that they can continue to provide over 1,000 meals a day to those in need, even as food prices escalate so dramatically.

You can make change, one bottle or can at a time.



Proline Volunteer Days

One of the new programs we are excited to launch in September is Volunteer Days, an initiative intended both to provide our team members the opportunity to engage and contribute meaningfully in areas that matter to them and to support our communities. All team members will have a paid day each quarter to volunteer with a charitable organization or serve their community in other ways. We are working on developing relationships with various charitable organizations to facilitate volunteering opportunities. As the program develops, there may also be opportunities to work alongside strata communities on specific projects that are being completed through community cooperation and volunteering.

The Heart of the Business

Wholehearted Togetherness: Our Annual ForUs Event

As you may remember, at the end of May our team took a day away from the office to connect and learn together. Lead by Dr. James Rouse, a naturopathic doctor, inspirational speaker, personal coach, author and generally delightful and loving human being, we spent the day in a barn in the forest learning, sharing, eating and speed walking, of course. Paul Merrien, the manager of our strata department, was the clear winner of the fastest speed-walker title, and is eager to defend his title if anyone out there would like to challenge him!

