

# Newsworthy

Here are some newsworthy items we sourced from close to home in Ontario and across the broader condominium community.



## **PanAm Games 2015 Athletes' Village includes condos**

PanAm/ParapanAm Games athletes will be spending their nights in the West Don Lands of Toronto.

Their accommodation is not purpose-built for the Games as often occurs with similar large sporting events such as the Olympics, but is a mixed-use development project that was accelerated specifically when Toronto was awarded the 2015 PanAm/ParapanAm Games.

After the Games are over the development project will include 787 units of market housing (condos), 253 units of affordable rental housing, the first-ever student residence for George Brown College in addition to other mixed-use development.

The project is a collaboration between Waterfront Toronto and Infrastructure Ontario. The developer is Dundee Kilmer Developments. Let the Games begin.

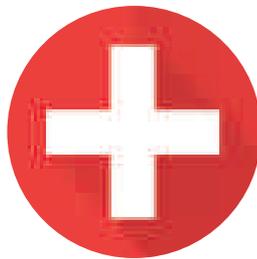
*Source: Waterfront Toronto*

## **Condo owners versus the City of Guelph budget**

A letter written by Ted Pritchard, chair of the Fair Tax Campaign-Guelph, appeared in the Guelph Mercury in late March. The campaign was organized over two years ago to address and ask for fairness in the City of Guelph's delivery of services on behalf of condominium owners. Requests included: a condominium advisory committee, and exemptions from the cart system with plastic bag use and trucks designed to service condo buildings. The campaign got its start in response to the thousands of condominium owners in Guelph who continue to pay twice for services.

In the letter Pritchard apologizes to condo owners and voices frustration over the seeming lack of progress the campaign has made. He explains the situation this way: "Councillors understand and sympathize with the problems of condominium owners, or at least they said they did during the municipal election. Thousands of condo owners have never received solid waste services from the City of Guelph. Hundreds more lost solid waste service from the city with the implementation of the cart system. More than 1,200 condominium owners have petitioned the city to receive the service they pay for with the environmental portion of their taxes. Communities across Ontario are recognizing the need to better service their fastest growing residential community, the condominium owners. None of this appears to have had an effect on council or city staff in Guelph."

*Source: GuelphMercury.com*



## **Falling glass from Toronto condominium injures man**

More glass panels have fallen from a downtown Toronto condominium. In mid-April glass fell from the balcony of a top-floor unit of a condo on King Street West near Spadina Ave. A passerby was injured.

Falling condo glass is a familiar story for downtown Toronto. In one instance last summer, a pane of glass fell from more than 50 storeys from the Shangri-la condo building.

*Sources: thestar.com and metronews.ca*



### Property management company ordered to pay \$12M US in accidental shooting

The family of an Albuquerque, New Mexico man killed by a stray bullet in 2011 has been awarded \$12 million.

A 31-year-old male resident was shot and killed when a bullet went through the door and struck him in the heart in front of his fiancée and two children, according to an attorney.

The victim's family filed a lawsuit against the Eagle's Nest Condominium Complex and its property management company, saying they could have done more to prevent the shooting. The family's attorney said the property manager didn't screen tenants before they moved in, though they are required by the rules of the complex. He said that led to a drug dealer living at the complex who he believes was involved in the shooting that killed the resident.

A jury agreed with the family and awarded them \$12 million. No arrests were ever made in the shooting.

The Roger Cox and Associates Property Management plan to file an appeal.

Source: KOAT7 Albuquerque

### Higher and higher

Of the 20 or so proposed and under development construction projects for downtown Toronto, each project will include condominium residences.

Source: [urbantoronto.ca](http://urbantoronto.ca)



### More scrutiny needed for US property managers

An editorial in the Island Packet newspaper located in Hilton Head, South Carolina calls for increased scrutiny for property management companies. This comes on the heels of the sudden closure of one of Hilton Head Island's most trusted property management companies, Property Administrators Inc.

Without warning the company closed its doors "leaving 21 Hilton Head communities unsure of whether money they paid to the company to take care of pool cleaning, grass mowing and other maintenance was properly spent and whether money for future renovations and repairs is still in their accounts."

There is speculation that the management company ran off with more than \$108,000 from its accounts without authorization. An investigation by the FBI is underway.

The editorial further advises all local condo regimes and owners associations to be vigilant, to double-check their financial accounts and to "implement rules that increase accountability." The editorial recommends that more be done at the state level. South Carolina lacks regulations for property management companies.

"A bill pending in the legislature would establish a regulatory body -- similar to the state Real Estate Commission -- to oversee property management companies. The regulatory body could implement a licensing process and force company employees to earn certification or take classes. It could also handle complaints from property owners who currently have limited recourse when unethical behaviour is discovered.

Some critics of the bill point out that those [managers] intent on stealing will find a way to do so whether regulations exist or not. Most owners and volunteer directors support state-imposed regulations to discourage would-be thieves and protect property owners."

Source: [islandpacket.com](http://islandpacket.com)



### Balcony barbecues

What is better in the summer months than a sizzling steak or barbecued burger? Before we get you salivating over dinner, unit owners who reside in midrise or highrise condominiums should do some research before firing up a balcony 'barbie'.

Ottawa-based lawyer Rod Escayola of Gowlings suggests that unit owners need to do their homework by checking out the bylaws of their local municipality as well as their condominium's governing documents.

Some municipalities will definitely allow the use of barbecues on balconies (Ottawa, Toronto, Mississauga and London don't prohibit their use.) On the other hand Guelph and Kitchener have bylaws in place that prohibit the use of barbecues on balconies.

After you have determined whether your municipality allows barbecues on balconies, unit owners should check with their condominium's governing declaration and rules. Often corporations will allow electric barbecues only while others allow barbecues to be connected directly to the building's natural gas supply.

Before you fire up, do your homework, keep safety in mind, be attentive to your neighbours ... then enjoy!

Source: [condoadviser.ca](http://condoadviser.ca)