Storage in a Parking Garage

Fire Prevention Division

August 28, 2024

Intent: Provide information on the intended use and limitations of parking garages, specifically pertaining to storage.

Parking Garage Use and Limitations

A parking garage is classified as a storage garage per the BC Building Code. A storage garage, by definition, is designed for the storage or parking of motor vehicles. As a subsidiary use, a parking garage may contain space for parking or storing other vehicles, such as bicycles, boats, mobility aids, electric bicycles, etc. All vehicles are required to be parked in a manner that does not obstruct or impede egress routes.

Vehicles and trailers that are being stored in a parking garage are prohibited from being used for material storage.

Use of the area for any purpose other than the original design shall not be carried out in a building. All combustible materials, other than those inherently a part of a vehicle, is not permitted to be stored in a parking garage that serves only one dwelling unit. Management of the parking garage is the responsibility of the building owner(s).

A fire incident inside of a parking garage is inherently dangerous for firefighters; the added fuel load from unexpected storage of items of items increases the hazards firefighters may have to deal with in the event of an emergency. Please take the time to store items in the approved locations.

Additional Information

Additional limitations may be applicable depending on the nature of the building. Please consult with strata bylaws, rental contracts, insurance policies and other agreements that may be applicable. Violation of an applicable regulation or agreement may result in fees, fines or other consequences.

For a strata building, the Strata Property Act states that the strata council's role is to "exercise the powers and perform the duties of the strata corporation, including the enforcement of bylaws and rules". Information on enforcing strata bylaws and rules is available on the Government of BC website. Visit 2.gov.bc.ca and search 'enforcing strata bylaws' to learn more.

For a rental building, the landlord may specify the rules and conditions regarding how the parking garage can be used. Please review the rental contract for details.

New Westminster

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Parking Garage

Use for the parking and storing of vehicle only

All vehicles are to be parked in a manner that does not impede or obstruct egress routes

Storage of all other items is strictly prohibited

Additional limitations on the use of the parking garage may be outlined in property specific documents, i.e. strata bylaw, rental contract, insurance policy, etc.

NWFRS inspectors may issue fees or fines for any violation of the CNW Fire Protection Bylaw

Property Management Company or Strata may take enforcement measures including warnings, fees, fines, etc. for any rental contract or strata bylaw violations

Please see the “City of New Westminster Bulletin – Storage in a Parking Garage” for more information.

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