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**Q: What are the advantages of having engineering oversight on large-dollar projects?**

**A:** Engineering can provide the condominium with peace of mind to ensure the job is being carried out in accordance with applicable codes and standards. Material selection for projects is paramount to ensure the long-term performance of the repair/replacement. Projects will also have firm contract documents signed by the contractor, condo, and engineer, which will ensure culpability by all involved. This will include, but not be limited to, warranties, safety requirements, etc.

**Q: What if the engineer specifies a material and the contractor who is carrying out the job wants to use something else?**

**A:** As part of the task of putting specifications together for bidding, the engineers should carry out a detailed investigation of the item to be replaced/rehabilitated (e.g. Roof). There are two reasons for this. First is the repair/rehabilitation required due to premature failure (e.g. something that is expected to perform for 20 years fails in

less than 10 years.); the second reason is the item is past its projected useful life and is deteriorating. Scenario number one is typical with newer-build condos: a builder will use a lower-grade material which will typically cost less than a better product and not last as long. This is allowed by code, but it usually leads to premature failure. In scenario number two, the engineer should specify the best available material to ensure long-term

performance. Yes, this may cost more than the lower grade, but in the long run it will be more financially beneficial to the condo as they will not have to replace as often as they would with a lower-grade material. If the contractor wants to “suggest” a different material/product, the engineer should only allow it if the suggested material/ product meets the same expected performance as the specified material.



**Q:** During the project, what if the contractor claims they need extra money for something that was not known or something extra needs to be replaced?

**A:** As stated above, the engineer, in putting the specifications/bid documents together, endeavours to account for all possibilities to ensure the project will stay within expected cost estimates. Specifications/bid documents should carry cash allowances just in case something unforeseen comes up. This way, the condo can budget for this if required but, in the same vein, will not have to pay if not used. If there is no engineering oversight and the contractor claims they need extra money for something, who is going to be responsible to determine if the request is justified and it was in fact carried out? There have been documented cases where condos have been taken advantage of because they did not want to utilize engineers as a cost-saving measure. However, in the long term, it has had long-term consequences.

**Q:** What if there are issues such as something falling apart after the project is completed?

**A:** As stated earlier, the contract documents will ensure warranties are in place, and therefore the contractor will be obligated to make good on all the work carried out. If the issue is due to material performance, the manufacturer's warranty will "kick in" with the item being replaced. Without engineering oversight, there may not be any firm warranties in place, or anyone to enforce warranties on behalf of the condo. **CN**

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