Balcony Safety Checks

In our CPD workshops for property agents, we have, on many occasions, discussed the importance of ensuring that the homes and properties that we manage are safe and fit for purpose.

As agents, you have a duty to your principals to ensure that the properties they entrust you with are well maintained and are not going to cause problems for them or for their tenants and the guests of tenants.

Property Managers seem to have an ever increasing list of items that require their attention when it comes to ensuring the properties are well taken cared of. NSW Fair Trading recently published a new safety guide as a timely reminder that one item that should always be on that list is balconies and decks.

The publication was released after a number of incidents in recent times have caused concern for both home owners and investors. It is important to ensure that all balconies and decks are regularly inspected for any signs of damage and even general wear and tear. There are many reasons why the structures could fail ranging from insect damage to simple weather wear.

The guidance material states that all balconies should be, at the very least, visually inspected once a year, and suggests the following tips when conducting these inspections.

Agents should look out for:

- pooling of water on the deck or balcony surface, which may indicate poor drainage, and can lead to water leaking onto lower levels of the deck.
- loose handrails and balustrades that should be solid and fixed. Be aware of balustrades that are fixed to the balcony’s or deck’s top surface and not fixed directly to the main supporting structure.
- tops of solid balustrades and fixings at wall junctions which may be loose or not adequately fixed.
- cladding that finishes hard against the balcony or deck. It may contribute to wet rot.
- cladding or lining board that is fixed to the balcony or deck, which can prevent visual inspection of the supporting members and the connections of the structure.
- beams that span long distances without any supporting posts and columns.
- beams that are sagging, cracking or warping.

We suggest that you incorporate the “what to look for” items into a checklist that can be added to your property management periodic inspection documentation to ensure that even inexperienced property managers are aware of what to look for. If any of these signs begin to present themselves, advise your principal that it is in their best interests to hire a qualified inspection of the structure. These can be carried out by licensed builders, building inspectors, structural engineers, architects and building surveyors.

Good luck with all your property dealings this week.

Til next time,
Wishing you every success in your business ventures,
Rosy Sullivan

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### Commercial and Retail Sales and Leasing Skills Course
*Whilst this is a skills course, students will receive 12 CPD points.*

**Monday 21st to Tuesday 22nd July**

Ring **1300 88 48 10** to book!
Once again the office has experienced a very busy few weeks. We have had full classes for our Experienced Real Estate Agents Licensing courses; Certificate of Registration workshops and our CPD seminars have been overflowing. The newer staff at the College have really stepped up to help accommodate our students through their studies with the College and we are creating quite a positive impact on our students. We have had to find additional training rooms in the CBD to keep up with this demand, and we are very happy with the outcome of these training sessions held on our overflow premises.

As the first semester for University has come to an end, we have our part timer uni students in the office working on quality control of our learning material and the all-important production of our student manuals. Braden has created a production hierarchy, obviously appointing himself as the Executive Head of Production (EHOP) and all other staff in the College are Assistant to the Executive Head of Production. We don’t think that Braden’s title will make it onto a business card anytime soon!

With winter settling in and the snow season under way, our very own snow bunny, Dominique headed down to the snow fields for a long weekend with her friends. She was considering not coming into work after her trip because she had described her sickness as ‘chronic goggle burn’. Dominique forgot to put sunscreen on whilst on the slopes! So please, if you are heading down to the snow for this school and university holiday break, travel safely, be cautious, have fun and most importantly put sunscreen on whilst on the slopes.

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