

# CONDO LIVING

Saturday, June 10, 2000 Section P

## Ask an Expert

# Installing condo doors

**Q** Are there existing or planned regulations for condo buildings in Greater Toronto to provide handicap automatic door opening mechanisms on the doors in heavily used common areas, such as main hallways and entrances from parking garages? Does the enforcement of such regulations change according to the building population size, targeted age, etc.?

**A** *Condo Living sent the question to investigative architect and building science specialist Martin Gerskup, of Best Consultants Inc. He has 15 years' experience in the condominium field.*

The design and construction of residential buildings, including condominiums, is regulated under the Building Code Act, which is often referred to as the Ontario Building Code.

The Ontario Building Code contains requirements for "barrier-free" design, which ensure that all buildings are accessible to persons with physical or sensory disabilities.

However, the Ontario Building Code only requires power door openers for doors in hotels, care and treatment occupancies (hospitals, nursing homes), assembly occupancies (theatres, arenas), business and personal services occupancies (banks, for example), and mercantile occupancies (stores).

The Ontario Building Code does not require the provision of power door openers in residential occupancies, and at this time there are no other existing or planned regulations for condominium buildings to provide automatic door-opening mechanisms in heavily used common areas. Furthermore, there are no regulations for condominiums that change according to the building population size, targeted age, etc. Condominium corporations that seek to provide "barrier-free" access should refer to the National Standard of Canada CAN/CSA-B651-95, titled "Barrier-Free Design."

Although this standard is not referenced in the Ontario Building Code, it does provide specific requirements to accommodate persons in wheelchairs and ambulant persons who use crutches or canes.