



Institute of Strata Title  
Management Ltd

## Media Release

Tuesday, 8 December 2009

### Home alone this Christmas

More than one in four NSW households are lone person households according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics<sup>1</sup>. And if you live in an apartment chances are someone living near you may be alone this Christmas.

Institute of Strata Title Management (ISTM) President David Ferguson is encouraging apartment owners and renters to be a bit more neighbourly this Christmas by getting to know the person down the hall or upstairs and spreading some Christmas cheer.

“Living in an apartment means living closer together. Your neighbour may be on the other side of the wall, above your ceiling or under your floor so spare a thought for them especially if they live alone,” Mr Ferguson said.

“We are encouraging owners and tenants in apartment buildings to get to know their neighbours – young and old – this Christmas and in doing so they can help revive the community spirit.”

Spreading a little Christmas cheer may especially help your elderly neighbours who may appreciate some attention.

“From time-to-time we hear sad stories of elderly people having accidents or even dying alone. By taking time, especially at during Christmas to introduce yourself to your neighbours you may end up helping a person in distress or even saving a life,” said Mr Ferguson.

“Not only that but making friends with the person across the hall may also decrease the number of neighbour disputes recorded each year.”

According to the Community Justice Centres (CJC) Annual Report for 2006-07, disputes between neighbours had increased from 37% in the previous year to 41% in that year.

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<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Products/1338.1~June+2009~Main+Features~Family+and+Community?OpenDocument>



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ISTM believes that many of the complaints from people living in apartments could be avoided if people just got to know their neighbours. Being able to approach your neighbour and get him to turn down his TV after 10pm because you get up early for work may be easier if he knows you start a shift at 7am each day.

“Noise is the issue most complained about to the NSW Office of Fair Trading and likely to be a trigger for the more serious issues that end up before the courts or the CJC,” said Mr Ferguson.

“So if you want to have a Christmas party invite the neighbours and make new friends. The benefit of this is you may not have to down the volume on Jingle Bell Rock because hopefully the neighbours will be singing along with you.”

-ends-

### **About the ISTM**

The Institute of Strata Title Management (ISTM) is the peak industry body for strata title management in New South Wales; promoting the role of the professional strata team and the value such a team adds to owners corporations in managing risk and a creating a harmonious strata living experience.

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