

# IMPORTANCE OF MAINTENANCE FEES FOR A BUILDING

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## INTRODUCTION

Maintenance fees are truly vital when it comes to maintaining a building to keep it in a good condition. Without the maintenance fees, there will be no funding to spend for any necessary building maintenance, and subsequently led to building malfunctioning. Fortunately, according to the Strata Management Act 2013 in Malaysia, the users or the residents of the building have the obligation to pay the maintenance fees and sinking fund to the Management Corporation (MC) or Joint Management Body (JMB) for the building maintenance purposes. The users or residents shall not opt that the maintenance fees are paid as a nuisance, but as an obligation to share the cost to make the living environment better.

## WHAT ARE MAINTENANCE FEES?

Generally, residents need to pay the sinking fund alongside the maintenance fees. The purpose of the sinking fund is to raise funds for preparation against future expensive expenditures such as large-scale repairs on the building <sup>[2]</sup>, while the maintenance fees are the day-to-day costs for maintaining common facilities and services in the development <sup>[1]</sup>.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTENANCE FEES

Most people would think that it will be a hassle to pay the maintenance fees and sinking fund monthly. These people take the maintenances and services provided by MC or JMB for granted, but what they may not realize was that sufficient maintenance fees are necessary to keep the whole property running properly. The following are some of the key importance on why maintenance fees should be paid.

- **SWIMMING POOL MAINTENANCE**

One of the major maintenance costs in a property is the maintenance and services of the swimming pool. Swimming pools need regular maintenance to ensure safe usage. Typical pool-maintenance services include vacuuming, brushing the pool surfaces, cleaning the filter, clean the skimmer baskets, testing, and balancing the water chemistry <sup>[3]</sup>. Besides, all equipment such as the timer and pump must be checked thoroughly to ensure functionality. Professional swimming pool specialists shall be engaged and paid to perform such services.

- **LIFT MAINTENANCE**

Lift maintenance is another major maintenance for a high-rise building. It is not the case for MC or JMB to only repair the lift when it is found malfunction but regular checking and monitoring is required from the Lift Specialist to ensure the lift condition is always in good and well-functioning conditioning for the safety of the lift users. The regular checking and monitoring of the lifts are regulated by the Department of Safety and Health (DOSH), and thus funding must be allocated for Lift Specialist engagement. Otherwise, it would cause a major inconvenience in any high-rise towers like office buildings or condominiums if the lift is not function. In the worst-case scenario, accidents may happen if the mechanical systems and its safety equipment are not maintained well.

- **SECURITY & CLEANING SERVICES**

Another important aspect that required maintenance fees is the security services. The engagement of security services is not only to prevent crimes and avoid unwanted guests, but it creates a safe environment in the development area such that people have a sense of security. Moreover, cleaning services are also required to keep the common area of the property clean and well-managed.

- **OTHERS SERVICES**

Other maintenances include minor repairs such as paving repairs, broken doors or windows repairs, lighting repairs, and gardening. Some of the major repairs which might be required to spend the sinking funds include exterior painting and plastering, plumbing replacement, waterproofing repairing, etc. Do note that these maintenances are not required to be done regularly, but parts of the maintenance fees are contributed to them as well.

- **MANAGEMENT CORPORATION (MC) OR JOINT MANAGEMENT BODY (JMB)**

Last but not least, a partial portion of the maintenance fees will be spent for the salaries of the administration and management team or for the fees to engage the property management firm for managing the property. Generally, MC or JMB is formed and managed by them. The MC or JMB is the entity who responsible for the quality of maintenance for the building. They are responsible to engage qualified maintenance teams and overseeing all the maintenance operations. All the complaints and feedbacks shall be also directed to MC or JMB for handling and keep the building always in the good condition.

## **CONCLUSION**

Most of the time, some residents take these maintenance services for granted and tend to think that the maintenance fee for the common area shall be bear by MC or JMB, but they never think that if they are not paying the maintenance fee, MC or JMB will have no funding for the maintenance. They shall understand the importance and the usage of the maintenance fees. It is not just for the people who work to improve the overall environment of the building, but also to ensure the safety and well-being of the people who stay in the building.

### *References:*

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[2] *A Simple Guide to Sinking Fund And Maintenance Fees In Property.* Retrieved on June 18, 2020, from <https://www.propertyguru.com.my/property-guides/a-simple-guide-to-sinking-fund-and-maintenance-fees-in-property-15045>

[3] *Kruckemyer, G. Before hiring pool service, know what you're getting.* Retrieved June 19, 2020, from <https://www.orlandosentinel.com/features/os-xpm-2008-03-09-orl-homespoolservice09030908mar09-story.html>