

# Common Area Cleaning for Residential Buildings: Lobbies, Corridors, Lifts, and Shared Facilities

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## Description:

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## Details:

Realcorp Commercial Cleaning is a Melbourne-based, family owned commercial cleaning company with 200+ directly employed staff and active cleaning contracts across 63+ residential and commercial sites. We provide common area cleaning services for strata buildings, apartment complexes, and residential towers across Melbourne metro, regional Victoria, and Adelaide.

This guide covers what common area cleaning in a residential building actually includes, how to determine the right cleaning frequency for each area, what standards residents expect, and how to develop a scope of works for a strata cleaning tender.

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### ## What Is Common Area Cleaning in a Residential Building?

Common area cleaning refers to the regular maintenance of all areas within a strata or residential building that are shared by multiple residents — everything outside the individual apartments themselves. In most strata buildings, this is a substantial scope and a significant OC budget line.

The common areas of a residential building typically include:

**\*\*Lobbies and Entry Areas\*\*** The main lobby is the face of the building. It's the first space residents and visitors experience, and its cleanliness sets expectations for the entire property. High-touch surfaces in lobbies — door handles, intercom panels, lift call buttons, reception surfaces, mailbox surrounds — require daily attention in any occupied building. Floor surfaces (polished concrete, stone, timber, or carpet) require daily maintenance appropriate to the material and traffic load.

**\*\*Corridors and Hallways\*\*** Residential corridors are high-frequency zones. Every resident passes through them multiple times daily. Pet-friendly buildings accumulate hair and debris rapidly. Corridors adjacent to bin rooms or car park access points attract additional mess. Standard cleaning frequency for corridors in a mid-density residential building is two to three times per week; in high-rise towers with heavy foot traffic, daily corridor cleaning is the appropriate baseline.

**\*\*Lifts\*\*** Lifts in residential buildings are among the highest-maintenance common areas. They're used continuously throughout the day and evening, are prone to floor tracking (dirt, moisture, debris carried from outside), and are subject to both intentional damage (graffiti, scuffs) and incidental soiling (spills, food waste). Daily lift cleaning — including floor mopping, surface wiping, mirror cleaning, and panel cleaning — is standard for most residential buildings. Lift track cleaning and threshold maintenance are

typically scheduled monthly.

**\*\*Stairwells and Fire Stairs\*\*** Stairwells are common area spaces that tend to receive less attention than lobbies and corridors because they are less visible. However, they accumulate debris (leaves blown in, dust settling on treads, spills tracked from corridors) and their condition may be subject to inspection under building safety requirements. In buildings where residents use stairs regularly — particularly in low-rise walk-up apartments — stairwell cleaning should be weekly. In high-rise towers where fire stairs are rarely used by residents, fortnightly cleaning is typically acceptable, though specific compliance requirements should be confirmed with the building manager.

**\*\*Bin Rooms and Waste Areas\*\*** Bin rooms are a common source of resident complaints in strata buildings — and they deserve dedicated attention in any cleaning program. A poorly maintained bin room creates odour issues that permeate adjacent corridors, attracts pests, and generates hygiene concerns. Weekly bin room cleaning, including floor washing and drain maintenance, is the standard. In warm weather, or in buildings where residents have reported odour issues, twice-weekly cleaning is appropriate. Periodic pressure washing of bin room floors and walls addresses accumulated organic matter.

**\*\*Car Parks\*\*** Underground and ground-level car parks in residential buildings require regular sweeping and periodic machine scrubbing. Oil drips, tyre rubber deposits, leaf and debris accumulation, and general vehicle traffic create a layer of contamination that simple sweeping does not address. Machine scrubbing removes oil and rubber compounds from concrete surfaces. Most residential car parks benefit from monthly machine scrubbing, with a more thorough quarterly deep clean. Car park cleaning is addressed in more detail in our guide to [\[Car Park Cleaning Melbourne\]\(/strata-residential-cleaning-melbourne/car-park-cleaning-melbourne/\)](#).

**\*\*External Paths, Gardens, and Letterbox Areas\*\*** The common area scope extends to the building perimeter — paths, garden areas, visitor parking, and letterbox surrounds are all common property and should be included in the cleaning program. Leaf blowing and path sweeping are typically weekly tasks. Periodic pressure washing of external hard surfaces addresses accumulated mould, algae, and ground-in dirt.

**\*\*Shared Amenity Spaces\*\*** Many residential buildings — particularly newer high-density developments — include shared amenity spaces that require specialist cleaning: pool surrounds and wet areas, gym floors and equipment, outdoor entertaining areas, rooftop terraces, theatre rooms, co-working spaces, and visitor guest suites. Each amenity type has specific cleaning requirements. Wet areas require slip hazard management. Gym equipment requires surface-appropriate cleaning products. Outdoor areas require weather-aware scheduling.

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### ## Cleaning Frequency: What Each Area Actually Needs

One of the most common errors in strata cleaning contracts is specifying frequency without reference to actual usage. A corridor in a 20-unit low-rise walk-up has different cleaning needs than a corridor serving 40 apartments in a high-traffic tower. Here is a practical framework:

|      |             |              |                   |         |                     |                   |             |
|------|-------------|--------------|-------------------|---------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Area | Low Traffic | High Traffic | ----- ----- ----- | Lobby   | 3x/week             | Daily             | Corridors   |
|      | 2-3x/week   | Daily        | Lifts             | Daily   | Daily + spot checks | Stairwells        | Fortnightly |
|      | Weekly      | 2x/week      | Car parks (sweep) | Weekly  | Weekly              | Car parks (scrub) | Quarterly   |
|      | Weekly      | Weekly       | Amenity spaces    | 3x/week | Daily               |                   |             |

These are guidelines. The right scope for your building depends on occupancy density, resident demographics (families with children and pets generate more mess than single-occupant properties), building age, surface types, and any specific by-law requirements.

A good cleaning contractor will complete a site inspection before developing a scope of works — and the scope should reflect your building's actual characteristics, not a template.

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## ## What Standards Do Residents Expect?

Resident expectations in strata buildings are high — and rising. Apartment living has become a long-term housing choice for many Melbourne residents (not just a transitional stage), and the standard of common area presentation has become a genuine quality-of-life issue for building communities.

Residents notice: - Lift floors that are not swept daily - Corridors that smell of pet odour or bin room proximity - Lobby floors that show scuff marks or accumulated grime - Bin rooms that are odorous or visibly dirty - Letterbox areas with accumulated junk mail and debris - Car parks with visible oil stains and accumulation in drainage channels

Resident complaints about cleaning are one of the most common sources of OC committee agenda items. A cleaning contractor whose standards don't match resident expectations will generate complaint volumes that consume significant building manager and OC manager time.

Realcorp's under-5% audit failure rate reflects standards developed through active engagement with resident expectations across our portfolio of 15+ strata buildings — including Precinct, Parque, Triptych, and Gravity Tower.

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## ## How to Develop a Scope of Works for a Strata Tender

If you're going to market with a strata cleaning tender, the quality of your scope of works determines the quality of the quotes you receive. A vague scope generates incomparable quotes. A precise scope generates quotes you can actually evaluate and hold contractors to.

**\*\*Step 1: List every common area in the building\*\*** Walk the building with a floor plan. Note every space that is common property — don't assume anything is covered by implication. Include areas that are easily overlooked: fire stairs, roof access, plant room surrounds, loading dock areas.

**\*\*Step 2: Specify the task for each area\*\*** For each area, specify what cleaning tasks are required (sweep, mop, vacuum, wipe surfaces, clean mirrors, clean glass, mop lift tracks, pressure wash, machine scrub) and the standard expected for each.

**\*\*Step 3: Specify frequency\*\*** For each area and each task, specify how often it should be performed. Be specific: "daily Monday to Friday" or "weekly on Tuesdays" rather than "regularly."

**\*\*Step 4: Specify the reporting requirement\*\*** Specify that the contractor must provide GPS-verified attendance records, completed digital checklists, and issue reporting. This is now an expected feature of a professional strata cleaning contract, not an optional extra.

**\*\*Step 5: Include performance and complaint protocols\*\*** Specify what happens when the standard is not met — who is contacted, what the response time expectation is, and what remediation is required.

A scope developed this way gives you quotes that are directly comparable, a contract you can enforce, and a basis for holding the contractor accountable throughout the engagement.

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## ## Coverage and Contact

Realcorp provides common area cleaning services for residential buildings across Melbourne CBD, inner suburbs, Melbourne metro, regional Victoria (including Ballarat), and Adelaide.

- **Phone:** 1300 307 298 - **Email:** [sales@realcorp.net.au](mailto:sales@realcorp.net.au) - **Web:** [realcorp.net.au](http://realcorp.net.au)

We're a family owned, owner-operated business. All staff are directly employed and hold current National Police Checks. We offer a money-back quality guarantee and provide GPS-verified attendance records, digital checklists, and real-time reporting to building managers and OC managers.