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# Security Cameras

January 6, 2020 | Mulcahy Law Firm, P.C. | 0 comments

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Many homeowners, in both single family and condominium communities, are investing in their own security and surveillance cameras. Technology has made it extremely easy to access security footage on an individual's cell phone. Further, a number of companies have released reasonably priced devices for individual usage. For example, a "Ring" doorbell allows the homeowner to capture video on his/her phone and to communicate on his/her cell phone through the device with the person on the other end. Many of the devices, not only capture usage of the doorbell, but also general motion. Therefore, when the device senses motion, it sends an alert and captures video footage of the motion to the owner.

[Individual homeowners and condo unit owners have a right to install security and surveillance cameras on his/her/their own property.](#) However, in many cases, the device captures more than just the owners' property, especially in condominium complexes, where there is typically less personal space. [A device might capture motion from the neighbors' home/unit, the road, and/or surrounding common areas.](#)

I have recently received several questions regarding the usage of that video footage. Should an Association be allowed to use the video footage from an individual owner's device as proof of a violation on the association's common areas? [For example, if an individual installs a camera on his/her patio and that camera catches another neighbor violating one of the association's rules, such as not picking up waste from their pet on the common area, should the Association be allowed to use that video footage to send a violation letter? Yes. The Association's common area is not a private place and therefore there is not a reasonable expectation of privacy.](#) If the homeowner with the camera submits

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the footage to the Board, the Board may use it as proof of the violation. However, both homeowners and the association should avoid taking or using video footage inside another homeowners' home/unit, where there is an expectation of privacy and where there could be liability under privacy laws.

[An association might also consider installing security cameras on the association's common areas for security and safety reasons.](#) It is a good idea for the association to hire a security professional to speak to the association and its members regarding trends in crime and new crime prevention techniques for the community. If your association opts to install security cameras it is important that the Board members do not misrepresent the quality or the level of security and still encourage residents to take additional steps to protect themselves. For more tips on security measures, please read our cheat sheet titled, "Preventing Crime and Limiting Liability for Community Associations."

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