



# Chapter 1

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## 1.1 Fundamentals

Buildings in disrepair or unsanitary conditions, unauthorized building works and dilapidated signboards are potential hazards to the public. The responsibilities for maintaining and managing buildings in safe and sanitary conditions rest with owners.

Timely maintenance and proper management of buildings prevent their deterioration, keep them safe and tidy, provide a pleasant and comfortable living environment and uphold their value.

## 1.2 Purpose

This Guidebook consolidates the guidelines from the Buildings Department (BD) and other relevant sources for building owners, Owners' Corporations, Owners' Committees and personnel involved in building maintenance and management. Apart from identifying the legal responsibilities of owners and usual problems encountered, it also enhances readers' awareness of the existing conditions of buildings and facilitates the formulation of plans for rectification and improvement.

## 1.3 Overview

**Chapter 2** briefly describes legislative backgrounds on the rights and responsibilities of building owners towards building maintenance and management.

**Chapter 3** contains common problems encountered such as defects and unauthorized building works in buildings, as well as orders from the Government.

**Chapter 4** provides guidelines on selecting the appropriate solutions to meet the needs and solve problems identified in Chapter 3. Though readers may resolve some situations by following the steps and guidelines suggested, they are always encouraged to seek the assistance of building professionals or parties possessing the necessary expertise to ensure the quality of the required works.

## 1.3 Overview

**Chapter 5** gives a general view on the roles of the Government in facilitating the responsible owners for complying with requirements and in acting against those that are non-performing. It also lists out some of the Professional Bodies whose members can provide services to the readers on the issues.

**"Frequently Asked Questions"** have included guidance or answers to resolve 100 situations or problems which may be encountered by owners in building maintenance and management. Topics include compliance with relevant Government Orders, dealing with unauthorized building works and advertisement signboards, application for loans from the Buildings Department under Building Safety Loan Scheme (BSLS), repair of common defects in buildings, maintenance of slopes and retaining walls, alterations and additions in existing buildings, formation of Owners' Corporations, etc.

The **Appendices** provide some useful documents and listings which are mentioned in the preceding chapters.

*The Guidebook offers general information on the maintenance and management of buildings, and it is not exhaustive on any matter in question. The Government of HKSAR does not warrant or guarantee the accuracy and suitability of the information contained in the Guidebook in any particular case.*

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*The Buildings Department strongly advise any owner or reader to seek independent professional advice on the details of relevant legislation, Deed of Mutual Covenant, other matters relevant to their particular case and the accuracy and correctness of the information contained in the Guidebook.*