

▶ THE CO-OP/ CONDO ECONOMIC REPORT

A SPECIAL **HABITAT** SURVEY
BY THE NUMBERS

POLICIES AND RULES

PERSONAL INSURANCE REQUIRED?

No one is risk-free, so attorney Geoffrey Mazel, a partner at Hankin, Hand-werker & Mazel, points to one “item of interest” with alarm: only 40 percent of the respondents said that they required their shareholder to maintain personal insurance on their units. “I find this figure to be extremely low, in light of the tremendous benefits the cooperative as a whole receives when its shareholders maintain their own insurance policies. It provides an extra layer of protection for everyone and should be required by more boards.”

OPEN BOARD MEETINGS DOWN.

Mazel feels that another surprising result was that only 15 percent of those responding have open board meetings. “In my opinion, open meetings are a double-edged sword - the desire for transparency with the shareholders versus the need for the board to operate in an efficient manner, without outside pressures.”

SMOKING BANS UP.

Smoke may not be getting in some people’s eyes much longer. Mazel cites as significant the 10 percent that had instituted smoking bans. “This is a red hot topic in this era of expanded smoke-free environments. Nonsmokers can spend all day in a smoke-free environment and then go home to their apartment and be subjected to secondhand smoke from a neighbor. Clearly, the case law is evolving in this area, and there are lower court decisions that require boards to take affirmative steps to protect their shareholders from secondhand smoke. How far a board can go on this issue is still unknown.”

