



(Photo submitted by Anne Holland)

January 21, 2022
Sterling Woods II – Master Association
Monthly Newsletter
Website: www.sterlingwoods2.org

Dear Unit Owners:

Below are operational highlights here at Sterling Woods and important information and reminders...

Home Repairs and Improvements (building permits and board approval)

Please see the attached document providing important information regarding building permits and board approval that are required for certain repairs and home improvements.

Vehicle Information & Unit Owner Contact Information

Please remember to let Kim Murray know if any of your vehicle information changes. See below from the Rules & Regulations:

Article VI, Section 6.13 states Unit Owners are required to provide accurate vehicle identification information for all cars and trucks that are housed on the community's property. Identification information includes year, make, model, color, and vehicle license number.

Please also remember to let Kim know if your address, e-mail address or phone number changes.

Please note - landlords are responsible for submitting this information on behalf of their tenants.

Water Shut Off Valve in your Unit

It is very important that you know where the water shut off valve is in your unit. If you have an emergency, and do not know how to shut off the water in your unit, you could end up with unnecessary damage. If you cannot find the water shut off valve, you can hire a plumber to locate it for you. If it is in a location that is not easily accessible, or if your shut off valve is not working properly, a plumber will be able to repair or move the valve if necessary.

In one of the units in each building (in most buildings it is in one of the end units), there is also a main water shut off valve that shuts the water off to the entire building. Please make sure you know if you have the building water shut off valve in your unit, but you should also know where the shut off valve is for just your unit.

If your unit is rented, please make sure your tenant knows where the water shut off valve is.

Amenity Update – the board is preparing to open the clubhouse which includes opening the fitness center, allowing clubs to meet at the clubhouse and for board meetings (allowing in-person and virtual participation).

Requirements are being put in place and the association's attorney is drafting a waiver to be signed by unit owners who want to use the fitness center, attend a club or a board meeting. Proof of identification and proof of vaccination will need to be shown to REI. Copies of your ID and vaccination card will not be made. Currently, there is no plan to open the clubhouse for rentals. Additional information will be sent out soon.



Information Regarding Snow Removal

Snowstorm Parking Reminder: The snow removal vendor uses visitor parking areas during storms for the temporary placement of snow. The availability of these areas is critical during a snowstorm. Do NOT move your car from your driveway to the visitor's lot during a storm to "make it easier" for the vendor to clean your driveway. It hinders the snow removal effort and is a violation of the parking rules.

The contractor provides for a 24/7 dispatch service during storms. Their dispatcher is available to REI for all snow inquiries. **If you have any questions or concerns during a snowstorm (or following the storm) or regarding the snow removal process, please contact Kim Murray.**

You can e-mail Kim at kmurray@rei-pm.net, call the on-site office at (203) 748-0859 or if you have an emergency and need to get in touch with someone right away, call (203) 744-8400 and hit 0.

Please note - snowstorms are handled differently by the snow vendor depending on when the storm starts, when the storm ends, the temperature, how cold the ground is, if freezing rain is expected, etc. For example, if there is freezing rain after it has already snowed, the snow vendor waits until the freezing rain ends before shoveling the walks, steps, and driveways because they want to let the ice adhere to the snow versus if they shovel earlier, the stairs, driveways and walkways would be a sheet of ice.

DO NOT PUT FOOD OUTSIDE YOUR UNIT FOR WILD ANIMALS

It has been observed throughout the community that residents are throwing food (bread, pizza leftovers, raw chicken) outside of their units to feed the wild animals. This is a violation of association rules. This practice also attracts wild animals including bears, coyotes, rats, and mice. Homeowners should eliminate any food sources that may attract animals including cleaning up bird seed below feeders.

Parking Rule Reminders

We would like to remind unit owners that parking on the street is not allowed. Also, **please do not park your car in the visitor's lot.** Your cars must be parked in your driveway or garage.

Reminder to Dog Owners

Please pick up after your dog. There is a lot of dog feces around the community and even brightly colored bags filled with feces tossed on sidewalks and in the woods. Per the rules, all pet owners or attendants are responsible to immediately pick up after their pet and **properly dispose of the waste.**

February Board Meeting

If you would like to join the Wednesday, February 16th Sterling Woods Open Session Board meeting at 7:30 PM, which will be held via conference call, you can call (203) 666-8107 and then enter the conference ID number which is 429 031 828#. When you call in, you will be put into a "lobby" and when the meeting is ready to begin you will be "brought" into the meeting.

Please note - you will be muted during the meeting. However, you can listen in. If you have any questions, you would like the board to answer, you should e-mail your questions to Kim Murray at kmurray@rei-pm.net a week prior to the meeting. Your questions will be addressed at the end of the open session. The board also gives those in attendance an opportunity to ask questions at the end of the meeting.

Some routine reminders...

The next holiday that will impact trash pickup is Memorial Day. That week, the pickup will be on Tuesday, May 31, 2022.

Currently, there are 321-unit owners (out of 358) who receive correspondence via e-mail versus receiving correspondence through U.S. mail. The board is requesting that all unit owners who are not currently signed up to receive correspondence via e-mail do so. At times, the board would like to provide information quickly to owners and sending an e-mail blast is the best way to do that. By receiving correspondence via e-mail, you will also save the association money. If you would like to provide your e-mail address, please contact Kim Murray.

Per the rules & regulations, decorations may be installed only up to 30 days prior to holiday observance, and they must be removed within 10 days after the holiday.

Please remember that your garbage can must have tight fitting lids on them and that you must properly secure all recycling. On windy days, the garbage and recycling will often be seen blowing throughout the community leaving a lot of litter behind.

If Kim or I can assist you in any way, please let us know. Kim's hours are approximately 7:30 AM until 2:30 PM. Her email address is kmurray@rei-pm.net and the on-site phone number is (203) 748-0859 or she can be reached at (203) 744-8400, extension 153. If you have an emergency, you can call (203) 744-8400 and hit zero.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Art Stueck', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Art Stueck
President
REI Property and Asset Management

Attachment

Building Permits & Board Approval for Home Improvements

In accordance with the Sterling Woods Governing Documents and the City of Danbury Building Department, there are many improvements and modifications a unit owner can make to the inside of their units without the need for Board approval and/or a building permit from the City of Danbury. **Everything else requires both.**

Below is a brief listing of each. More complete information is available from Kim Murray at 203-744-8400 or KMurray@rei-pm.net.

Permits and Board approval are **not** required for painting, wallpapering, tiling, carpeting, cabinetry, countertop replacement and similar work not involving structural or mechanical alterations, minor electrical maintenance, plumbing work, and replacement or repair of minor parts of HVAC systems and gas fireplaces.

Some examples of when Board approval & city permit are needed:

- Replacing a hot water heater (tank or tankless) or HVAC equipment.
- Replacing a gas fireplace.
- **Any electrical work** other than repair of existing outlets, switches etc.
- Installation of additional lighting (i.e., track, recessed).
- **Any plumbing work** other than immediate leak repair and general maintenance. This includes replacement of sinks, faucets, drains, garbage disposals. Permission is **not** needed to replace countertops with identical footprint replacements, but a plumber and building permit **are** required to reinstall existing sink or a replacement sink.
- Installation of a radon abatement system.
- Any renovations that will have an impact on the structure of the unit/building.

Comments: It is, unfortunately, quite common for contractors to tell customers that permits are not needed for many of these projects. This is absolutely not correct according to the Danbury Building Department. Every licensed contractor is keenly aware of the few items that do not require a permit as outlined in the CT building code and often choose not to inform the customers because it adds time and expense.

It remains the unit owner's responsibility to know when these are required and to get proper approvals and permits before work is started. REI can provide more detailed information and references to the Danbury Building Department and the pertinent Sterling Woods II Governing Documents. Failure to follow the procedures can result in fines, insurance deductibles being charged to the unit owner, and/or requirements to reverse the work.

Per the City of Danbury Building Department and State Building Code:

Where equipment replacement and repairs must be performed in an emergency situation, the permit applications shall be submitted within the next business day to the building official.

When in doubt, ask Kim!

References:

Sterling Woods II Rules and Regulations Article IX, Section 9.2 Compliance with state and city regulations. <https://sterlingwoods2.org/rulesregulations.htm>

Sterling Woods Master Documents Article 13, Section 13.1 – Additions, Alterations, and improvements by Unit Owners: <https://sterlingwoods2.org/rulesregulations.htm>

Excerpts from 2018 Connecticut State Building Code: <https://sterlingwoods2.org/information.htm>