



(photo submitted by Anne Holland)

January 22, 2024
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...

URGENT INFORMATION
ACTION REQUIRED BY MARCH 31, 2024

REMINDER: The rules require that you provide certain information to the Association by March 31, 2024.

All Unit Owners were sent a letter on January 5th informing them that they need to provide information to the Association by **March 31, 2024**, verifying they are in compliance with the water-related maintenance standards. A form was provided to all Unit Owners that must be returned with related attachments.

To date, we have received only 16 forms and there are 358 Unit Owners.

Please return the form when it is completely filled out along with any relevant attachments depending on how you answer the questions on the form.

What to expect if you do not turn in the attached form and related information by March 31, 2024:

- If a Unit Owner does not send in this form with all information filled out and the necessary documentation included by March 31, 2024, that Unit Owner will receive a warning letter on or about April 1st.
- If the Unit Owner does not return the information required by May 1st, the Unit Owner will be sent a hearing notice and will be fined each day going back to April 1st. The Unit Owner can either pay the fine or request a hearing with the master board.
- This process will continue monthly with daily fines until the Unit Owner complies with the water-related maintenance standards.

MAINTENANCE STANDARDS – ENSURE WEEP HOLES ARE WORKING – WHAT IS A WEEP HOLE?

The Maintenance Standards state that all Unit Owners, tenants, and occupants shall ensure that there are working weep holes on storm and/or screen doors.

Unit Owners have asked – what is a weep hole? There are weep holes under windows and sliding doors – please see the pictures below. Although weep holes will not all look the same, they should be similar. Weep holes allow any accumulated water in the window or slider track to drain outside and not inside into the unit which can cause damage.



Proposed Revised Rules – Exhibit A – Maintenance, Repair and Replacement Standards of the Rules & Regulations - #14 Turn Off Water During Extended Absence

Attached you will find a proposed rule change (Exhibit A, #14) that was approved by the Master Board at the January meeting. After Master Board approval, there is a requirement of notice to all residents and a ten-day comment period. If you have any comments about the proposed rule change, please mail or e-mail them to REI. After the notice and comment requirement is met and final ratification occurs, we will send all residents updated rule pages which you can insert into your rule book. A full set of the rules can be e-mailed to you at any time if you cannot locate your hard copy (or if you prefer electronic files).

Special Assessment in 2024

There was an operating loss in 2022 in the amount of \$8.3K and in 2023 in the amount of \$82.3K which eroded the association's operating cash. This became apparent at the end of December when there was barely enough cash to pay association bills. The \$82.3K loss in 2023 was driven primarily by the unplanned increase in insurance premium payments of \$42K and unanticipated general maintenance costs of almost \$56K. The extra maintenance costs were largely the result of the number and severity of storms in 2023, resulting in damage from multiple roof and window leaks as well as basement flooding. Maintenance costs also included the installation of backyard drains to prevent further flooding.

It is likely that we will have to recoup this loss later in 2024, depending on our financial condition at that time. To alleviate this cash flow problem in the short term we will borrow funds from the reserve fund, which will need to be repaid at a later date. The board is considering using the money from the common charge default reserve and the insurance deductible reserve (\$30.4K) to offset the amount of money that would have to be assessed to owners. At this time, the board is estimating that an average assessment would be approximately \$145.00 per unit.

FITNESS CENTER – RULE REMINDER – The exercise room is available only to residents ages 18 and over unless supervised by an adult resident.

Recently, a Unit Owner brought his two small children to the fitness center and the young children were playing on the fitness center equipment like it was a jungle gym (hanging off the pull-down bar, etc.). This is not allowed. It is unsafe and the equipment is new and should be used properly to minimize wear and tear and damage. See below from the rules.

Article X11, Section 12.5 in the Rules & Regulations states: the exercise room is available only to residents ages 18 and over unless supervised by an adult resident. Guest use of equipment is not allowed at any time.



Snowstorm Parking Reminder & Information

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 association rules.

Please note - snowstorms are managed 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.

Residents enjoying the first snowfall of the season on January 7th.



Overflow Parking Spaces

When a unit owner has 3 licensed drivers living in their unit and they have 3 cars, they can reach out to management to request an overflow parking pass. If overflow parking spaces are available, a 90-day pass is issued to the unit owner which allows them to park their third car in one of the overflow parking spaces with a pass displayed on their dashboard. When the pass is close to expiring, the unit owner needs to reach out to REI to request another parking pass. Note: a unit (all villages except the Birches Village) can never have 4 cars.

Currently, there are 12 overflow parking spaces on Bradford Drive and 2 overflow parking spaces on Cypress Drive. There is signage in these areas indicating where the overflow parking spaces are, and the spaces are lined with yellow paint.

Please note that you may only park in an overflow parking space if you have an overflow parking pass displayed on your dashboard. The spaces are first come, first serve to owners who have a pass and if the overflow spaces are full in an area, you must move your car to another overflow parking area (you cannot park in the visitor parking spaces).

The board has been discussing adding additional overflow parking spaces on other roads in the community. On Revere Road, at the very end of the road, two parking spaces on the far right of the parking area will become overflow parking spaces. On Pinnacle Way, two parking spaces to the right of 1506 Pinnacle (two spaces on the far left of the parking area) will become overflow parking spaces.

In the spring, proper signage will be added in these areas on Revere Road and Pinnacle Way as well as the parking lines will be painted yellow indicating the spaces are for residents with an overflow pass. In the meantime, if you have an overflow pass and it is convenient for you to use these new spaces on Revere Road and Pinnacle Way now you may do so if your overflow pass is displayed on the dashboard of your car.

The Board is evaluating whether any spaces need to be added on Heartwood Lane and Hancock Drive and if so where they should be located. Once this is determined, you will be informed.



At the December 2023 Open Session Board meeting, the Board voted on Master Board positions as follows:

Steve Griffing, President (Willows Representative)
Andrew Bayer, Vice President (Summit Representative)
Stan Kishner, Treasurer (Birches Representative)
Jennifer Finnerty, Secretary (Oaks Representative)
Maureen Dunkerton, Director (Elms Representative)
Valerie Dawson, Director (Maples Representative)

February Board Meeting

The next board meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 21st at 7:30 PM. It will be held in person at the clubhouse, or you can attend electronically. If you choose to attend electronically, call (203) 666-8107 and then enter the conference ID number which is 966 306 742#. 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 – if you join via conference call, 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 either in person or via conference call an opportunity to ask questions at the end of the meeting.

Some routine reminders.....

DO NOT PUT FOOD OUTSIDE YOUR UNIT FOR WILD ANIMALS

Please do not throw food outside as it 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. The Association is also continuously incurring expenses for exterminating services because some units do have mice.

Dog Guidance Reminder: If you walk your dog in the back of your unit, please keep at least 15 feet from your neighbor’s or any other unit.

Holiday Related Information - per the Rules & Regulations, decorations may be installed only up to 30 days prior to holiday observance, and they must be removed within ten days after the holiday.

The next holiday that will impact trash pickup is Memorial Day. That week, the pickup will be on Tuesday, May 30, 2023.

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 ext. 153. If you have an emergency, you can call 203-744-8400 and hit zero.

Sincerely,



Art Stueck
President
REI Property and Asset Management

Attachment

Sterling Woods
10 Day Notice and Comment
Suggested Change to Exhibit A – Maintenance,
Repair and Replacement Standards of the Rules & Regulations

#14. Turn Off Water During Extended Absence

January 22, 2024

EXHIBIT A

MAINTENANCE, REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT STANDARDS

Suggested change is in bold below.

14. Turn off water valve during extended absence. If a unit is to be unoccupied or untended for twenty-four hours or longer, the main water valve for the unit must be turned off. **The requirement to shut off the water when you leave your unit for over 24 hours only needs to be followed in the period from November 1 to March 31.** Note - some units also have total building shut off valves which shall not be turned off.

On or before March 31, 2024, Unit Owners must acknowledge to management that all adult occupants, including tenants, know where their shutoff valves are located and how to turn them off. This is subject to a five-year recertification.