



(photo submitted by Anne Holland)

October 18, 2024
Sterling Woods II – Master Association
Monthly Newsletter
Website: www.sterlingwoods2.org

Dear Unit Owners:

Below you will find various updates, news, and reminders. Your attention to these matters is appreciated.

2025 Budget

It is during this time of year that we plan for the next fiscal year. As a result, a draft budget for 2025 will be presented to the Master Board by the Treasurers Committee during the November Board Meeting. The formal presentation to owners will take place at the Annual Owners Meeting on December 4, 2024. A meeting notice, agenda and the proposed budget will be sent to you in advance for your review and consideration.

Upcoming Assessment

The Board discussed at the October Board meeting that there will be an assessment in early 2025 to cover three expenses: 1) to cover the overage in general maintenance this year due to water damage from severe storms; 2) to cover additional tree work that is needed to remove large tree branches along the wood line that threaten to fall on roofs and decks; and 3) to pay back the \$75K that was borrowed from the reserves earlier this year to cover the large initial insurance premium payments associated with the 2024 insurance rate increase.

The amount unit owners will be assessed is not determined at this time, but unit owners will be informed in the near future.

Gutter Cleaning

Post leaf drop season, all gutters throughout the association will be cleaned. Although we do not have dates this work will be done, please do not be alarmed if you see workers on ladders once the leaves have fallen.

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. If you have work done in your unit that requires a building permit, city officials must come out and inspect the work when it is completed and a copy of the building permit and Certificate of Approval must be provided to the association.

Fall & Winter Reminders

- All thermostats in the units must be set at a minimum of 55 degrees Fahrenheit from November 1 through March 31 as required per the Association Rules/Maintenance Standards.

IMPORTANT: Should you know of any neighboring units that are vacant, please notify the property management office at kmurray@rei-pm.net. We will then make certain ownership is aware of the rules in this regard and that they are following them. Thank you for your cooperation.

- 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.**

- Please remove any dead plants from your outdoor flower/plant pots - this includes plants that were planted around trees. If you have a pot that is large and ornamental, you can clean it of dead plants and leave it where it is for the winter. Please properly store the smaller pots inside your unit. In the past, it has been noted that some unit owners store empty pots on the sides of their units or under trees – this is not allowed. Please note – unit owners should not dump potted soil in the common areas. Shepherd hooks should not be left outside with nothing on them.
- Please remember to winterize all exterior hose bibs following procedures recommended by the hose bib manufacturer even if you have a frost-free valve.



The October Landscaping Report is attached.

November Board Meeting

The next board meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 13th 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 933 542 312#. 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 would like to address the board and would like to be added to the agenda to speak at the beginning of the open session meeting, you should e-mail Kim Murray at kmurray@rei-pm.net a week prior to the meeting. There will also be a sign-up sheet at the meeting if you would like to add your name to the list to address the board at the beginning of the meeting. If you call into the meeting, you will be asked if you would like to be added to the list to speak at the beginning of the meeting. If you call into the meeting, you will be muted during the meeting. Questions will not be taken at the end of the meeting.

Signage Cannot Be Put Outside your Unit or on the Common Elements

Please note that unit owners cannot put signs outside their unit or in the common elements (per the Rules – Article II, Section 2.4) such as slow down signs or don't let your dog go to the bathroom in this area signs).



Frying a turkey in the community inside or outside of a unit is NOT allowed.

A Hazardous Waste Day Flyer is attached to this newsletter.

Some routine reminders.....

There will be no delayed trash pickups for the remainder of the year.

Holiday decorations may be installed up to 30 days prior to holiday observance and must be removed within 10 days after the holiday. Holiday decorations shall be limited to the front door and porch area and may not be permanently affixed to the unit. However, in the Birches Village, unit owners are allowed to place holiday decoration up to six feet in front of their single-family homes.

We would also like to remind unit owners that they should change the batteries in the smoke detectors and in all thermostats in their units at least annually (or as recommended by the manufacturer for the installed unit).

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Art Stueck'.

Art Stueck
President
REI Property and Asset Management

Attachments

LANDSCAPE REPORT

OCTOBER 2024

Just a reminder: unauthorized plantings on the sides of end-unit townhouses will be removed. These areas are treated as common areas and the Landscape Committee is responsible for them.

During October, an extra trimming of some large shrubs was done on Bradford Drive, Hancock Drive and Logging Trail Road. This was a test project to see if this extra trimming will help maintain the size of these shrubs. We will determine if we will extend the extra trimming of large shrubs to other villages in the future.

Gonzalez Landscaping. Mowing, weeding, and policing of trash throughout SWII is continuing on a weekly basis. Fall shrub replacements, reseeding work and pruning/trimming of shrubs was done the third and fourth weeks of September. Any requests received now will be put on the spring 2025 list.

Bartlett Tree. As mentioned last month, all of the contracted work for the season has been completed, with the exception of two repellent treatments for deer susceptible plants located throughout SWII. The estimated dates for these treatments are 11/10/24 and 1/12/25, weather permitting. Because we have had so many requests for trimmings/prunings of preserve trees (those in back of units which serve as privacy walls and are the trees that were here before the development was built) we are also using another tree vendor (the one who worked on the pines removal project) to do some of this work. However, this work cannot be done until we have an approved 2025 budget.

Lawn Doctor. All the lawn applications have been completed for the 2024 season. Some unit owners have expressed concerns about the chemicals used for some of the applications, Lawn Doctor has provided Kim Murray with a list of these chemicals. Also, yellow tags are put in certain locations throughout SWII to alert residents that an application has been done.

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 203-748-0859 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.

If you have work done in your unit that requires a building permit, the City must come out and inspect the work when it is completed and a copy of the building permit and Certificate of Approval must be provided to the Association.

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>



Household Hazardous Waste Drop-off Event



For the towns of: Bethel•Bridgewater•Brookfield•Danbury•Kent•New Fairfield•New Milford
Newtown•Redding•Ridgefield•Roxbury•Sherman•Weston•Wilton

Brookfield High School - 45 Long Meadow Hill Rd., Brookfield
Saturday, November 2, 2024 9:00am-2:00pm

PROTOCOL for this event:

- REMAIN IN YOUR VEHICLE AT ALL TIMES.
- Place items at the back of your vehicle.
- Please have your identification ready.
- Workers will remove contents from your vehicle.



What to Bring

- Paints
- Stains and Varnishes
- Paint Thinners & Strippers
- Wood Preservatives
- Resins, Rosins & Adhesives
- Polishes for Furniture, Floor & Metal
- Cleaners for Rug & Upholstery
- Cleaners for Oven, Toilet Bowl & Drain
- Swimming Pool Chemicals
- Pesticides, Herbicides, Insecticides
(including Lawn Care Products)
- Flea Powder
- Moth Balls
- Spot Removers
- Dry Cleaning Solvents
- Lighter Fluids
- Septic Tank Degreasers
- Engine Degreasers
- Waste Fuels (Kerosene, Gasoline)
- Carburetor Cleaners, Brake Fluids
- Transmission Fluids, Car Waxes
- Full or Partially Full Aerosol Cans
- Rubber Cement, Airplane Glue
- Photo Chemicals, Chemistry Sets
- Hobby Supplies
- Rechargeable (Ni-Cd) Batteries
- Camera Batteries
- Mercury Thermostats, Thermometers
- 1lb. Single Use Propane Cylinders

What NOT to Bring

- Fluorescent Bulbs
- Motor Oil & Antifreeze
- Auto Batteries & Tires
- 20lb. Propane Tanks
- Empty Aerosol Cans
- Alkaline Batteries
- Smoke Detectors
- Ammunition
- Fireworks
- Explosives
- Pharmaceutic
- Medical Wastes
- PCB Capacitors
- Radioactive Materials
- Unknown Gases
- Controlled Substances
- Pathological Material

*Take to your local recycling center ***

Put in garbage

Call the Police Department

*Use a take-back facility,
go to www.hrra.org for info*

Email: info@hrra.org

*** Note, not all local recycling centers will accept material.
For more information on disposal options, visit www.hrra.org*

Event is facilitated by the Housatonic Resources Recovery Authority
(HRRR) www.HRRR.org email: Info@HRRR.org

- No smoking on site.
- You must be a resident of the HRRR region.
- Remember to please remain in your vehicle at all times.

WARNING: LITHIUM BATTERIES are DANGEROUS. They cause significant fires on waste collection trucks and at recycling facilities. **NEVER** place in your trash or recycling. Bring to a drop-off location.
Learn more at www.HRRR.org