



(photo submitted by Anne Holland)

December 4, 2025
Sterling Woods II – Master Association
Monthly Newsletter
Website: www.sterlingwoods2.org

Dear Unit Owners:

On behalf of the Master Board and REI, we wish you all Happy Holidays and a Happy and Healthy New Year in 2026!



As you know, the association recently held the Annual Owners Meeting for ratification of the proposed 2026 budget. After board presentation, and a question and answer session, with the owners that were present, the proposed 2026 budget was unanimously approved. As a result, there will be a 3.8% increase in common charges next year. The 2026 approved budget is attached.

Coupon books will be mailed to all Unit Owners in the near future. We anticipate their arrival before January 1st. Please do not mail in your January payment until your coupon book has been received. Unlike years past, late fees will not be waived in January since you will receive the new coupon book early enough to make your January payment on time.

Please be reminded that if you pay your common charges through First Citizens Bank, you will have to go to their website and adjust the amount you authorize to be paid each month. It will not be updated automatically by First Citizens Bank. If you set up automatic payments through your own bank, you will have to adjust the amount they pay the association each month.

If you pay through First Citizens Bank, or online through your own bank, you need to change the amount you pay starting in January, the new common charge rate per model style (per month) in 2026 is as follows:

<u>Model Style</u>	<u>2026 Common Charge Monthly Rate</u>
Acorn - you paid \$455 in 2025, and your 2026 monthly common charge rate is:	\$472
Beechnut - you paid \$528 in 2025, and your 2026 monthly common charge rate is:	\$548
Chestnut - you paid \$562 in 2025, and your 2026 monthly common charge rate is:	\$584
Dogwood - you paid \$669 in 2025, and your 2026 monthly common charge rate is:	\$694
Birches - you paid \$669 in 2025, and your 2026 monthly common charge rate is:	\$694
Hickory - you paid \$575 in 2025, and your 2026 monthly common charge rate is:	\$596
Juniper - you paid \$528 in 2025, and your 2026 monthly common charge rate is:	\$548



[Important Information Regarding Snow Removal](#)

Snowstorm Parking Reminder: The snow removal contractor 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 contractor to clean your driveway. This actually hinders the snow removal effort and is a violation of association rules.

The snow removal contractor provides 24/7 dispatch service during snow and ice storms. Their dispatcher is available to REI for dealing with any issues. If you have any concerns during or following a snowstorm, please contact Kim Murray. The snow removal contractor is not permitted to take directions from unit owners.

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 contractor 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.

[Hot Water Heater Reminder & Form Verifying Compliance to Water Related Maintenance Standards](#)

As many of you are aware, early in 2024 each Unit Owner had to fill out a form verifying they were in compliance with the water related maintenance standards (found in the Rules & Regulations) – this was a requirement from the Association's insurance carrier. **Note for new owners: if you did not fill out this form, please contact Kim Murray from REI to discuss this.**

We would like to remind you of the rule regarding hot water heaters (see below). Your hot water heater needs to be replaced before it is eight years past the installation date or before the date at which the warranty expires, whichever is later.

Please check when your hot water heater needs to be replaced. REI will also be sending reminders to unit owners when it is time to replace their hot water heater. There are many owners who have to replace their hot water heater in 2026 so please check to see when you need to replace your hot water heater. Remember to have your contractor obtain a building permit and provide the permit and Certificate of Approval from the city to REI. You will also need to provide the date of installation of your new hot water heater and the warranty expiration date. Please note if you do not replace your hot water heater when it is due to be replaced, you will be invited to a hearing and can be fined each day until the hot water heater is replaced.

**From the Rules & Regulations: EXHIBIT A
MAINTENANCE, REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT STANDARDS**

1. Hot Water Heaters. All Unit Owners must replace their water heaters either A) BEFORE they are eight years past the installation date OR B) BEFORE the date at which the warranty expires, *whichever is later*. Replacement of tankless heaters shall be made either A) BEFORE they are sixteen years past the installation date OR B) BEFORE the date at which the warranty expires, whichever is later.

The date of installation, water heater type, and warranty expiration date of your water heater must be provided to management by March 31, 2024. This information must subsequently be provided whenever a new water heater is installed. On or before March 31, 2024, all water heaters (tank or tankless) must be supplemented with a leak detection and automatic water shutoff system. Battery-only powered leak detection and automatic water shutoff systems are not acceptable. Unit owners are required to obtain a building permit from the City of Danbury prior to installation of the leak detection and automatic water shutoff system and must provide to management a copy of the building permit and Certificate of Acceptance issued by the City of Danbury after installation is complete.

Unit owners who already have a leak detection and automatic water shutoff system installed must provide to management an invoice for installation of the system or allow for an inspection to verify compliance with this maintenance standard.

Reminder: Unit Owners are required to obtain a building permit and Certificate of Approval from the City of Danbury when replacing their hot water heater/HVAC and this documentation must be provided to management.

Vehicle 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, vehicle license number and the state the vehicle is registered in. Please note - landlords are responsible for submitting this information on behalf of their tenants.



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. 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 will be allowed holiday decorations up to six feet in front of their single-family homes.



Dumpster for Christmas Tree Disposal

The association is once again offering Christmas tree disposal services for all residents. A dumpster will be placed in the parking area at the top of Revere Road (across the street from the clubhouse). The dumpster will be dropped off on January 2nd and picked up on January 12th. If the dumpster is full before January 12th, it will be removed sooner. Please understand that no artificial Christmas trees will be accepted for disposal. Your trees, free of all decorations, will be welcome and accepted at the disposal site. **Please do not leave your Christmas tree next to the dumpster.**

Holiday Decorations

The board appreciates the donation of time and work from the following unit owners: Julia Brzezinska and Maureen & Tom Dunkerton. We thank them for putting up the decorations at the entranceway to Sterling Woods and inside and outside of our clubhouse.

Incident on Cypress Drive in November

On November 20th, an unlocked car was broken into on Cypress Drive and some personal items were stolen. The Unit Owner contacted the police. The Danbury police have previously described this type of activity as theft by convenience and advise everyone to lock their cars. If you see anything suspicious in the community, please contact the City of Danbury Police Department and inform REI.

Gutter Cleaning

All gutters have been cleaned in the community.

Garbage Rule Reminders

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

Your garbage can and recycling bin can be placed at curbside for pickup either after dark on the night before pickup, or on the same day as pickup. All refuse containers must be removed and brought inside your unit the same day as the pickup. No garbage container shall be stored outside a unit.



The December Landscaping Report and the Landscaping Year-End Report are attached.

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 visitors' parking lot. This has become an issue on many streets in the community lately as residents are parking in the visitor parking lot. This is not allowed. During the first snowstorm of the year, there were a few visitor parking lots that were full with residents' cars – the snow vendor uses these areas to temporarily put snow until the snow can be moved. Regardless of the weather, please do not park in the visitor parking spaces. Your cars should be parked in your driveway and in your garage.



2026 Board Meeting Dates & Owners Meeting Date

Board meetings are normally held on the third Wednesday of the month at 6:30 PM. The board meetings are being held in person at the Platinum Club clubhouse or via conference call. Information is provided in the newsletters each month letting you know the call-in information for the following month's meeting.

In 2026, the November board meeting date has been changed to Wednesday, November 11th. The December Owners Meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 2nd. There will be no Board meeting held in December.

January Board Meeting

The next Master board meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 21st at 6:30 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 173 585 329#. 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. The board meeting agenda will be posted to the website prior to the meeting.

Some routine reminders...

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

Receiving correspondence via e-mail saves the Association money

Currently, there are 333 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.

Please remove decorations that are out of season - such as pumpkins and potted plants that have died off for the year. If the pot is a large ornamental, you can clean it of dead plants and leave it where it is for the winter. Please properly store smaller pots inside your Unit.

If we can be of assistance, please let us know. Kim's hours are approximately 7:30 AM until 2:30 PM Monday to Friday. Her email address is kmurray@rei-pm.net and she can be reached at 203-744-8400 ext. 153. If you have an emergency, you can call 203-744-8400 and dial zero.

Sincerely,



Alan V. Wunsch
Branch President
REI Property & Asset Management

Sincerely,

Kim Murray

Kim Murray
Property Manager
REI Property & Asset Management

Attachments

Sterling Woods – 2026 Approved Operating Budget

Sterling Woods Master Association - 2026 Approved Operating Budget	
DESCRIPTION	APPROVED
	2026 BUDGET
INCOME	
Common Charges	\$2,427,155
Clubhouse Income	5,300
Late Charges & Fines	5,100
Miscellaneous Income	380
TOTAL INCOME	2,437,935
ADMIN. EXPENSE	
Pool payroll	7,730
Misc. Administration	4,700
Legal	1,100
Accounting	4,400
Land Taxes	1,610
Insurance	396,250
Management	116,370
TOTAL ADMIN. EXPENSE	532,160
UTILITIES	
Water/Sewer	98,490
Electricity	2,720
Recreation Utilities	17,240
Trash/Recycling	71,740
TOTAL UTILITIES	190,190
COMMON AREA EXPENSES	
Landscaping	196,500
Tree Maintenance - Contracted	79,560
Snow Removal	252,220
Recreational Bldg Upkeep	19,530
Pool Expense	6,730
Roads/Walks/Paving	16,000
Deck Staining/Pressure Washing	70,670
Major Painting Projects	22,160
Entrance Road Maintenance	18,700
General Maintenance	125,000
Exterminating	8,000
Lawn & Shrub Maintenance-Non Contracted	65,940
Tree Maintenance - Non-Contracted	13,110
TOTAL COMMON EXPENSES	894,120
RESERVE TRANSFER	821,337
TOTAL EXPENSES	2,437,807
PROJECTED SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	128

Sterling Woods – 2026 Approved Reserve Budget

Sterling Woods Master Association - 2026 Approved Reserve Budget	
DESCRIPTION	APPROVED 2026 BUDGET
INCOME	
Capital Contribution In	21,000
Reserve Transfer In	821,337
Interest Income	38,500
TOTAL INCOME	880,837
ADMIN. EXPENSE	
Corporate Taxes	16,500
TOTAL ADMIN. EXPENSE	16,500
CAPITAL PROJECTS	
Pine Tree Removal Project	
Pre Cast Stoop Replacement	546,000
Sewer Pipe replacement	Complete
Roof Replacement	Complete
Tree Restoration	35,000
Concrete Replacements	2,000
Drainage	2,000
Storm Damaged Tree Removal	2,000
Access Road Replacement	Complete
Reserve Study	6,000
TOTAL CAPITAL PROJECTS	593,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	609,500
PROJECTED SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	271,337

LANDSCAPE REPORT DECEMBER 2025

The Landscape Committee held its last meeting of the season on November 13, 2025. Even though our meetings have concluded for 2025, the Landscape Committee keeps in contact with our members and vendors throughout the year about the concerns of our unit owners. We will begin our meetings for the new season in mid-April.

Gonzales Landscaping continues leaf blowing and policing of trash. Their contract provides us with services until mid-December and after that our snow vendor takes over the policing of trash.

Bartlett work will commence on the 2026 contract in the winter months (Dec.-Feb) and the pear trees on the left side of SWII (Heartwood Lane, Logging Trail Road, Silversmith Drive and Cypress Drive) will be pruned. Also, the maple trees in these villages will be pruned. Additional tree work outside of the contract includes pruning of 8 maple trees near the SWII clubhouse and pruning of tree branches behind 1801 and 1802 Cypress Drive.

Lawn Doctor will begin its 2026 lawn services either late April or early May. The application is a 90 day fertilizer, crabgrass control and broadleaf weed control. In addition, gypsum (leaches out salt left from snow piles) will be applied to center islands of the main driveway and the lawn areas of the units that have stairs (these units have smaller lawn areas where snow can be piled, thereby, leaving more salt residue on the lawns. Lawn Doctor coordinates their work with Gonzales so any spring reseeding work is not compromised with any weed lawn applications that could harm the newly planted grass seed. This could cause a delay in the first lawn application. Also, all applications depend on weather related issues.

LANDSCAPE REPORT YEAR-END 2025

The Landscape Committee Members - Claire Hines, Elissa Silvio, Maureen Dunkerton, Mary Beth Byrnes, Kathy Grosse, and Julia Brzezinska.

Meetings took place from mid-April to mid-November.

The Landscape Committee's function is to make recommendations to the Master Board and follow up on all residents' concerns and take corrective measures as needed. Minimizing costs without compromising essential services is our objective.

We have four vendors maintaining landscaping services: Gonzales Landscaping, Lawn Doctor, Bartlett Tree Company and Murad Tree and Landscaping.

In late fall, Gonzalez Landscaping cuts down perennials such as day lilies, sedum and hostas and ornaments grasses along the entrance way. Regular trimming of shrubs is done twice a year (June and September). A light trimming is done of any spent perennials and any ornamental grasses including any winter damaged branches. Every spring, mulch is added to all the villages. However, mulch removal and replacement are done every two years, that is, two villages a year. In 2025, mulch removal and replacement was done on Pinnacle Way (the Summit), Cypress Drive (the Willows) and the Sterling Woods II Platinum Club House. In 2026, mulch removal will be done on Heartwood Lane (The Oaks), Bradford Drive (the Elms) and the Sterling Woods entranceway. This work is done to prevent arterial fungus (black spots) from adhering to the siding on the houses. Also edging of shrub beds and tree mounds, weeding, removing dead shrubs and planting new ones, reseeding, aeration, over seeding, blowing leaves and policing the grounds for trash are performed by Gonzales Landscaping.

This year, we replaced 263 shrubs with 35 warranties. Drought conditions in 2025 contributed to the increase in shrub replacements. Last year, we replaced 170 shrubs, with 10 warranties. In 2023, we replaced 349 shrubs with 36 warranties.

Lawn Doctor does five lawn applications a year from April to October. We are continuing to apply gypsum during the first lawn application to the Beechnut and Acorn units' lawns. These units have exceptionally small lawn areas and, in the past, have not responded well to reseeding work. Gypsum works as a leeching agent to remove salt from lawns as a result of the snow mounds on the lawns.

In 2025, 11 trees were removed and only 3 were replaced. Six trees were in back of units. However, 24 trees (wild growing trees) from the backs of Hancock units were removed because the trees were encroaching on the lawn areas. In addition, 38 trees in the back of the Revere units were removed because the trees were hosts to the spotted lantern flies (these insects laid their eggs on these trees). Last year, 24 trees were removed due to storm damage and other factors. Only 2 were replaced. In 2023, 25 trees were removed and 4 were replaced.