



## CEDAR HOLLOW SUMMER NEWS 2013

**We hope everyone reads this newsletter as it contains important information.**

**OUR CONDO FEES WILL BE GOING UP IN NOVEMBER DUE TO SEVERAL MAJOR COST INCREASES.** Your board has tried to keep everyone informed of the maintenance projects that we are addressing currently and we all know there are many, many more on the list. We also have tried to keep the common fees steady and still pay the ever increasing bills. However, we now must face some rather large increases in insurance and utilities and all vendors have added energy costs to say nothing of the increase in the goods they deliver. We have **no control over these increases** and we cannot absorb the increases by taking the money from the many deferred maintenance projects. If you have any concerns or questions we want to hear from you. We will post a meeting agenda item to hear your input on the increase in fees as soon as we have all the details so watch the mailboxes and bulletin board for a future announcement. Of course you are welcome at all board meetings.

We all DO have some control over issues that involve the care of the property and items that play a part in further increased cost of running Cedar Hollow. Anyone who would like to see a list of our major property projects is welcome to ask. We need to be preparing the budget now so this is the time to volunteer and be part of the process.

**INSURANCE:** A 33% increase in this next fiscal year alone. We need to keep our claim history down wherever possible. This has an impact on our cost. Of course there are necessary claims but anything we can do to keep the cost and frequency of claims plays a big part in our increases. There are not many insurance companies that insure condos and only a very few that will touch ones with aluminum wiring built in the 1970's. In other words we don't have much choice in who insures us. Seeing that you take care of your unit and all the working parts reduces both your personal claims and our fees.

**WATER:** MDC (our water company) has hit all towns hard with their state wide reconstruction projects. We absorbed the increase this year but it continues to grow as it is a long term assessment and we cannot absorb in the current budget going forward. Each owner can watch the amount of water used; especially for leaky fixtures in your units, toilets that run, spigots that leak, hoses left on, etc. This can really add up when multiplied by 80 units. Any hot water heater beyond its warranty period needs to be replaced or it runs the risk of failing and costing both the unit owner and the Association if there is a claim. Fixtures that have leaks or drips can become a major expense and a constantly running toilet wastes a very large amount of water as does a dripping faucet. A leaking toilet caused a large claim just this past year. Each time there is a claim our premiums increase as do the premiums on your own insurance policies if the claim is related to damages inside your unit.

**UTILITIES:** The electrical company has increased their rates as you have noticed in your own units. One way to save on your personal bill is to see that your furnace is serviced annually, and your furnace filters are changed several times a year. If you have pets it should be more often. Your dryer needs to be cleaned and serviced and the dryer vent hose leading to the outside brought up to standard and cleaned to run efficiently. This will cut down on your electric bill. More importantly this will also prevent possible fires, service calls and insurance claims. Fireplaces are required to be inspected every two years for possible fire hazards and leaks or deterioration of the original construction.

**AIR CONDITIONERS:** These are a major budget item. The Association pays the entire cost of replacement **only** for the original (1973-74) A/C units. In all other cases, the Association only pays for the outside condenser. The unit owner is responsible for all other costs. All coils and pipes in the unit are at the unit owner's expense including the costs of getting to the pipes if you have a finished basement. This year we provided and asked for

everyone to cover their AC to assist in keeping the winter debris at a minimum. The proper type of cover was purchased as heavy sealed tarps will cause even more damage. We would like everyone to please take care of their own covers and store for future use. Please do not leave it lying out on your deck all summer. We will not be replacing covers any time soon. If you take a hose and gently spray the debris and grass off the unit it also helps the A/C to be more efficient and lowers your electrical costs. If you have a physical reason and need help I am sure neighbors would be happy to assist you.

**DECK MAINTENANCE:** We would love to paint everyone's deck each year but the cost for that has risen from \$250 per deck to well over \$600. Deck life can be extended if each owner would:

- Shovel the heavy snow off in the winter.
- Keep it swept and clear of leaves and seasonal debris. Piles next to your doors and unit are homes for rodents, ants and other vermin and moisture that rots your door frame.
- Don't use for storage of heavy items, rugs or anything that keeps air from circulating which causes the wood to rot.
- We do provide paint for anyone willing to paint their own deck. Thank you to everyone who has taken advantage of this.

**LANDSCAPING:** Another large expense is the landscaping. This is an on-going area to be on top of both for the board volunteers as well as the management company. We all need to do our part in keeping the animal waste picked up in the yards and all the toys, decorations and furniture out of the mowing path of the vendor. When the time comes to renew contracts we want them to consider us problem-free so we can avoid price increases on the new contract. If they have to step through dog feces and weed wack around personal items improperly stored between decks they will not be willing to maintain our current pricing.

Please be aware that every time we have a call into our management company that requires a work order it is a cost to the Association. Many are expected and necessary but we do hate to pay \$75 to change a light bulb on someone's porch. Again, if you have a physical need for help try asking a neighbor.

**POOL INFORMATION:** This is another large budget item adding to the cost of water and electricity. You had a team of four volunteers running the pool this year and each year we say it is our last. We will be looking for a company that we can pay to assist in handling some of this care next year which will be another added budget item but we will still need volunteers for day to day operation.

Just a reminder, please see that you and your family know the pool rules and please clean up after using the area. Please limit guests when the area is heavily used during heat waves. Seasonal pool closing date will be posted.

**OTHER REMINDERS:**

- Bird feeders and any open food containers can attract rodents and even bears.
- Any item, large or small that collects rain water is a breeding ground for mosquitoes.
- If you see a light bulb out in one of the lamp fixtures please contact Elite (or send us an email at [cedarhollowcondos@gmail.com](mailto:cedarhollowcondos@gmail.com)) with the lamp number. Each lamp post has been numbered at about eye level. A Board member will replace the bulb. If it turns out to not be the bulb we will have an electrician take a look at it.

If each of us does our part in owning and caring for our own homes, all the little things will add up to a better community where we can keep the cost of day to day expenses down and meet the challenges of the rising costs which we cannot control. Our complex is aging and we have major issues to address with our limited common fees.

IF YOU HAVE AN IDEA TO IMPROVE OUR COMMUNITY LET THE BOARD KNOW

“IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING”