



Newsletter: August, 2022

Five topics are addressed in this edition of the newsletter: preventing water damage to your unit, a summary of recent road and driveway work, the upcoming board election, one other opportunity to volunteer, and a happy addition to the Waterway Pines grounds.

Water, water, everywhere: not what you want to come home to.

Water damage from broken pipes or hoses, malfunctioning appliances, and foundation or floor leaks can be devastating. Yes, we all carry condo owners' insurance, and yes, the association is also insured against damage to our buildings. However, that means very little when it's YOUR home and YOUR possessions that get wet. Moreover, the aftermath of flooding, or even of a small amount of water leaking into the walls or under the floor, can bring mold , which poses not only a danger to our belongings, but also to our health.

TAKE PREVENTIVE STEPS TO SAVE YOURSELVES HEARTACHE.

1. First, there was an association-wide project three years ago that tagged all the shutoff valves at every condo. Look for the tags in your lower level that show you where those valves are located. If you can't find them, ask a board member or neighbor for help.

Always shut off the outside water in the winter. The pipes for the faucets at the front and back of your unit can be vulnerable to a Michigan polar vortex: the extreme cold simply cracks the pipe, allowing water into the walls. Avoid this by turning off the outside valve and draining the faucet.

Take seriously the advice to shut off water to your entire unit when you are gone. Certainly do this if you spend significant parts of the year elsewhere. Consider doing it for short term overnight absences, as well. The association has had two major instances of water damage this year. In one, the co-owner was absent only for part of a day; in the other, no one had been in the unit for several days. When you return from an extended absence, and turn your water back on, the faucets and toilets may spit and gurgle a bit—not to worry. That's better than a flood.

2. Although everyone does it—DON'T run your dishwasher or washing machine when you are out of the house. If you are present when a leak develops, you can take steps to minimize damage.
3. Do you have a plumber coming to fix a leaky faucet or running toilet? Ask them to check the shut-off valves and connecting lines to your faucets and toilets, just to see if they are in good condition. It isn't unreasonable to replace old valves with new ones. After all, our buildings are all around 20 years old, and we should expect wear and tear. It is much cheaper to replace parts that are aging than to rip out your flooring and drywall.



4. At the same time you check toilets and indoor faucets, you can check the hoses to your washing machine. This is especially important if you don't run the machine regularly (because you spend a lot of time somewhere else). Those hoses can dry out and crack. Replacing them is inexpensive, and easy if you are handy or know someone who is.
5. Take a look at your hot water heater, too. How old is it? Most commercial websites say that a water heater should last 10-12 years. Is yours older? Rather than patting yourself on the back because of its longevity, consider replacing it before it fails. Technology is improving all the time, and you may find that a new appliance actually runs more efficiently. You might even get it on sale.
6. If you see a crack in your foundation or floor, or if you suspect that something isn't right with regard to the water systems in your unit, report it. Getting help before disaster strikes is good prevention.
7. Finally, if all of this has made you slightly paranoid, there is new technology that can alert you to a water problem. Here are a couple of links:

<https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/reviews/the-best-smart-leak-detector/>

<https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/blog/smart-gadgets-save-homes-from-water-leaks/>

Recent driveway/road work

During the week of July 25,

- Seven driveways and one parking pad were replaced.
- Three condos had repairs made where the driveway meets the entrance sidewalk with a small cutout and repaving.
- Ten condos had notable cracks filled.

All work was performed on schedule and with great communications with our vendor, MSR.

Yet to be done:

1. Striping on the parking pad in the northwest part of the association
2. Repair of some sprinkler heads inadvertently buried by the pavers
3. Seal coating of the nine driveways replaced in 2021

MSR provided clear and timely communication and our Waterway Pines residents were very cooperative during the work. Thanks to everyone.



Board of directors election in October: now is the time to volunteer

One board position is open, beginning in January 2023.

There are many reasons to serve on the board: you will participate in making policies and decisions that affect us all: modification requests, snow plowing, lawn care, insurance providers, and many others. You will develop a better awareness of what's happening in the community. You will serve your neighbors by shouldering some of the burden of maintaining our homes—the very burdens you gave up by joining a condo association in the first place. You will help to maintain the property value of your own home. You will make new friends. You will help to shape the nature of this community.

Board members are elected for a three-year term. Yes, it is work, but you would be joining a supportive team. Two current board members are snowbirds: Zoom has made long-distance board work possible.

Here is a link to the board application:

<http://wwpines.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Board-Application.pdf>

If you have questions, ask a current or former board member to talk with you.

Fall landscape workday: can you help? (from Gerry Stoneburner)

A morning work day is scheduled for Saturday, September 3, 2022, beginning at 9 am. We will be working to improve the James Street entrance landscaping and some on the Lakewood entrance. Meet at the James Street entrance. Bring rakes, shovels, trucks, pruners, good backs, wheel-barrows, gloves, etc... and work as little or as long as you can but not longer than noon. Thanks, Gerry

Finally, look for a couple of benches placed on the property. A co-owner has offered to purchase two lightweight benches that can be moved by the mowers, and stored in the winter. If you would like to contribute to this enhancement of the public spaces at Waterway Pines, please contact Gerry Stoneburner at gnks905@gmail.com.