

Insurance & Risk Management Suggestions for Owners

Property Insurance

1. Understand your associations rules regarding water shut off. If you are going to leave your unit for more than 72 hours shut off the water to the unit. Once or twice a year exercise the unit's water shut off valve.
2. If you have a home watch ensure water shut off verification is a service they provide.
3. Replace your water heater after 10 years to prevent water leaks. Understand that insurance does not cover maintenance or a lack thereof in an owners unit.
4. Have your AC serviced at least once a year and have the drain lines cleared out.
5. Use nylon metal braded lines for your washer, toilet and any water service. In Florida we have hard water along with the heat which diminishes the useful life of plastic water lines. These are the lines behind your toilet and under your sink and going to the washing machine.
6. Replace your toilet seals every 10 years including the wax rings.
7. If you have hurricane protection check your insurance policy for any requirement that they be installed before a storm. Many storms materialize in 3-4 days so being early to install is always the best option. Do not rely on outside contractors or the association for this service.
8. Renters and their property are not covered under your policy. They should have their own policy.
9. If you are leaving for an extended period of time (usually defined as over 30 days) determine if any vacancy provisions are in your policy(s). Some carriers will restrict coverage if you are not in your unit for a certain period of time.
10. Ensure you have mold, water/sewer back up coverages since these are endorsements.
11. Understand that your board can change insurance requirements from Florida statues and it's your responsibility to ask about the changes and comply. Ask your manager about any changes that have been filed. Your entitled to a copy of all the association documents and the rules and regulations.

This is a general summary of insurance tips and does not replace or modify your association documents and/or policy's. Owners bear the responsibility to review the associations documents and rules and regulations. In the event of a conflict the association documents, polices along with your units policies take precedence.

Liability Insurance

1. If you create damage to another owners unit be a good neighbor and offer to cover their deductible. If not you could end up in small claims court.
2. Ensure your policy is rated for your occupancy correctly. Insurance carriers need to know if you are part time, seasonal or full time and if you rent. If your residency changes contact your agent. If your policy is not rated correctly for your occupancy is not correct it could be considered a reason to deny a claim or insurance fraud?
3. If you rent for one night it's no different than 30 nights you're a landlord. Ensure you have coverage for renters or they have their own insurance with you as an additional insured.
4. Purchase loss assessment coverage for the full limit and ask if more is available.
5. Remember if you sue the association it's your dollars that will be used to defend a suit.
6. Understand the association rules for rentals and use of common areas.
7. If you use a contractor ask for an insurance certificate and verify they are licensed.

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