

Tips & Reminders



Monthly Assessments

Your monthly assessment covers the following costs:

- Required Grass cutting
- Required sprinkling system water and maintenance of sprinkler controls
- Required fertilizing and grub control Rodent control when necessary
- Required trimming/replacement of original shrubs Required edging of common sidewalks
- Required gutter cleaning where needed
- Maintenance of pond and waterfall (treatment, electric)
- Grounds maintenance of common areas (waterfall, walking paths)
- Monthly administrative and management costs for 1st American Management company
- Legal fees for resident issues
- Property taxes for common areas
- Required snow removal
- Capital reserves fund for community repairs (seal driveways, cedar painting, etc.)
- Property insurance for common areas

Battery Replacement. There are some household batteries to replace as needed. Your garage door keypad, your furnace thermostat, smoke alarm sensors (refer to your manual for replacing the batteries). For the homeowners that have a plug-in Carbon Monoxide detector, a power outage will cause a weak or dead battery to chirp until removed or replaced with a fresh battery.

Birds Nesting in Dryer and Exhaust Vents. Check your dryer and exhaust vents! Homeowners have reported birds nesting in these vents.

The birds are somehow opening the louvers to get in and make nests. If you see a lot of bird droppings directly under your vents, you can be pretty sure that they are making nests. You can buy vent covers that will prevent birds from entering at your local home improvement store.

After 10 years, most dryer vents will have an accumulation of lint in the exhaust pipe if no effort was made to clean it. Dryer vents can become completely blocked. You should clean the lint trap after every usage of the dryer. It is also highly recommended that you have the vent system cleaned every 3 years. This is an extreme fire hazard. Every homeowner should be aware that they HAVE to get the vent cleaned.

Winter Protection of Outside Water Valves. If you are going to be away from home for more than a day or two, you should turn off your water to prevent freezing pipes. Even if you leave your heat on, the power can go off for an extended period of time and a substantial amount of damage can occur if a frozen pipe bursts, not only to your home, but to your attached neighbor's.

Don't forget to disconnect your hoses from the outside of your homes (failure to do so can cause pipes to burst over the winter), and to remove pots and decorations from porches to permit snow removal.

Grilling. If you are grilling near your home, please be sure the grill is a good distance away from the siding. If it's too close, the siding will melt.

HD Antenna. Ken Heinemann, a Briar Cove homeowner, did some research and found an affordable antenna (around \$60.00) that can receive Chicago channels. It's a Multi-Directional HDTV UHF Antenna and it is designed to work in locations where the transmitters for digital stations are spread apart. It utilizes a bowtie design that provides a strong gain across the entire UHF spectrum (channels 14-69). It functions incredibly well in areas where flexible aiming is required and features a weatherproof construction that resists extreme wind loading. Ken purchased his from <http://www.mcmelectronics.com/> (part number DB4). You may be able to find it a little cheaper by doing a web search for "DB4". You can also

purchase a Universal J Mount for wall or roof mounting for under \$20.00. For more information, please feel free to contact Ken at Kheinemann@sbcglobal.net. Please remember, however, that any antenna needs to be placed on the rear roof below the ridge line of any residence, and you must receive approval from the Architectural Review Committee before installation.

Ice Dams. See information below under "Water Spots/Ice Dams.

Iron in Sewers. Some preventative maintenance for those of you with basements: If you have a problem with iron build-up in your sump pump, every spring and fall you should wash out your sump pump with a strong spray of water to dislodge all the iron. You can also use Iron Out in the pumps once a month. The last thing you need is for the pipes to be completely closed by iron deposits. If this does happen, it is a homeowner expense, not an Association expense.

Moles. If you see little mounds of dirt in your lawn (created by those nasty little moles), please contact Peter immediately! We apply bait, but the moles have to consume the bait in order for the poison to work. For the bait to be effective, the mounds need to be left undisturbed. (The product applied is Talpid. The following link provides additional information: www.talpid.com Potted Plants/Trees. When planning flowers or potted trees for your front porch please be careful not to obstruct access to the front door or obscure your house numbers.

Shutters. See Exterior Modification Requests.

Solicitors. When strangers are knocking on your door soliciting their goods, please remember to ask for identification and don't let the person in. If they get belligerent or actually try to open your door if you do not answer, please call the police right away. Soliciting is allowed in both Dyer and Schererville with the proper permits issued by the respective towns. The solicitors permit must be carried by the solicitor and shown upon request. If the solicitor does not have a permit, ask them to leave and

report the situation to the police. For further information, please contact the respective towns.

Water Spots/Ice Dams. Water spots are possibly due to ice dams where the freeze cycle lifts shingles and melted snow/ice makes its path. A roofer is the right person to inspect and repair any damage; damage related to ice dams is not covered by warranty and would be at the homeowner's expense. Once the outside is taken care of, and depending on the size of the stain, you might only need to touch the spot up with paint. Ask the roofer if they feel that the insulation might be saturated and need replacement. The roofing subcontractor used by Olthof is Eenigenburg Roofing (219-365-8879). The same homeowner who had her window replaced said that Eenigenburg came out the same day and fixed her problem for a very reasonable charge. 1st American Management also recommends Korellis Roofing in Hammond (219-844-1400).

Window Warranty. One of our homeowners had moisture between the panes in one of her windows. She called Olthof and found out that there is a lifetime warranty on the replacement glass, but it does not cover installation. The lower windows can be removed and re-installed easily, but the upper ones are more difficult and likely require an expert. Her lower window replacement was completely free of charge and she had the option of picking it up at Kirsch in Frankfort or directly from the factory from Silverline in Lansing. If you are having a problem with your windows, you should call Shawn at Kirsch Builders (who originally installed our windows). His number is 815-469-3200. Apparently you need to know your lot number when you call. If you don't know it, you can call Becki at Olthof first at 219-558-8080, ext. 316. Thank you to the homeowner for sharing this info!

Damaged Mailboxes. The Association will not absorb the cost for the repair of damaged mailboxes. If your mailbox cluster is damaged, you will need to get together with your neighbor and arrange for the repair. The replacement mailbox must remain uniform. Peter Bylen has recommended

two contractors that would be able to replace or repair mailboxes: 1st American Management's maintenance department (800-990-3536 extension 309, or use the contact link at <http://www.1stpropertymanagers.com/>); or CustomCrafters in Lowell IN. Call Tim Post at 219 712 1555 ...email ccremodeling@aol.com . The costs are comparable and both contractors are fully insured.

Exterior Modifications. With spring comes the focus on the outdoors and landscaping modifications. Don't forget to use the Exterior Modification Request form for all exterior modifications. You can find the form on this Website. After completing the form, submit it to Peter Bylen either by mail (1st American Management Company, 3408 Enterprise Avenue, Valparaiso, IN 46383-6953, by e-mail or by fax (219-465-6014). Peter will then forward the request to the Architectural Review Committee, who will review the request at their next monthly meeting. You will receive their decision within a few days, but you must wait to receive the official approval from Peter by mail before you can begin the work, and then you must place the approval certificate in your front window while the work is being done.

Fire Hydrants. If you notice that a fire hydrant in your area is obscured or covered when the snow is plowed, please advise Peter Bylen immediately at 800-990-3536, ext. 310.

Ground Cover. The only approved ground cover for our planting areas around our homes is cedar mulch. Rubber mulch is not approved and is considered to have potential environmental problems as well as future disposal problems.

Home Businesses in Briar Cove. Article XI, pages 14-15 of the Declaration, states "Home offices which do not increase traffic within the property shall be considered residential uses and related purposes if the

Residential Unit is occupied as a residence by the persons using it as a home office." The towns of Schererville and Dyer also have rules regarding home businesses. Increased traffic and/or clients coming to ones home impacts insurance and raises liability concerns. It is recognized that this issue can be somewhat sensitive, however, the Declaration must be adhered to.

Pets. The board has received many complaints by homeowners who do not have pets, yet have to pick up after their neighbors' pets. Please be respectful of lawns and neighbors' property when walking your pets. Pursuant to Article XI, Section 6 of the Declaration, "An owner may not keep, raise or breed any animals, livestock or poultry in or on a Residential Unit, provided, however that two (2) pets only shall be allowed to be kept in or on a Residential Unit, subject to the Rules and Regulations of the Association." The Rules and Regulations also provide that the Owner is required to keep their pet(s) on a leash at all times and pick up after their pets.

Salt. Use only calcium chloride salt for melting ice, it's the safest for asphalt/cement. Please be sure to read the packaging label, as some products claim to be less harmful than others, and note that the instructions state to clean the slush before it refreezes.

Siding. The Association is not responsible for repairing or replacing siding. Should you need any siding replaced, please contact Peter Bylen for vendor names. If your siding is damaged by the lawn maintenance crew, you should contact Peter immediately so the vendor can be notified.

Signs. See Amendments and Resolutions Page.

Sprinkler Notices. Watch for the irrigation notices in the mail to either turn on or turn off the valve inside your home. You will be asked to turn on the sprinkler valve in the spring or turn off the sprinkler valve in the fall. If assistance is required, you can call 1st American Management for assistance.

Street Parking. The Schererville Police Department has advised us that vehicles should be removed from the street after two inches of snowfall to allow for city snow removal. Possible tickets and/or towing may result

Trash/Recycle Bins. Please remember to secure garbage and recycled waste on garbage pick-up day. Any hazardous medical waste must be disposed of properly and not in with the regular trash. Also, please remember to bring in your garbage cans and recycle bins after they have been emptied, and remember to bring in your delivered newspapers daily. When these items are left for more than a day, a thief may think you are not home. If you are going to be away from home for more than a day or two, a good idea is to arrange for a neighbor to bring these things in for you, or at least to the top of your driveway or front door.