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March 2024

myriverwoods.org

BOARD CORNER

Keeping the Association Looking Good for Everyone

River Woods' Declaration of Covenants makes it clear that the Association's Board of Directors has four primary functions: maintain (and if possible improve) the common grounds, replace shingles every 20 years, paint the wood exterior and trim of our houses on a regular schedule, and make sure the exterior appearance of all homes is maintained. Any change in the exterior **must** be approved in advance by the *Architectural Control Committee* (ACC), which has been delegated that authority by the Board.

The Association has not always stayed on top of enforcing this rule. For example, a number of units have installed cameras without securing ACC approval (excepting Ring-type camera/doorbells, which do not require ACC approval). A number of units have installed unapproved white storm doors without securing ACC approval. Some units have screening around their deck railings, also not approved. These violations have been noted to the owners of those units after our spring walkthroughs in the past, but only a few have complied with our requests to remedy the situation. Although the Board had noted a fine might be imposed, it hasn't done so very often, and more and more unapproved changes are occurring.

That has changed. Starting with this spring's walkthrough, owners will be notified as usual, by US mail, of their violations. If not corrected, or if a plan to correct them with an estimated completion date has not been submitted, within 30 days, homeowners will receive a courtesy notice via US mail reminding them of their violation(s) and giving them an additional 30 days to remedy them or appeal directly to the Board to give a valid reason why they should be exempted. If they don't do either of these within 30 days, a second mailed notice, with a \$50 penalty assessed to their unit, will be sent. If this is ignored for another 30 days, a third mailed notice will be sent, with a \$100 penalty, assessed. And if even this is ignored for 30 days, a fourth mailed notice, accompanied by a \$150 penalty, will be sent. Ultimately, if all these notices continue to be ignored, or the violation not remedied, these unpaid assessments will result in the units being turned over to our legal counsel for collection.

Most owners will never be faced with these notices, as well over 90% of River Woods owners abide by Association rules and regulations. But there are a few owners who have ignored those rules and willfully ignored notices by the Association to correct them.

Ideally all owners would pay their fees on time and abide by Association rules. But in the real world, there are always a few owners who choose to violate rules and refuse to correct violations. Sometimes these are new owners coming from single family dwellings where they could freely make any changes to their homes they wished, a situation that is never true in a townhouse community.

But the Covenants require us to make and enforce rules to maintain the appearance of the Association and, reluctant though we may be to do so, if penalties are the only way to make sure those rules are enforced, we will do so. Hopefully this information will motivate the few who consistently violate rules and regulations to alter their practice. Following the rules and regulations benefits everyone in the community, as it makes our townhouses and Association grounds more attractive to both homeowners and potential home buyers.

April Dates to Remember

The **Board** meets on April 16 at 5:30 in the HOA office.

The **ACC** meets on April 23 at 5:30 in the HOA office.

Spring Walkthrough to Start

The time is here for the Spring Walkthrough. If you receive a notification of a violation by US Mail, please do not be alarmed. It is simply an assessment of the items that need attention, and which are the homeowner's responsibility. If you fix the problem within 30 days, or, if more time is needed, submit a plan to the HOA office with a reasonable estimated completion date (and of course complete the repair), that will be all there is to it.

One exception: Any unit on this year's painting cycle — units 190-229 — will need to have repairs completed within 30 days of notice.

Everyone's home values are affected by a homeowner letting their unit fall to disrepair. Neighbors are not happy that they must look at a "falling apart" unit.

We realize that for some it may be financially difficult to afford to make repairs immediately. That's why we suggest making a plan that you can afford and submitting it to the Board, with a completion date, for approval.

Power Washing for Units 190-229

The power washing of units 190-229 will begin sometime in May; please do not set out plantings, furniture, decorations, etc., until you have been power washed. Both vinyl and wood sided units will be power washed. This will also bring out any wood rot that is on the unit. In order for painting to begin, rotted wood will need to be replaced correctly. Once the siding is power washed a white paint will be sprayed to indicate any wood that needs replacement. Water will need to be accessed, please have your outside faucets on and in working order.

Don't Do Doggie Doo-Doo

When spring comes to River Woods, other things come with it: tulips, lilacs, green grass ... and piles of dog defecation that owners haven't cleaned up. Doggie doo-doo creates numerous problems: odors that offend neighbors and blight the appearance of our lawns, the spreading of disease, and problems for the crew trying to cut the grass.

Cleaning up your dog's deposits is a homeowner responsibility — the River Woods crew will not clean it up. Not only is cleaning up after your dog being a good neighbor, but can save you



a lot of money. River Woods HOA fines owners who don't clean up after their dogs. The fine is \$25 for a first offense. Each additional offense increases the fine in increments of \$25 to a total of fine of \$500 for the last offense. After which you'll either need to get rid of the dog(s) or face foreclosure.

Please take a plastic baggie with you when you walk your dog and use it to clean up after the pooch does his business.

Who You Gonna Call When a Dog Runs Loose?

Don't call the River Woods office when you see a dog running around unattended, tied up outside with no one around, or left out all day or night on the deck, barking. Those are all violations of a Burnsville ordinance. Call Burnsville animal control (952-894-3647), which enforces Burnsville's animal control ordinances.

Take those Bins Back Inside

Most homeowners in River Woods bring their trash and recycling bins back inside their garages the day of collection. A few wait until the next morning. But there are a few owners — thankfully very few — who let the empty trash bins sit outside their garages for days, creating an unsightly appearance for their neighbors and visitors, including prospective buyers. And create problems plowing if there is a snowfall.

Therefore, starting April 1, the Association has instituted a new rule regarding the trash bins. If they are not removed from the common grounds by noon of the day following collection, they will be collected by the crew and brought to the HOA office. Owners can collect them there during normal working hours. If owners want the crew to return the bins, there will be a \$10 delivery charge.

If an owner occasionally has a special circumstance that prevents them from returning their trash bins to the garage — for example, if they are going to a hospital Wednesday morning for several days — please email/call the office beforehand, and we will pick up your trash bins after collection and return them at no charge when you return from the hospital.

Courtyard Maintenance Forms

For the 92 units with courtyards, we offer these maintenance and upkeep services at no charge if you fill out a Courtyard maintenance Form: mowing,

trimming, pruning, spraying, fertilizing, sidewalk shoveling and salt treatment. If you would like to sign up for courtyard maintenance this year, please download the Courtyard Maintenance Form from the Association's website and submit it to the HOA office. The deadline is April 12, 2024 to assure you get the maintenance you want. Even if you submitted a maintenance form last year, you should still submit another one this year: we need a new form each year.

Empty Your Mailboxes!

The USPS has informed us that several mailboxes have not been emptied in some time. When your mailbox fills up so much the mail deliverer cannot put more mail in the box, the postal service may retrieve the mail from the mailbox and return it to the sender.

This could cost you money. If you are assessed a penalty for a late fee or a rules violation by the Association, and don't pay the fee because you didn't know about it (not having retrieved the notice from your mailbox), you'll continue to accumulate late fees. And if you don't get the monthly statement we send to all homeowners owing fees, you might not find out about it until late fees have become substantial. If Dakota County notifies you that you have not paid sufficient real estate taxes, you'll start accumulating late fees. If the State of Minnesota sends a check to all taxpayers, as it did in 2023, you won't get it if you don't check your mail.

Empty your mailboxes regularly.

Please Update Your Email

The Association's usual method of contacting homeowners at River Woods with important information (other than statements of account and notices of penalty assessments) is email. If you haven't given the office your email, please do so. If you've changed your email, please inform the office.

Annual Meeting Set for June 18

The River Woods HOA annual meeting will be held at 6 p.m. Tuesday, June 18, 2024, at the Burnhaven library, 1101 W. County Road 42, Burnsville, MN 55306. On the ballot for 2024 will be the election of three people to the Association's Board of Directors and a proposed change to the Association's By-Laws to provide more flexibility in scheduling the Annual Meeting. The meeting will be adjourned at 7:15 p.m. as we have the meeting room available only until 7:30 p.m. Ballots will be mailed to homeowners in May.