

General Information, Maintenance & Safety Tips

SUMP PUMPS

As constructed, all units have a network of underground drains located beneath the basement floor. This network of drain pipes and the weep holes in the foundation blocks that feed these drain pipes is called the weep system. The weep system helps relieve water buildup beneath the basement floor and relieves water pressure from against the foundation walls. At the first sign of a wet or damp basement, the Association's Property Manager should be called.

In addition to the weep system, all units with below grade basements (units not located on the ravine) are equipped with a sump pump. The sump pump helps the weep system operate efficiently in heavy rains by discharging at a rapid rate the water collected in the weep drains to an outside drain line or or pit. Sump pumps that do not operate, or do not operate properly, allow water and silt to collect in the weep drains, and over a period of time the weep system may become clogged. Wet basements may be the result of a clogged weep system, and it is very expensive to unblock a clogged weep system. For this reason, Unit Owners are required to keep their sump pumps in proper working order.

Periodic inspection of the sump pump is necessary to insure that it is working properly. The following steps will help Unit Owners determine if their sump pump is working.

- 1) Listen for the sump pump operating during medium to heavy rain falls. The pump should operate periodically for short periods; just long enough to empty the sump pump pit.
- 2) If you do not hear the sump pump operating during medium to heavy rain falls, remove the sump pump pit cover and observe whether there is any water in the pit. It is normal for there to be enough water in the pit to just cover the sump pump motor. If the sump pump pit is filled to the point you cannot see the pump motor, then the sump pump may not be operating.
- 3) If you do not hear the sump pump operating during medium to heavy rain falls, and the water level in the sump pump pit is low, you can manually fill the sump pump pit with water to a point just below floor level. The sump pump should kick on and empty the pit. If this does not happen, unplug the sump pump from the electrical outlet and plug a lamp into the same outlet. If the lamp lights, meaning that the outlet is functioning properly, then the sump pump is defective and needs to be replaced. If the lamp does not light, then there is some electrical problem with the outlet, and an electrician should be called.

While weep systems are Common Elements and the responsibility of the Association, weep system repair to units caused by an inoperable sump pump is the responsibility of the Unit Owner. Sump pumps with emergency backup are available.

FLOOR DRAINS

Units are equipped according to code with a laundry room floor drain. Residents are advised to keep this floor drain unobstructed from tile, linoleum, carpet, or other floor coverings. In the event of a water leak, burst pipe, or cracked hot water heater, the laundry room drain must be able to drain the basement area.

ICE MAKER/HUMIDIFIER WATER LINES

In any environment, refrigerator ice maker and furnace humidifier water lines can be a hazard. These water lines are small ¼ inch plastic or copper tubing. A cursory inspection of the laundry room ceiling under the kitchen area will reveal the small ice maker line running through the laundry room ceiling. Plastic water lines become brittle with age and should be replaced with copper tubing. The humidifier water supply line is easily identifiable as emanating from the humidifier. In either case, determine where the water shutoff valve is located for each of these appliances. If a unit is going to be vacant for an extended period of time, both ice maker and humidifier should be turned off and the water supply to each appliance shut off.

WASHING MACHINE HOSES

The water hoses connecting the washing machine to the hot and cold water lines should be inspected periodically for cracks, brittleness, fraying, kinks, or crimping. Replace both of these hoses if either one of them show any sign of wear. Check that the washing machine discharge hose is securely seated in the drain tube. Both the hot and cold water lines to the washing machine should be shut off if the unit is going to be vacant for an extended period of time.

MAIN WATER LINE

Each unit has a main cold water supply line located either under the basement stairwell, or in the laundry room running through the foundation wall. The unit water shutoff valve is located at the point where this line passes through the foundation wall. It is recommended that this water line be shut off during extended periods of absence in the winter time. Any heat failure could cause water pipes to freeze and burst. Before the water is shut off from the main shutoff valve, the hot water tank should be turned to low.

BATH TUBS

The grouting in bathtub tiled walls can become loose, cracked, or porous with age. Loose grout is visible but porous grout, or grout with hairline cracks is difficult to diagnose until water damage to the ceiling below the tub becomes apparent. Tile grout is available at all hardware stores, and it is a simple matter to re-grout following the instructions on the product label. Silicone sealants are also available at hardware stores that will waterproof porous grout. Loose grout must be removed and the area re-grouted before silicone sealants can be applied.

FAUCETS AND TOILETS

Unit Owners can help control its monthly water bill by repairing leaky faucets. Any handy person can replace the cup washers in most faucets at a fraction of the cost of paying for wasted water. Toilets that leak are usually heard and not seen. By removing the toilet tank top and bending the float arm down slightly, most toilet leaks can be fixed. Units are inspected periodically during the multi-unit alarm inspections for leaky plumbing, and residents are required to fix any water leaks that are found.

GARBAGE DISPOSAL

The garbage disposal should be kept running with plenty of water for a short time after grinding to allow food particles to be completely flushed down the disposal drain. The garbage disposal can be kept in good working order by periodically grinding ice cubes. Water leaks and drips under the sink caused by loose plastic pipe couplings can be tightened by hand.

DISHWASHERS

Dishwasher leaks can be caused by 1) worn door gasket, 2) too much detergent, 3) rusted or corroded pump well, or 4) worn pump seals. Most dishwasher repairs require the help of a handyman or repair technician.

HOT WATER HEATERS

Water that is found on the floor next to or under a hot water tank can emanate from one of two places. Hot water heaters have a pressure relief valve installed on the top of the tank. A piece of plumbing, usually aluminum tubing, is attached to this valve and directed towards the floor. If water has accumulated under the pressure relief valve tubing, the pressure relief valve most likely needs to be replaced. A large puddle of water found underneath the hot water tank usually means that the tank has developed a crack and a new hot water heater will have to be installed. In either case, the hot water heater can be used for a short period of time, but should be replaced as soon as possible

Water heaters will last longer if their temperature settings are set at medium to low. Gas water heaters have an adjustable thermostat located near the bottom tank liner wall. Electric hot water heaters have one or two thermostats located behind removable panels located on the tank liner wall.

To adjust the temperature on an electric hot water tank, 1) turn off the circuit breaker to the hot water tank, 2) remove the thermostat covering panel(s), 3) turn the thermostat temperature adjustment screw with a small screw driver to the desired setting, and 4) replace panels and turn on circuit breaker.

Gas water heaters lose efficiency as sludge accumulates on the bottom of the tank. The drain spigot on the bottom of a gas hot water tank can be opened to flush the bottom of the tank. Be sure to put a bucket under the spigot before opening the valve.

PATIO SCREEN DOORS

Most handymen or hardware stores can re-screen a patio screen door. Screen doors that do not slide properly can be fixed by a handy resident. Parts for patio screen doors, rollers, and latches, can be secured from the listing on page 5. If the screen door will not slide because it is binding between the top and bottom track plates, the Property Manager should be contacted to make the repairs.

Patio screen doors that rub the bottom track are difficult to open and close. Patio screen doors use two bottom rollers to slide along the door track. Two additional rollers located at the top of the screen are used to guide the screen door. Each bottom roller supports the entire weight of the screen door and each roller must be positioned correctly and in good operating condition in order to support this weight. One adjustment screw positions the roller by fixing it in an up or down position. The roller has a spring attached that acts like a shock absorber. By loosening the screw that secures the roller, and repositioning the roller in a lower position, the bottom of the screen door is raised. Rollers that are adjusted to the lowest possible position and still do not allow the bottom of the screen door to clear the track need to be replaced. Removing the adjustment screw allows the roller to be removed from the screen frame, and a new roller to be installed.

PATIO SLIDING GLASS DOORS

Patio sliding glass doors that become clouded need to have their glass panes replaced. Patio sliding glass doors that will not slide freely need an experienced handyman to make repairs. If the sliding glass door is pinned between the top and lower tracks, the Property Manager should be contacted in order to inspect for structural defects.

FRONT DOOR LOCKS

Front door locks can be repaired by a locksmith or handyman. Most front door hardware can also be replaced by a handy resident. Note that the front door locks have two 3/4" backset and a barrel rather than a plate latch.

GARAGE DOORS

Check all hinges twice a year. Make sure hinge screws are tight (a nut driver or socket set is required). If they cannot be tightened, remove the screws and fill the screw holes with wooden tooth picks or wood splinters and try again. If they are still loose, replace them with flathead through-bolts. The flathead should be installed on the outside of the garage door. Broken garage door springs must be replaced as soon as possible and in pairs. Report loose garage door panels to the Property Manager.

TRASH COMPACTOR

Trash compactors should be filled to the top before compacting. As a compactor ages it is less advisable to try to compact glass bottles, especially if they are placed upright in the compactor. Do not allow trash to hang over the side of the compactor bin and make sure that the bin clamping ring is securely in place and locked.

OUTDOOR WATER FAUCETS

All units, excluding second floor flat units, are equipped with one perma-frost outdoor water spigot in the kitchen patio area. Some units have an additional perma-frost spigot installed either at the walkout dining room patio deck or at the walkout basement deck. The design of these spigots is such that the shutoff valve is located further away (12 to 14 inches) from the shutoff handle than normal. This allows the shutoff valve to be recessed deep into the wall cavity where freezing is less likely to occur. However, if the heat retained within the wall cavity is not sufficient, the shutoff valve and water supply plumbing freeze. If this happens, the water supply plumbing may burst resulting in considerable water damage to the unit or units.

For this reason, a second shutoff valve is installed in the basement allowing the water supply to be turned off well within the heated confines of each unit. Each outdoor water spigot installed has this second shutoff valve. In order to winterize outdoor spigots, it is not enough to turn off this second valve. The only safe way to winterize outdoor spigots is to turn off the indoor shutoff, open the nipple-cap on this valve and allow the water to drain between the outside spigot and the indoor shutoff.

FIRE PREVENTION AND SAFETY

The most essential ingredient in fire prevention is the daily, conscientious practice of good housekeeping habits by all residents. The following guidelines are offered.

- Each unit should have one or more of the residential type fire extinguishers located in strategic places.
- Keep entryways, patios, and decks free from trash and litter.
- When removing ashes from fireplaces and grills, be certain that there are no burning embers. This residue should be placed in a metal container and kept away from flammable materials such as fences and cedar siding.
- Trash should never be piled against a unit's exterior siding, garage, or fence as the careless tossing of a cigarette could ignite a very serious fire.
- Fireplaces were designed for burning of natural wood logs only. *Do not burn store-bought pressed logs* and do not overload the firebox.
- To prevent the possibility of a soot fire, chimneys should be cleaned periodically by a professional chimney sweep, the frequency of which will be dictated by fireplace usage.
- Bathroom ceiling and kitchen exhaust fans should be inspected and kept free from dust, lint, and grease.
- The discharge of fireworks in Pickawillany is illegal. Their use poses a dangerous fire hazard as well as well as creating the potential for serious personal injury.
- Obey speed limits at all times: **35 mph** on Little Turtle Way, **25 mph** on Blue Jacket Road, and **10 mph** on all Pickawillany's lanes. Remember, ***no parking on service lanes.***
- Be ever mindful of children and their activities. Be doubly cautious in the vicinity of the swimming pool area during the summer season.

FIRE ALARM SYSTEM

The alarm system brings with it a high level of personal and collective security along with some very important resident responsibilities. Resident activated false alarms cause unnecessary concern and inconvenience to neighbors. They also cause needless fire runs and eventually result in fines imposed by the City of Columbus. Our goal is to totally eliminate this type of alarm and the following guidelines are provided to achieve this goal.

- Prevent smoke from outside barbecue grills from entering your unit.
- Use range hood fan while cooking and cleaning the oven. Never leave the stove unattended while in use.
- Never leave toaster or toaster ovens unattended while in use.
- When showering, prevent steam from reaching the smoke detector by closing the bathroom door and using the exhaust fan.
- Clothes dryers must be vented to the outside to control lint.
- When starting a fire in the fireplace, be sure the damper is open and in good working condition.
- When carpet is being laid, prevent steam from seaming irons from activating the smoke detector by providing adequate ventilation.
- Dust can set off a smoke detector, so the dust level caused by interior decorating activities should be kept to an absolute minimum.
- Bathroom ceiling and kitchen exhaust fans that become heavily soiled can overheat and catch

REPAIR SERVICES

Unlike home ownership, condominium unit ownership provides for the maintenance and repair of the exterior of your unit and for grounds upkeep. All maintenance or repair requests for common property should be directed to the Association's Property Manager. You, however, are required to maintain and keep in good repair the many Limited Common Elements of your unit. The following list of area vendors, though not endorsed by PCUOA, have provided repair and replacement services to Unit Owners.

Patio screens, sliding glass doors, window sashes and screens

James W. Fox Company
614.267.2543

Stanek Windows
216.341.7700

Patio and window glass replacement

Trio Insulated Glass
614.276.1647

Glass Guru
614.856.4550

Garage door hinges, springs, closers, locks

CE Price Door Company
614.846.8870

Chimney Sweep, fireplace repair

Blackburn's
614.297.3870

D.M. Thompson Chimney Repair Specialist
614.263.1272

COMMUNITY SERVICES

POLICE AND FIRE - EMERGENCY	Dial 9-1-1
AEP (AMERICAN ELECTRIC POWER)	800.277.2177
CAPITAL AREA HUMANE SOCIETY	614.777.7387
CHARTER SPECTRUM	855.757.7328
COLUMBUS BULK PICK UP	3-1-1
COLUMBUS FIRE - NON EMERGENCY	614.221.2345
COLUMBIA GAS HOTLINE	800.344.4077
COLUMBUS POLICE - NON EMERGENCY	614.645.4545
FRANKLIN COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER	614.525.3647
FRANKLIN COUNTY SHERIFF	614.525.3360
O.U.P.S.	3-1-1
POISON CONTROL CENTER	800.222.1222