

KEEPING HOMES FIRE SAFE

The Board of Directors would like to make all Woodlands Association Residents aware of an event which occurred on Saturday, April 13, 2024. At approximately 4:00 p.m. a fire broke out in the basement of 33 Pheasant Court. The Windsor Locks Fire Department along with other safety personnel were quickly on scene and everyone was able to get out of the building safely with no injuries. The cause of the fire is currently under investigation. The fire impacted five units, 27, 29, 31, 33 and 35. These families were displaced from their residence and the Association along with the building inspector and restoration company worked very diligently to get the families back into their homes with the exception of unit 33 which will be under construction for at least a year.

The Board of Directors would like to remind all residents to be always aware of their surroundings. What you do inside your unit could affect other units. NEVER leave your home with a dryer, dishwasher, stove, or candles going. If a fire starts in your home remember:

- Make sure EVERYONE leaves home with you.
- Take your keys.
- Close, but DO NOT lock the home's door. Closing the door saves lives. If doors are left open flames and smoke from a fire can travel more quickly.
- Alert people to the left and to the right of your unit.
- Call 911 once you reach a safe location, DO NOT assume the fire department has been reported unless firefighters are on the scene.

Furnace Maintenance – Unit Owners are required to have their heating unit checked annually, with necessary preventative maintenance items being handled on a regular basis. Cleaning of pipes, filters, duct work, etc. is the responsibility of each Unit Owner, and will not only ensure maximum operating efficiency, but will also help to extend the life of the system. Gas furnaces burn natural gas to produce heat, and if there are any leaks or malfunctions, it can lead to potentially dangerous situations.

Maintain Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors - working detectors are a critical component of fire safety. Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors SAVE lives by quickly giving you an early warning. If a carbon monoxide alarm sounds, you should get out immediately and call 911. If a smoke alarm sounds, execute your escape plan, if you have one. Remember smoke and carbon monoxide detectors have a life span of approximately 10 years and batteries should be changed every 6 months.

Have an Escape Plan - an escape plan is important to keep you safe in the event of a fire. Everyone in your household should help make the plan and practice it regularly. Unit owners may want to consider buying fire escape ladders to keep in their bedrooms.

Keep your Kitchen Safe - keep the area around your stove clear of towels, paper, and potholders. NEVER leave cooking food unattended and enforce a kid-free zone around your stove.

Fire Prevention - Keep operational fire extinguishers handy.

Eliminate Hazards - Store all flammable materials away from heat. Do not let trash accumulate in the attic, basement, or garage. Clean dryer lint traps before using the machine.

Avoid Electrical Hazards – Do not overload electrical outlets or extension cords. Do not run extension cords behind rugs or curtains. Use surge protectors or other safety-tested devices to protect outlets and expand their capacity if needed.

Home Owner Insurance Policy - Each Home Owner is required to carry an H06 Policy with a loss assessment of \$10,000. There is a \$10,000.00 per incident deductible for all claims on the master insurance policy. Per the Woodland's Association by-laws, the unit owner is responsible for insuring "walls in". This includes any interior walls, finished interior surfaces of ceiling and floors, kitchen and bathroom fixtures and any heating, AC, plumbing, and electrical systems which are wholly contained within the unit and service no other units and shall also contain any pipes, wires, ducts and conduits situated in the perimeter walls of the Unit serving only that Unit. Discuss particulars with your agent.

Investor Units: Liability is the responsibility of Unit Owners. Often liability may be added to the policy covering the investor's primary residence. Investors should also secure coverage for rent loss in the event that a unit becomes inhabitable. The Master Policy and the Association will not honor any claims for loss of rents. It is also recommended that unit occupants purchase H04 Tenant Homeowners unit Policy.

Dryer Vent Cleaning - Dryer vent cleaning is something you must put on your cleaning checklist. Over time, lint and small debris builds up in exhaust pipes and needs to be removed. This build-up can reduce the efficiency of the unit and eventually become a fire hazard.

In fact, dirty dryer vents are the leading cause of domestic dryer fires, according to the US Fire Administration. So, you'll want to tackle cleaning the clothes dryer vent at least once a year. The last thing you want to do is wait for a burning smell to waft through your laundry room.

Grills, Chimeneas and Outdoor Heaters – Chimeneas, outdoor heaters and other types of outdoor heaters are STRICTLY prohibited at the Woodlands. Gas grills are allowed, however please keep them away from the building and far enough away from items that can ignite.

Fire Place Inspection – Units that have fireplaces are REQUIRED to have fireplace inspections and cleanings. Cleaning, maintenance, repair and replacement of fireplaces is the unit owner responsibility. Each unit owner is also responsible for chimneys and flues.