

WHAT'S NEW?

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NEW CONCEPTS

ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT

**COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL
REAL ESTATE SERVICES**

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

GENERAL CONTRACTING

RENTAL MANAGEMENT

MORTGAGE SERVICES

CONSULTING

FEATURED ARTICLE – “Spring Training”

By Gene Sullivan, President of New Concepts Management.

There's nothing like the baseball season opener and especially this year with our very own Minnesota Twins outside and in their new ball park. For most of us, we look upon a game that is made to look easy, not only because of the athleticism of the players, but because of the hard and grueling practices that take place before the season starts.

Ask any athlete and they will quickly tell you that a huge reason for their success is due in large part because of reviewing and practicing the fundamentals of the game, so when they are in that tough spot, they are able to quickly react and execute perfectly. It is this same commitment and discipline by both Board and Management that allows all Association Members to see their communities run smoothly.

With so much on a Volunteer Board's plate, it can be easy to assume that once you have decided upon a course of action for any policy and procedure at the property, one can move on without having to give it much thought again. However, it makes good sense to review your policies on a yearly basis. What would some of those policies be?

- What work at the property is still under warranty? Identify those items and the contractor(s) who did the work. Do they have an emergency number and contact to call when something fails? This allows you to call upon them to guarantee their work and ensures that those precious dollars of the association go further and on other needed issues.

- Have all preferred contractors been identified? It makes sense to have the proper protocol in place and work being accomplished by those who know the intricacies and eccentricities of the property in order to have work done in an efficient and cost effective manner.

- Does the Association have a policy in place for those situations where at first you don't know whether the repair is a Homeowner or an Association issue? It is impossible to determine sometimes on after hours and weekend calls; who is the responsible party for a matter until someone goes out to inspect the issue. When this occurs, is it the policy of the Association to pay for the initial discovery? Or is it the policy of the Association to say to Homeowners “If we send someone out initially and a matter is found to be your responsibility, you will have to pay for that contractor and their



Gene Sullivan,
President of New Concepts Management

time.” And if it is the later of these two that is the Association's policy; have you reminded your homeowners of this on a regular basis so they are not surprised when they are charged for the call?

When any Association Board works to clarify and communicate their community's policies and procedures on a regular basis, they will begin to see the following benefits:

- Board Unity, because every one is on the same page. Veteran Board Members are reminded of proper protocol, while new Board Members go through a proper and thorough orientation.

- Decisive Action, time is not spent asking the question “what are we going to do?” instead, the property manager is empowered to act on behalf of the Board's wishes, allowing more, not less, to be accomplished.

- Happy Community, because everyone understands what is expected of one another and how things are accomplished.

Associations, like ball clubs, when they are running smoothly, and professionally, become the type of organization that everyone wants to be identified with. ■

What's in the News?

Featured Article:
“Spring Training” -pg. 1

Article:
It's Finally Green... -pg. 2

Free On Line Seminars -pg. 2

Home Savings Store -pg. 2

Contact Information -pg. 2

“Where You Live”

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It's Finally Green-What You Should Know About Turf, Trees and Shrubs as an Association Member

By Paul Roth, Executive Vice President of New Concepts Management.

Here are answers to some commonly asked questions about grass, trees, and shrubs:

What are all those little tunnels I see in the grass?

What you are seeing is mouse damage and it is most commonly seen in newer housing communities. Over the winter field mice chew through the thatch layer of the turf in search of food. The tunnels are most obvious in early spring before the grounds maintenance crew has had an opportunity to rake the turf. Fortunately the mouse damage rarely kills the grass and in most cases the damage is not noticeable after a few mowings.

What can be done about dead grass along driveways and roads?

Most associations have their grounds maintenance company repair turf that has died due to salt or standing water. Individual homeowners can really help the repaired areas take root by keeping watch and watering new sod and seed for the first two to three weeks. This assistance is important even if the association has an un-

derground lawn sprinkler system because new sod and seed need much more frequent watering than the sprinkler system is set to provide.

There is a dead shrub near my home.

Who do I tell?

Call, fax, or e-mail your property manager with this information. In most cases the association is responsible for replacing dead shrubs and trees.

I'd like more shade.

Can I plant a tree in my yard?

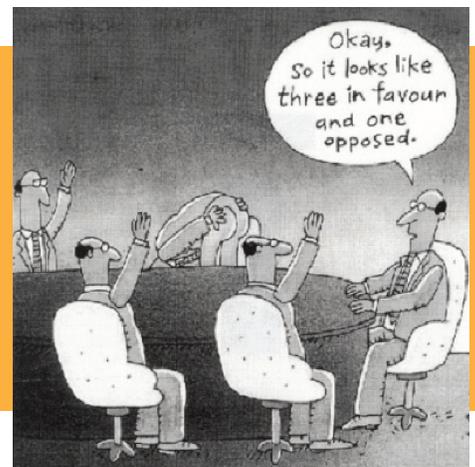
Yes, you probably can plant a tree. In almost all cases you'll need to get permission from the Board of Directors before planting a tree or making any other kind of exterior alteration, however. Most associations are happy to allow owners to plant additional trees but prior Board approval is needed to ensure the type and size of the tree is compatible with the overall landscaping plan. The Board also will want to ensure the tree is planted an adequate distance away from the building or other landscape features and that utility and sprinkler lines are located and avoided.



Paul Roth, Executive Vice President of New Concepts Management

Sometimes I see trash here and there near my home. Is someone hired to pick up garbage? The grounds maintenance company is typically only on the property on a weekly basis during the growing season, so if you see garbage be a good neighbor and throw it in your refuse container. Take pride in your community! Help maintain the appearance of the association by picking up trash and by keeping your patio, stoop, deck, etc. neat. ■

Tallying The Board's Vote.



Free On Line Seminars – Don't pass up on these in May and June!

Classes run between 30-60 minutes. You can register anytime right up to the start of any seminar by going to www.webinar.com and click on the "join webinar" button. You will be guided through the registration process. To register you will need to supply your e-mail address and identify the seminar you wish to join by typing in the 9 digit I.D. # assigned to each class below. Here are our upcoming offerings:

"Looking Ahead" – Wed. May 19, 2010 from 7-8 p.m. I.D. # 770447586. Some huge changes have taken place recently in government regulations that will affect both the cost and procedures of doing business for homeowner associations. – Instructor Paul Roth, Vice President of New Concepts Management.

NEW* "How Important is FHA Financing for Your Association?" – Tues. June 1, 2010 from 7-8 p.m. I.D. # 989384923.** Major changes in mortgage underwriting over the last few years have put home buying out of reach for many. Now more than ever, lenders are looking at the policies and operations of an association prior to giving lending approval. Learn what every association should know to demonstrate good economic health and to promote sales in their community. – Instructor Gene Sullivan, President of New Concepts Management.

NEW* "Dealing with Mental Health Issues in Multi Housing" – Thurs. June 17, 2010 from 7-8 p.m. I.D. # 906586339.** Sometimes issues, conflicts, and angst go deeper than a mere disagreement over rules and regulations. At times, these could be an early warning of more serious mental health issues. When they arise, what can we do to help those battling problems such as hoarding, paranoia and rage? Don't miss this important discussion. – Instructor Toni Crockett, Vice President of Rental Management Services New Concepts Management. ■

Home Savings Store

– Resources, products and services available at special pricing for our homeowners and subscribers. To take part in any of these specific offerings, please contact our Home Savings Store Coordinator Courtney Sletten at 952-224-2663 and ask her for full details.

Home Maintenance

Don't know where to turn to when you need a new water heater? Who can handle all those handyman tasks that you have been meaning to get to around your home? You can be assured that when Start To Finish is on the job, it will be done right by experienced, licensed, and insured professionals who care about your home as much as you do.

Mortgage Network

Whether you're refinancing to reduce a high rate adjustable mortgage, preparing to pay the cost of a special assessment, or getting back on your feet from near foreclosure, experience the Klein Bank difference. Mortgage Banker Greg Johnson doesn't simply put you into something in order to make a sale. He spends the time to counsel you to see what makes the best sense.

Preferred Realtor Network

Because we are involved with the resale disclosures on every sale at your association, we know who does the best in getting the job done quickly and at top dollar. If you do not have a relationship with an experienced agent, we can help. Discounts are also available on the cost of a re-sale disclosure by going through this program.

Rental Management Services

Your preference was to sell, but your home isn't moving. That new job is calling, and you don't want to walk away from your equity. What do you do? Call New Concepts. We can give you peace of mind knowing your property is being watched closely, and the renters aren't getting you in hot water with the Board or your neighbors. ■