



FirstService
RESIDENTIAL

Your Community's *Winter Ready Guide*

Reminders, Maintenance
Checklists and Planning Tips

Winter Ready Checklist for Community Associations



Introduction

When it comes to maintaining or enhancing property values, it is critical for board members and property management to align on a preventative maintenance plan and execution. Too often, maintenance is deferred or not fully executed causing community associations – and homeowners – to either spend additional funds or lower the value of their homes.

A professional management company will work with boards to ensure the following:

- Identify useful life expectancies
- Review how the maintenance systems are currently serviced
- Assess the reserve funds needed per the reserve study
- Analyze operating budget and service contracts

On the following pages, we have prepared a winter-ready maintenance checklist to help ensure your building is adequately prepared for harsh seasonal changes in weather. Also included is an annual maintenance planning guide to get your association on the right path to maximizing your useful life expectancies and enhancing property values.

For more information on how a professional property management company can help, contact FirstService Residential.

Winter Ready Checklist

INTERIORS

GENERAL

- ❑ Check all weather-stripping around doors and windows. Replace if necessary
- ❑ Check all smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
- ❑ Reverse ceiling fan direction to circulate warm air downward, maximizing your heating efforts
- ❑ Check thermostats and timers for operation, engage circuit breakers for these systems, check fused disconnects and replace any old or defective fuses



HEATING SYSTEMS

FORCED AIR

- ❑ Inspect thermostat for proper operation
- ❑ Inspect filter, change or clean as needed
- ❑ Check all electrical components and controls
- ❑ Oil motors as needed; inspect heat exchanger for potential cracks, which could introduce deadly carbon monoxide into living spaces
- ❑ Check air flow and ensure evaporator coil and duct work are clean
- ❑ Check air fuel mixture, if appropriate
- ❑ Hire a professional to perform maintenance checkup if no engineer is on staff

HEAT PUMP

- ❑ Inspect wiring, belts and oil the moving parts

HOT WATER SYSTEM

- ❑ Check shut-off valve for leaks and drain lower water cut-off per manufacturer
- ❑ Lubricate pump and motor
- ❑ Bleed air from radiators or convectors

WATER HEATERS

- ❑ Every 6 months, turn off energy source and flush until clear of sediment
- ❑ Inspect flue assembly (gas or oil heater), checking for leaks or corrosion



Follow these maintenance best practices:

- Have your building engineer conduct and log daily inspections of your building's components
- Follow manufacturers' recommendations and requirements for maintaining building systems and components
- Keep a log of product and contractor warranties
- Implement a Building Automation

For even more valuable tips and suggestions, contact FirstService Residential, or connect with us online, at www.fsresidential.com

Winter Ready Checklist

EXTERIORS

GENERAL

- ❑ Arrange a professional chimney inspection to ensure they are structurally sound and not obstructed by debris. Install chimney caps where missing and replace those that have rusted to protect from water, debris and critters
- ❑ Make sure gutters and downspouts are free of debris
- ❑ Check the roof, siding and foundation for cracks, leaks, or flashing that needs replacement or repair
- ❑ Close or plug foundation vent openings. Check and correct grade for proper drainage away from foundation
- ❑ Carry out furnace maintenance, including changing filters and checking the humidifier
- ❑ Check joints between wood and masonry. Waterproof, repair or repoint brick and stone if necessary
- ❑ Remove any potted plants or removable carpet from decks to prevent dry rot
- ❑ Replace burned out bulbs, reset exterior lighting clock to adjust for seasonal change or replace with photocell system
- ❑ Check pipes for rust or white lime deposits which indicate leakage
- ❑ Install covers on outside hose bibs prior to freezing temperatures
- ❑ Check inside faucets for leaks and drain outside faucets
- ❑ Flush drain line of any blockage from buildup or tree roots to prevent backups and flooding
- ❑ Drain the “dry pipe” sprinkler system “Drip Drums” in your garage or any other location where the dry pipe system exists. If these systems are not purged of this water periodically they can freeze and burst the Drip Drum, associated piping, or sprinkler heads causing the fire pumps to engage and thus flooding your garage or other area covered by the dry pipe system. This will also engage your fire panel, disrupt your elevator service (auto recall) as well as summon the fire department to your property or building
- ❑ Cut down dead trees and limbs, trim hanging limbs
- ❑ Clean up yard debris
- ❑ Reseed lawn

PARKING

- ❑ Arrange for drains to be cleaned out
- ❑ Repaint curbs
- ❑ Repair any deteriorated areas
- ❑ Have de-icer available



ROOFS

SHINGLED ROOFS:

- ❑ Check roof for warping, aging, moss or cracking
- ❑ Inspect and repair flashing around chimneys, skylights and vents
- ❑ Repair or replace as needed

FLAT ROOFS:

- ❑ Sweep to remove debris
- ❑ Clear all drains and scuppers
- ❑ Inspect and repair separated roofing seams, parapet wall caps, vent and pipe flashing

GUTTERS & DOWNSPOUTS:

- ❑ Clean and ensure they are running clear

Annual Maintenance Planning

A maintenance plan is a great tool for organizing and discussing a co-op or community association's property repairs and maintenance. What the plan looks like depends on the building type and age, as well as the association's finances. Maintenance plans come in a variety of different formats, from brief outlines, to comprehensive multi-page reports. Regardless of the situation, an ongoing plan for preventive maintenance can extend the effective life of the property and increase its value by:

- Increasing the life of building components
- Improving a community's visual appeal
- Increasing residents' pride of ownership

REQUIRED MAINTENANCE

Backflow Devices

Associations and co-ops are required to annually test their backflow prevention devices. This helps ensure that they are functioning properly to prevent water from the building flowing back into the city line. Cities in Illinois have become increasingly stringent about enforcing testing requirements.

Fire & Life Safety/Elevators

An association must perform a variety of testing under different frequencies. Contractors provide a copy of test results that the community may have to provide—along with proof that they have fixed any defects—to fire inspectors upon request. Recently, inspectors have focused on parking garage fire doors and storage areas because of their susceptibility to fires.

Emergency Generators

Some buildings have emergency generators that typically can provide emergency power for lighting and one elevator. The last thing community residents want to discover during a power outage is that their generator is not functioning properly. Associations are expected to test and check their generators, which is recorded in a log kept on site.

Roof Anchors

These safety devices, which are attached to the building exterior, are used by trades such as window washers that require fall protection equipment. Roof anchors need to be certified by a specialized company each year and it is best practice to post the certification at the access point to the roof.

Mechanical/Electrical/HVAC

This equipment requires a wide range of inspections. A unique requirement is the testing of CO2 sensors, which are located in the parking garage. These turn on the garage fans if the CO2 level from car exhaust becomes too high. Associations must also maintain and test the communication links between the fire panel and exhaust fans.

What Goes Into a Maintenance Plan?

Required Maintenance: This includes anything your association must do to be compliant with safety regulations and government authorities, such as your city or fire department.

Regular Maintenance: This is maintenance that is not legally mandated. Most people think of it as preventive maintenance (cleaning, painting, etc.). It also enhances curb appeal.

Annual *Maintenance Planning*

REGULAR MAINTENANCE

Painting & Mill Work

When it comes to painting, prioritize the building's front entrance and lobby. These areas have the greatest impact on property values. Rotate painting of hallways so that, for example, north hallways are done one year and south hallways the next. Although mill work is often forgotten, it is important to budget for repair of the wood trim in the lobby and common areas.

Power Washing & Parking Garage Cleaning

It is a good idea to pressure wash the front of the building at least once a year. Hot water pressure washing can remove items like gum. Parking garages can be cleaned by pressure washing or power scrubbing. A great option for dusty garages is a mid-year power sweeping.

Landscaping

An annual walk-through with the association's landscaper can help identify issues that may affect the community's maintenance plan. Has your board considered artificial turf? The main benefits are that it needs less maintenance and is dog-friendly.

Janitorial

Remember to consider budgeting for both regular cleaning and deep cleaning. Deep cleaning includes items such as scrubbing the complete garbage room,

thorough cleaning of stairwells and detailed grout cleaning. A way to reduce costs is to encourage residents to sort waste correctly and break down boxes they are discarding so that janitors do not have to do it for them.

Carpeting & Flooring

Regular vacuuming not only helps maintain carpets, but may extend their life. On average, a community association may want to have its carpets cleaned once a year by a professional cleaner and spot-checked quarterly. For tiled areas, cleaning grout regularly and having it sealed at least once a year can reduce cleaning costs.

Dryer Vent

Dryer vents can be cleaned from the interior and exterior. It is important for the board to create a policy on who is to conduct the interior cleaning of the dryer vents. As fire codes become stricter on cleaning frequency, more community associations may find it worthwhile to take responsibility for interior cleaning.

Window Washing

Most buildings have their windows cleaned a minimum of once a year. Two methods to wash windows are with a tucker pole that extends to about 50 feet and allows cleaning from the ground, or by hand washing using a bosun chair or ladder. Give residents a set time to report deficiencies once work is complete.

ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY MANAGER

Since each community is unique, it is important that the board of directors and owners discuss their vision for what is to be included in a potential maintenance plan. From there, your property manager can work with your board to create a plan that reflects your directives and particular maintenance focus.

ABOUT FIRSTSERVICE RESIDENTIAL

FirstService Residential is North America's property management leader, partnering with more than 8,500 communities across the U.S. and Canada, including low-, mid- and high-rise condominiums and cooperatives; single-family communities; master-planned, lifestyle and active-adult communities; and mixed-use and rental properties. HOAs, community associations and condos rely on their extensive experience, resources and local expertise to maximize property values and enhance their residents' lifestyles. Dedicated to making a difference, every day, FirstService Residential goes above and beyond to deliver exceptional service.

FirstService Residential is a subsidiary of FirstService Corporation (FSV), a North American leader in the property services sector. Visit www.fsresidential.com.