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Directors Choice, LLC Newsletter November 2011 Tip of the Month

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November/2011

Greetings!

Happy Thanksgiving!

We hope your budget preparations and meetings are all going well.

This month we have an article from Keith Ott with Clear Choice Lint Removal, LLC. Keith is the owner of Clear Choice and is well aware of the dangers of dryer fires due to his first-hand knowledge as a fire fighter. Any Board would be doing their association a great service by hiring a company to clean the dryer vents as a preventative safety measure for the community. As the saying goes, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

TIP OF THE MONTH

Collections Policy Notification

As you all know, a basic facet of association collections is to process all collections actions uniformly. That means that all delinquent owners are charged late fees, interest, and legal action is taken against all owners equally, regardless of who they are or their current situation.



Have you told your members this? In a lot of cases, a simple letter to all members advising them of the association's collection policy can make a world of difference. In your letter, tell your owners what the due date is for assessments.

Let them know how many days following the due date late fees and interest will be charged. Tell them the steps the association takes to collect if the owner fails to make payment or reach a payment plan- the 30 (or 45) day notice-to-lien, the lien, and the foreclosure. Many owners do not know that the association can foreclose on their home (even if they are paying their mortgage!). You should also let them know that the association can legally collect the rent from tenants in their unit. Finally, make sure they know that this process is followed with every owner, every time they fail to make a timely payment.

This does not have to be a confrontational letter. It is simply a polite, informational tool meant to enlighten owners of the responsibilities and liabilities of owning in a condo or homeowners' association. They can stick the letter on their fridge and reference it when they know they cannot pay on time. They will know when the late fees are charged and what amount, when the interest is charged, and when they can expect to start seeing legal fees. They will also be aware of what the association has the power to do if they choose not to pay.

Guess what... your paying owners should appreciate this too. They will be able to see that they have a Board acting in their best interests, making every effort to keep the bills paid and the fees down by fulfilling its fiduciary duty to collect against delinquent owners.

Best of luck!

VENDOR SPOTLIGHT

Clothes Dryer Fires in Residential Buildings

Findings:

Clothes dryer fires account for about 15,600 structure fires, 15 deaths, and 400 injuries annually.

Annually, 12,700 clothes dryer fires occur in residential buildings resulting in 15 deaths and 300 injuries.

"Failure to clean" is the leading factor contributing to clothes dryer fires in residential buildings.

For many households and other establishments, the clothes dryer is an indispensable convenience and necessity. However, if clothes dryers are not properly installed or maintained, critical fires can occur. Each year, losses result from an estimated 15,600 fires that required a fire department response. These clothes dryer fires cause an annual average of approximately 400 injuries and 15 fatalities.

The Hows and Whys of a Dryer Fire

A clothes dryer works by forcing hot air through a turning drum. Wet clothes placed in the drum are then dried by the moving hot air. It is possible for a full load of wet



clothes to contain as much as one and a half gallons of water. Lint is created from the clothes as the water is removed and the clothes dry. While much of the lint is trapped by the dryer's filter, lint also is carried through the venting system, together with moist air. The accumulation of lint, both in the dryer and in the dryer vent, reduces the airflow and creates a highly flammable fuel source. In addition to the accumulation of lint, blockage in dryer exhaust vents also can occur from the nests of small birds and animals or from bends in the venting system itself. A compromised vent will not exhaust properly to the outside. Overheating may result. If enough heat is produced to ignite the lint itself or nearby combustible items, such as the clothes in the dryer or combustibles left nearby, the engineered safety mechanisms are compromised and fire ensues.

Proper Dryer Maintenance

If you notice heavy clothes such as blue jeans or towels taking a long time to dry, or clothes feel hotter than usual at the end of the cycle, then a clogged dryer vent exhaust is likely the problem. Disconnect, clean, and inspect the dryer duct and venting every couple of years, or hire a professional company to clean the dryer components. Some dryer vents may need more frequent inspection, such as in homes with complex construction where the dryer vents exceed 6 feet from the outside, or with smaller stack dryers and dryers that are older and do not have moisture sensors or high temperature safety limit controls. **This will reduce the fire risk and increase the dryer's efficiency.** (U.S. Department of Homeland Security * U.S. Fire Administration National Fire Data Center * Emmitsburg, Maryland 21727; www.usfa.dhs.gov/statistics/reports/ TFRS Volume 7, Issue 1)

Clear Choice Lint Removal will only do a complete cleaning. This means we clean the dryer vent pipes from the inside where the dryer connects to the wall, all the way through to where it exhausts outside. This is the **only** proper way to clean dryer vents. Clear Choice Lint Removal will not clean solely from the outside of the buildings because of high liability risk. Below is a list of reasons why we do not believe in cleaning from the outside only.

***There is no way to clean the dryer vent and dryer unit from the roof. Cleaning from the outside will only reach a few feet down the pipe. The rest of the pipe will still have lint on it and some of the lint that gets knocked loose will even fall down further into the pipe.**

*The dryer needs to be cleaned from the lint trap to the dryer motor, and from the motor to the rear discharge. **This is where the fires start.**

*The floor and wall behind the dryer needs to be cleaned free of lint build up.

*The pipe between the dryer and the wall needs to be cleaned.

Sincerely,

Keith Ott

Founder and Owner of Clear Choice Lint Removal, LLC

Directors Choice, LLC is a Naples, Florida based community association management firm working with Condominium and

Homeowners' Associations. We provide a full range of financial, consulting, and management services.

If you feel we can be of service to you in any way, please contact us. We would love to speak with you.

Sincerely,

Janet Howard

Directors Choice, LLC

239.877.7457 main

239.877.1295 direct

239.791.1076 fax

janeth@directorschoicellc.com

www.directorschoicellc.com