

# SPRINGBROOK CONDO NEWSLETTER

## JANUARY 2003

*Information and Updates from the Board of Directors*

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### **ABOUT ICE DAMS:**

Ice dams on roofs occur after a heavy snowfall followed by several days (or weeks!) of very cold weather. Because of the escape of heat from the buildings' interior through the attic, the snow on the roof starts to melt and trickle down to the eave where a crust is formed, holding the snow in place and keeping the wind from blowing it off the roof. This process continues until a dam of ice is built up that exerts pressure at the edge of the roof and the lower tier of shingles. As this ice expands and backs up closer to the warm roofing, it melts again and find its way under the roof shingles and into the building. The weather conditions this month has been perfect for ice dams. The depth (up to 6") and location of some of the dams appears to have allowed water to enter the buildings in new and different ways, including over the edge of the roofs where it can run into joints in the wood rakes and trim.

As this melting occurs under the shingles, the water drips down onto ceilings and interior walls. During the winter of 2000-2001 37 of your neighbors suffered with such conditions in their 2<sup>nd</sup> floor units. The financial cost to the association to make interior repairs in all 37 units was considerable. The emotional cost to the 37 unit owners who watched helplessly as water dripped and damaged their interiors, was immeasurable.

You might assume that removing the snow from the roofs would solve the problem. Unfortunately that is not always a solution.

Chipping ice dams from roofs, more often than not, causes damage to the shingles and roof, creating another set of problems and damage when the spring rains arrive. A roof rake can also cause damage to the shingles and shorten their useful life as they scrape away the ceramic-coated granules that protect the shingles from sun and weather exposure.

Though there is no cure for the formation of ice dams, there is a cure (*usually* effective) for damage from ice dams. It is a strip of rubberized material (generally 3 ft wide) known as an ice and water shield, laid along the eave edge of the roof under the shingles. This shield prevents the melting ice dam from penetrating into the attic and unit interiors.

In the last 2 years we have replaced the roofs on 6 or our 9 buildings. The specifications for our new roofs were written by Tim Little, PE, of Noblin & Associates, author of our 1998 "Condition Survey & Reserve Study". Tim Little's specs called for the installation of an ice and water shield that was 6 ft wide (not the more common 3ft width).

In spite of the new roofs with 6 ft ice and water shields on bldgs 3, 4,5,6,8,and 9, nine of your neighbors are experiencing ice dam damage in their units; some in bldgs with the new roofs. Taking care not to do damage to the new roofs (and void the warranty), we arranged with the roofing company to remove the snow from the eaves of bldgs 5 and 9 where most of the leaks were occurring.

While there is no absolutely certain way to avoid ice dams and the damage they can cause, there are things that can be done to lessen the odds of ice dams leaking and causing damage. In addition to the installation of ice and water shields, keeping the roof cold is imperative. Attic ventilation is the key to keeping the roof cold and the ice dams from melting. To encourage cold air ventilation in our attics, we have louvered openings in the gable ends and soffit vents in the overhang. Insulation on the attic floor keeps the heated air from rising.

When all of these precautions and prudent measures are taken, the facts remain that we live in northern New England, it is January, and we cannot protect ourselves from every possible event.

There is some good news! The severe pitch of the roofs at Springbrook minimizes the formation of ice dams. The steeper the pitch of a roof, the less conducive to ice dam formation. (NH's State Fire Marshal warned those property owners with flat or low pitched roofs to remove the snow or fear collapse under the weight of the record snow.) Though it is of no comfort to those unit owners who have suffered damage, in spite of the most severe weather conditions in years, Springbrook with its steep pitched roofs has suffered relatively little damage so far this winter.

*Source: Providence Mutual Fire Insurance Co., Mutual Fire Insurance Association of New England, Portsmouth Herald.*

### **CHRISTMAS TREES:**

Thank you for your 100% cooperation! At last report, *all* Christmas trees had been deposited under the basketball net as requested. Thanks!

### **BBBBRR - It's Cold!**

In recent weeks, 2 of our buildings have had frozen pipes. To avoid having your pipes freeze consider the following: Leave your kitchen cabinet doors open at night so that the heated air in the room can circulate nearer the pipes. Likewise, leave your bathroom vanity doors open. When single digit temperatures are predicted, let *cold* water drip from a sink. (Just a drip!)

### **GOOD NEIGHBORS:**

On Saturday, January 4<sup>th</sup> we all woke up to a record snowfall! Days like this one are when you recognize the blessings of good neighbors. We live busy lives and know our neighbors to nod to or say good morning. But on this Saturday morning, our parking lots, blanketed in snow, were scenes of neighbors helping neighbors. The young and strong were shoveling, the not-so-young or not-so-strong, were brushing snow off cars - everyone's cars! People were drawn to the sound of car wheels spinning: someone needed a push! This was a scene of community life at its absolute best!

We don't know all of you but some of these good Samaritans were Bill Cunningham, Craig Maidrand, Bob & Sharon Egan, Jason Pendergast, Linda White, Brian Hussey, Tim Reynolds, Walter Petig, Sam & Susan McLeod, John Davey, Mark Brodeur, Linda Roche and Chad, who stopped by to shovel out his mom and stayed to help others.

### **PLANS FOR SPRING:**

#### **ROOFS:**

New roofs, funded by the 2003 special assessment of \$835 (due by June 30, 2003) will be installed on bldgs 1,2, and 6.

#### **SIDING:**

If you attended the informational meeting last spring, you know that the board of directors has been investigating the efficacy of alternative siding materials. We have since narrowed our focus to vinyl products and our research continues. We hope by spring to have a product selected and to have it applied to the mailhouse &/or the clubhouse. Doing these 2 small buildings first will allow us to make adjustments or changes and refine finishing details before residing our main buildings. Stay tuned for another Informational Meeting in the Spring.

#### **MAIN LINE CLEANOUTS:**

A back up last summer in bldg #6 brought to our attention the possibility that not every building at Springbrook has a "main line clean-out". When a backup occurs in a building, RooterMan accesses the "main line clean-out" on the outside of the building to clear the line. If no such "main line clean-out" exists, access must be made through a plumbing fixture (such as a toilet) from within someone's unit. It is possible that some "main line clean-outs" exist but cannot be found, having been buried under years of accumulated mulch.

When weather permits, Hart Plumbing and RooterMan will identify the location of the "main line clean-out" on each building. Where they may not exist, they will be installed.

### **FIRE SAFETY:**

Recent headlines of fatal fires remind us of the importance of fire safety. Risk Management experts agree that to provide immediate first response to a small kitchen or electrical fire, every home should have a type ABC fire extinguisher. It should be a "1A 10 B-C" size extinguisher (usually red with the letters "ABC" printed in yellow). Start the New Year right, give yourself a gift of safety!

### **TOILET LEAK?**

We asked the City's Water Dept to help us identify possible water leaks and, by so doing, avoid wasting water and \$\$\$\$. Our single largest budget item is water and sewer costs: \$51,500 for 2002.

Try this: remove the cover from your toilet tank and add a few drops of food coloring to the water in the tank. If the food coloring shows up in the toilet bowl - you have a water leak. Please do your part, call a plumber and have your water leaks fixed. Thanks.

### **FIND A KEY IN YOUR MAILBOX?**

When the post office has a package for you they leave it in one of the parcel boxes at the side of our mailhouse. The key you find in your mailbox is the key to the parcel box containing your package. You are supposed to retrieve your package, leaving the key in the parcel box lock for the post office to use again.

The post office has requested that you please retrieve your package and make the parcel box available for someone else. Thanks.