

Sentinel News



A newsletter for owners and residents

May 2005

New Fire Alarm System is Activated, Works as Expected in 'High-Rise' Mode

A few weeks ago, the new fire alarm system was activated in "high-rise package mode" for the first time. (The activation was a false alarm caused by someone illegally tripping the system.)

However, some residents noticed that not all floors heard the voice advisory and command signal. This is a feature of the new system, where the announcements are "zoned" to limit the number of people rushing to exit the building when it would not be necessary for them to do so.

When the fire department arrives at the building, they will first check the alarm system panel in the fire room to determine exactly where the trouble is located. If the firefighters see a need for all building occupants to exit, they will immediately activate the panel to notify all floors of the building. They will also check the information box which contains a list of residents who may require special assistance to exit. (If you need to be added to this list, please notify the management office.)

The Alexandria Code Enforcement Fire Protection Division authorizes this method and our new system has been inspected and approved. Additional questions regarding the new system may be directed to Mr. Maurice Jones at 703-706-3966, x207.

Dorinda Fitt appointed to Board

The Sentinel Condominium Association Board of Directors is pleased to announce the appointment of Dorinda Fitt as interim director. Dorinda takes over for Stan Bosco, who resigned due to his increased work schedule.

The Board thanks all of the candidates who expressed interest, and encourages them to please consider running for the Board next fall when regular elections are held.

FYI

Please return the attached pool pass application to the Management Office as soon as possible, so we can prepare your passes in plenty of time prior to the pool's opening day – Saturday, May 28.

Please note that no pool passes will be made on opening weekend.

The Management office will be closed on Memorial Day, Monday May 30.

Please stop by the office to meet Mia Morrison, our new administrative assistant.

More About Water Hoses

According to insurance industry estimates, broken washer hoses cause over \$100 million in damages per year. Our washer hose replacement program, which was completed in early January, makes us a proactive community association – insurance carriers like that!

Some additional facts:

- ◆ The useful service life of a standard rubber washer hose is approximately five to seven years.
- ◆ The greater the bend in the hose, the shorter time the hose will last.
- ◆ Standard rubber hoses look strong until about one-half hour before they fail.
- ◆ The metal flexible hoses are guaranteed against bursting for the life of the washer.

You may want to check your dishwasher hoses and if they are the standard rubber, replace them with metal flexible hoses.

Exhaust Fans/ Dryer Vents & HVAC Blowers

Please remember to periodically check your bathroom exhaust fans, dryer vents and HVAC blowers for dirt and dust. A clean fan and vent will operate more efficiently and safely, saving you money on your electric bill.

The Service Specialties Inc. web site (www.ssihvac.com) includes coupons for saving \$ on your HVAC service.

Faith Mechanical, 703-930-3099, will service the fan coil unit for \$83 (\$65 labor plus \$18 coil cleaner).

Air-conditioning facts and tips:

- ◆ Our air-conditioning system is a central building system, which works in accordance with the outside air temperature.
- ◆ If the outside temperature is below 62 degrees, the air-conditioning system *will not* come on.
- ◆ When the system is operating normally, there will be a temperature difference of 14 degrees between the outside temperature and your unit.
- ◆ To help keep your unit cool you may want to keep your blinds/draperies closed, especially if you have a southern exposure (a rear-facing unit).
- ◆ Fans are helpful for moving the cool, air-conditioned air through your unit.

Window Screens

Need new screens? Contact the Management Office to order.

Small:	\$45
Medium:	\$55
Large:	\$65

Add \$5 per screen for installation.

Need New Windows?

If you are interested in joining a **window replacement program**, please leave your name and unit number with the Management Office. We are asking local vendors for reduced prices based upon a bulk purchase.

Storage Bins

Please let the office know which storage bin you are using.

Currently, the storage bin registration list contains many names of former residents and the Management Office wants to update it so that abandoned items can be removed and the bins reassigned to current residents. Also, in the event of a water leak or other unforeseen occurrence, an updated list will enable the office staff to call the resident whose bin is affected.

Bridge Players Wanted

Anyone interested in playing bridge, please contact Bill or Becky at 703-823-3072. Please leave a message if no one is there to take your call.

Some Reminders from the Management Office

Parking

Recent inspections found numerous vehicles parked in the parking structures without displaying proper parking stickers or hanging placards. This practice is in violation of the Parking and Towing Policy. All vehicles parked in the Sentinel of Landmark parking facilities must display either a Sentinel parking sticker or mirror hanger.

West Side Bridgeway Work

This project requires a large amount of work and will take several months, so be careful when walking between the building and the west garage. Updates on this project will be posted on the bulletin board near the mailboxes.

Elevators

Please do not prop the elevator doors open with packages or other objects, as this can cause damage to the elevator mechanisms. Also, please remember that some residents live directly across from the elevators, and they are subjected to noises that other residents don't have to cope with, such as loud conversations, elevator doors banging and beeping when propped open, and the sound of the alarm bells when activated. Please be courteous when waiting for the elevator, especially during the evening hours.

Many grocery and variety stores sell folding carts with wheels that you can use to transport parcels to your unit. Giant recently had them on sale for \$18.

Trash Room Usage

Please place all trash in plastic bags, tie the bags shut, and put the bags into the trash chute. Do not leave anything on the floor of the trash rooms. All newspapers and recycling materials are to be taken to the loading dock areas and placed in the proper receptacles. With warmer weather approaching, trash left on the floors will create unwanted odors and attract bugs.

Door-to-door Solicitations...

...of any type are prohibited with the exception of notices from Management.

Balconies

Balconies often get cluttered during the winter, usually starting with the holiday season. The weather is getting warmer so this would be a great time to inspect your balcony and remove any clutter. And, please remember that barbecuing of any type is prohibited on balconies ... there are grills in the gazebo area near the pool for your use.

Also, if you must smoke on the balcony, please refrain from throwing cigarette butts or matches off the balcony. We have had several incidents of small brush fires near the building which could have been very dangerous if they had not been caught early.

Barbecue Grills

The barbecue grills in the gazebo area are available for the use of all residents. Please note that reserving the Community Room does NOT provide exclusive use of the grills. Also, please remember that **BARBECUING ON THE BALCONIES IS PROHIBITED** by Sentinel regulations.

For better-tasting food with less air pollution, use the chimney starters with the grills:

- ◆ Place no more than two half-sheets (14"x22") of crumpled newspaper in the lower chamber (the part with the holes).
- ◆ Move the coal tray to the lowest position.
- ◆ Place the chimney starter on top of the grate, then pour charcoal briquettes into the top chamber.
- ◆ Light newspaper through hole with a match; wait 15-20 minutes for coals to be ready.
- ◆ **DO NOT LEAVE UNATTENDED.**
- ◆ Pour coals onto the tray and raise it to the desired distance from grill.

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Please direct comments and submissions to the

Sentinel Management Office, 703-823-1951 or sentinel.condo@comcast.net

The FITT Group @ RE/MAX Regal Properties, Inc.

30 April 2005

Dear Sentinel Owners and Residents,

The month of April 2005 was the most incredible month to date with regard to our local area real estate market.

Sales prices continue to climb as purchasers compete and contracts escalate. Meanwhile, interest rates continue to be most affordable with 6% and less still available. Interest-only loans are the most popular financing alternative in this appreciating market.

The FITT Group just sold Unit #611 on April 27. We had a total of four contracts and closed at \$282,000. This is currently the highest "closed" priced to date but there are two other listings under full contract which will close in May and will close higher.

One of those listings is a substantially upgraded unit that listed at \$309,900, and I am pleased to report to you that the RE/MAX listing agent says they are "at/about" that price. So you can continue to enjoy your equity!

I keep reminding you that condition and improvements do matter. Even in this market it is important to "sparkle and shine" to obtain the greatest interest and to achieve the highest possible price.

As an owner/agent at the Sentinel of Landmark since 1990, I know the building well and my partner and I welcome your calls or e-mails at any time.

Best regards,

Dorinda Fitt and Wallace B. Shuman

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