

HIDDEN VALLEY'S IMPORTANT INFO FOR RESIDENTS

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FOREWORD

Hello. I would like to take a moment to say thank you to all unit owners for their cooperation with the compliance of the Hidden Valley rules and regulations.

This is a great community and I am so happy to be here. I am sure many other unit owners feel the same.

Compliance of the rules and regulations results in all unit owners being happy and having a beautiful community.

Compliance also helps to keep the condo fee from increasing.

I believe some unit owners would be quite amazed at just how much upkeep is required for this community. And none of this upkeep is free of charge. We have numerous contractors and there are always maintenance expenses.

The Board cares a great deal about this community and spends a lot of time negotiating with existing contractors and finding new ones when necessary. This is done to help all unit owners.

The HVCA budget has very little room to absorb any contractor price increases which is why compliance to our rules and regulations is very much appreciated.

Some examples of how compliance helps all unit owners:

NEVER flushing wipes down the toilet ensures that the pumping station contractor doesn't have to get called to clear clogs. Unclogging the pumping station is a big expense.

ALWAYS breaking down boxes before tossing them into the recycle bin ensures that the bin doesn't fill up quickly. And also cutting them to be no larger than 3' x 5' as mandated by city of West Warwick.

Moving vehicles after snow storms to give the plows open parking lots makes it very easy for the plowing contractor. The easier we make it for the plowing contractor ensures us good prices when negotiating the winter contract.

These are just a few examples of how rules and regulations compliance can keep community expenses down.

Hopefully whatever info that you need can be found here.

Please email if it isn't.

Kim
Hidden Valley Secretary

UNIT OWNER CONTACT FORM

MANDATORY for all unit owners.

The Board must have a completed form from every owner. This includes owners who have their unit as a rental.

It is the owner's responsibility that the Board always has accurate info (**ESPECIALLY EMAIL ADDRESS AND PHONE #**) at all times. This is very important so unit owners can be contacted quickly if an emergency arises.

If any info changes are required, an email can be sent or a revised contact info form can be placed in the HVCA mailbox which is located on the main circle outside the gazebo.

If you sell your unit, please make the new buyer aware of this form which can be found on the Hidden Valley web site.

The home page of this site has a FORMS link at the top of the page.

There is a downloadable contact form there.

CONDO FEE

Condo fees apply to the month of payment.

Fees are due by the 1st of each month.

After the 10th a \$25 late fee will be added.

Please place your check into an envelope and write your unit # on the outside of the envelope and also on the check.

Drop the envelope in the HVCA mailbox which is located on the main circle outside the gazebo.

ASSIGNED PARKING SPACES

Each unit owns two parking spaces. Space #s will never change.

Refer to the link under FORMS for the space #s assigned to each unit.

MAILCHIMP community emails

Our Gmail account is not used for sending community emails.

Mailchimp is the web site used for sending all community emails.

ALWAYS read emails that you receive from Mailchimp.

These emails are to keep everyone informed about anything happening in the community, to advise about any issues, to provide various reminders and to share any important general info.

It is a good idea to add Mailchimp to your email account's address book.

For some reason there are times that Mailchimp emails go to recipients' Trash, Junk or Spam folder.

And for Gmail users – Mailchimp emails sometimes go onto the Promotions tab instead of the Inbox.

At the end of every Mailchimp community email there is a link "Add Mailchimp to your address book". If you click on this link, future emails should always go to your Inbox.

NOTE: There are times when an email may be a reminder for owners/residents to either do or not do something and failure to comply could result in a fine. Not reading a community email will never be grounds for waiving a fine if one results.

UNIT OWNER ANNUAL MEETINGS

There are two unit owner meetings each year:

1st Monday of June – Election of Officers

1st Monday of December – Budget

Unit owner meetings are extremely informative and there is always an open floor discussion at the end of each one.

Hidden Valley is a large property with numerous aging buildings.

The yearly budget has to cover numerous contractors, utilities and insurance.

It is the owner monthly fees that make upkeep, maintenance and improvement projects possible, so all owners should want to know how their money is being used.

The meeting venue is always local and only a short drive.

HIDDEN VALLEY GMAIL ADDRESS

hvcamain@gmail.com

All issues, concerns, questions, complaints, suggestions and compliments are to be emailed to this address.

The Secretary will forward the email to the appropriate Board member and may at times also reply to the email.

All Board members will reply in a timely manner which is typically within a few days.

Emails are not always checked on a daily basis so ALWAYS contact the police or fire department for emergencies.

The Board should never be contacted first for any emergency situation.

The Board does not get involved with personal issues between unit owners unless a rule or regulation is being violated.

HIDDEN VALLEY MASTER INSURANCE

Our policy is with Hanover Insurance Group. Refer to the Hanover and Acord links under FORMS at the top of the web site's main page for detailed info.

Very Important – Hidden Valley's master policy has a \$25,000 deductible per unit per incident for any claim that gets placed.

If a unit owner places a claim with Hanover, it is unit owner responsibility to pay this \$25,000 deductible.

If damages occur inside a unit as the result of an issue outside the building (such as ceiling water stains from a roof leak), repairs inside the unit would not be at the expense of the Association. The unit owner would have to place a claim with Hanover.

HVCA insurance does NOT cover any incidents/disasters that happen inside units (for example burst hot water tanks and leaking washing machines or dishwashers)

All unit owners should have their own homeowner's insurance.

It is very important that your personal homeowner's insurance agent knows the amount of Hidden Valley's master policy deductible. Your personal policy could be written to include covering the \$25,000 deductible in the event that a claim ever has to get placed.

If any incident happens in a unit and it's the result of an issue in a neighboring unit, the HVCA should not be involved unless damage in any affected unit exceeds the master policy's \$25,000 deductible.

The owners of the affected units should work together to resolve all problems and work with their own homeowner insurance companies.

SMOKE DETECTORS

All units have three hard wired smoke detectors – two inside and one in the outside utility closet.

If you lived in a single family house, it would be your responsibility to trouble shoot smoke detector “nuisance alarms” and to do battery changes.

The same holds true for smoke detectors in condominiums. They are unit owner responsibility.

DO NOT contact the Board for help with nuisance alarms and battery changes.

For the safety of other residents all detectors are on a hard wired circuit with either two or three units.

Therefore it is **very important** to know your neighbors so you can work together if alarms begin to sound. Especially if the sounding is a false alarm and the “nuisance” detector needs to be determined.

Hidden Valley has twelve buildings and each building has ten units.

Each building has the same hard wired circuit configuration.

The two units on one end (unit #s ending with 0 and 4) are connected to the same alarm system.

One garden unit below and two townhouses above (unit #s ending with 1, 5 and 6) are connected to the same alarm system.

One garden unit below and two townhouses above (unit #s ending with 2, 7 and 8) are connected to the same alarm system.

The two units on the other end (unit #s ending with 3 and 9) are connected to the same alarm system.

Humid weather tends to trigger nuisance alarms. And this is typically caused by the detector in the utility closet where it is not air conditioned. Humidity causes stickiness. This stickiness will collect dust particles, and these particles might interfere with the battery connection which might trigger the alarm. Dust particles might also collect on the smoke sensor which is inside the unit. Other causes for nuisance alarms can be cooking smoke, steam from a shower, a bug inside the detector or in the battery compartment or electrical power surges.

Procedure to follow if your detector sounds and it is a nuisance alarm:

1. Check all your detectors to see if one has a rapid blinking light. This typically determines the detector that is triggering the alarms. (Smoke detectors will have a rapid red light and the combo smoke/carbon monoxide detector will have a rapid green light.)
2. If one of your detectors does have the rapid blinking light, push the HUSH button. This will silence all detectors that are on the circuit.
3. If the detectors sound again, remove the batteries from the compartment.
4. Clean the compartment with a small brush, canned compressed air or a tissue.
5. Replace the batteries, close the compartment door and press the TEST button. All detectors on the circuit will sound during TEST mode. (Smoke detectors – push TEST button for approx. 5 seconds until the mode begins. Smoke/carbon monoxide combo detectors – push and release the TEST button.)

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT THE TEST BUTTON GETS PUSHED ANY TIME ANY DETECTOR IS UNATTACHED/REATTACHED TO THE HARD WIRE AND ALSO AFTER ANY BATTERY CHANGE!! THIS TEST IS HOW THE CIRCUIT RESETS ALL THE DETECTORS.

If none of your own detectors have the rapid blinking light, it is in one of the other units that are wired to your system.

Contact your neighbors to find this rapid blinking light.

If these steps fail and the alarms are still sounding, contact the Association.

All detectors should have a solid green light which indicates that the detector is connected to an electrical source.

The smoke only detectors will have a red light that flashes approximately once every 45 seconds. This indicates that the detector is functioning properly.

April 2021 every unit had three new detectors installed. **NEVER** remove and replace any of these detectors.

Hard wired circuits work best when all detectors are the same make and model. If you have a defective detector, the Association will replace it for you.

Once a year the Association hires an electrician to test all detectors in all units and also install new batteries in all detectors.

A community email gets sent in advance to provide date and time for your building's detector testing.

It is MANDATORY that someone be home so the electrician can enter.

A fine will get issued to any unit that cannot be entered during their building's scheduled visit.

A "chirping" detector indicates that the batteries need to get changed.

HOT WATER TANKS

VERY IMPORTANT to know how to react quickly if your water tank begins to leak.

This is especially important if you own a second floor unit where a failed hot water tank can cause significant water damage to your unit and the units below.

Know how to use the tank's water shut off knob.

Know which circuits in the electrical breaker box shut off the tank.

There should be a leak pan under the tank.

And there should be a leak detection/auto shut off system connected to the tank. There are many styles available in a range of prices.

Leak detection systems can significantly reduce the amount of damage created by a leaking hot water tank – both in your own unit and also a neighboring unit.

Have a 25' hose near the tank. If there is a leak, connect this to the tank and get the other end out a door or window.

If a leak happens:

First – use the tank's shut off knob

Second – electrical circuits get shut off

Third – attach hose

Please take notice of the age of your hot water tank. Most tanks are good for about 7 to 8 years, and they can go without any warning.

UNIT WATER SHUT-OFF KNOB

Every unit has a knob or valve that will shut off the water for the entire unit.

Townhouses – knob is on top of the hot water tank

Lower Units – knob is in front entry closet behind the vent that is near the floor

EXCEPTION – The upper end units **DO NOT** have their own main water shut off knob. The lower end unit for each building controls the main water shut off for the upper end unit that is above.

RECYCLING AND TRASH

There is only one recycling bin, so it is very important for recycling to be done properly to prevent the bin from filling up quickly.

The main cause for the bin filling quickly is boxes that are not being broken down. **Please email the Board if you see anyone not recycling properly.**

Fines do get issued for anyone who does not follow proper recycling procedure.

NEVER put boxes in any of the bins if they are not broken down or cut into pieces. This is extremely disrespectful to all other unit owners. There are many of us who need to dispose of our trash and recycling.

Styrofoam, plastic bags, pizza boxes, bubble wrap and other wrappings are NOT recyclable. Please dispose of these in the trash bins.

Hidden Valley gets fined by the recycling company if any incorrect items are in the recycling bin. Any fine is an unnecessary expense since it is easy to recycle properly.

For any unit having construction or remodeling work done all construction materials must be removed by the company doing the work. Construction and remodeling job items cannot be put into the Hidden Valley trash bins – even if it is the unit owner who is doing the job.

If you have large items to discard (such as mattresses, hot water tanks and furniture) or electronics, they must be brought to the dump.

West Warwick Public Works does not offer heavy trash pick up in condo communities.

DON'T LEAVE ITEMS ON GROUND IN THE DUMPSTER AREA. This will result with a fine. Any items outside of the bins will not be picked up for removal.

Failure to comply with any of the recycling and waste management rules will result in a \$50 fine.

HVAC (heating and air conditioning) SYSTEMS

Routine maintenance is necessary to help prevent issues with leaks and water damage.

As per the HVCA by-laws it is the responsibility of the unit owners to keep up with proper maintenance of their unit which includes the heating and air conditioning units.

It is recommended that all unit owners have a regular maintenance program to avoid issues with your own unit and with neighboring units. This will also avoid issues with your insurance.

DRYER LINT SCREENS AND VENTS

The lint screen should be cleaned after each dryer use. Failure to do this is a fire hazard.

The vent hose that leads from the dryer to the ceiling should be checked periodically and cleaned if necessary.

Screens and vents that are not clean are one of the top causes for fires!!

Also – it is recommended that doors to the laundry area are kept OPEN while running the dryer.

SPARE KEY HOLDERS / KEYLESS ENTRY KNOBS

It is strongly suggested that all owners purchase some type of spare key holder. If there is an emergency (such as a leaking hot water tank) and the unit owner is not at home, emergency personnel would have to break down the entry door. Replacing the door would be at unit owner's expense.

This type of situation could be avoided if there was a spare key holder.

The unit owner could be contacted and could advise where to find the key holder and how to access the spare key.

There are now also numerous styles of keyless entry door knobs. These door knobs have a reprogrammable combination pad, and the unit owner could be called for the combination during an emergency. Some can even be operated remotely to allow entry.

GAS GRILLS & FIRE TORCHES

By order of the West Warwick Fire Department gas grills are **NOT ALLOWED** on the decks of any unit at Hidden Valley or within 10' of the buildings.

Unit owners are allowed to have electric grills on decks.

No torches of any kind (tiki, citronella, etc) are allowed on decks or patios.

PUMP STATION

It seems that the pump station gets clogged a few times each year.

This is always an unexpected budget expense and it affects all unit owners.
ONLY FLUSH TOILET PAPER !!!

Anything else flushed will cause the pumps to clog and stop working.
If the pumps stop working, the result could be a back up of sewage material into lower units.

NEVER flush wipes of any kind, Kleenex, dental floss, cat litter, feminine products, diapers, paper towels, grease or cooking oils.

A clog could potentially damage a pump.
And replacing a pump would be very expensive.

MOUSE TRAPS

If you believe that you have mice, please **DO NOT** use poison as this will trap the mice inside the walls. Please use traps.

BIRD NESTS

If you notice a bird nest near your unit (lower deck, gutters, roof, etc) and it is causing an issue, please email the Board.

We cannot remove the nest if birds or eggs are still in it, but we will make note of the unit number and location for addressing the issue at the proper time of year when the birds will not be affected.

NEVER try to remove the birds or nest yourself.

If you have a problem with woodpeckers, please email the Board.

CIGARETTE BUTTS

These should **NEVER** be discarded around the buildings, in the parking areas or anywhere else throughout the complex.

Please always discard your cigarette butts in a proper receptacle.

NEVER dispose of freshly snuffed cigarette butts in the trash bins as this is a huge fire hazard.

Failure to comply with this is a violation of improper trash disposal on Hidden Valley grounds and will result in a fine.

UNIT SALES

If you are selling your unit, please send an email to the Board and advise. This will alert the Secretary to watch for emails with requests from the seller, buyer, realtors and banks.

Also be sure to give your realtor the HVCA email address for communicating all sales requests.

Fees do apply for certain requests from realtors and mortgage companies, and the Board must have these requests on file.

Please also relay that the HVCA requests a 7 day turnaround on all requested documents from outside vendors and agencies for resales.

The selling unit owner must provide the new buyer with a unit owner contact info form. This form can be found on the web site and must be completed by the new owner within two weeks after move in date.

The completed form can be placed in the HVCA mailbox which is located on the main road outside the gazebo or it can be emailed to Hidden Valley's Gmail address.

EXTERMINATOR

Hidden Valley currently has a contract with Big Blue Bug Solutions for all pest control issues on the exterior of units.

If any unit owner has an interior issue, it is your choice which exterminator to use since interior issues are unit owner expense.

If you want to use Big Blue, advise that you are a resident of Hidden Valley when you call.

Big Blue gives a discount to all unit owners in Hidden Valley as long as we contract with them.

Big Blue's phone number is (401) 941-5700

If the tech determines that the interior issue is the result of an exterior issue, the tech will advise the Hidden Valley VP of Buildings.

Unit owners are not responsible for a pest expense inside their unit if it is the result of an exterior issue.

MECHANICAL ROOMS

Every building has a mechanical room. It is located on the lower level behind a set of double doors.

This room **IS NOT** to be used for any reason by any unit owner.

National Grid, cable companies, firemen, police and other professionals need complete and uncluttered access to all mechanical rooms at all times.

NOTE: Please do not confuse mechanical rooms with the utility closet that every unit has off its deck.

Every unit owner has a utility closet off their deck, and this closet is included in the ownership of each unit.

This utility closet is the location of the HVAC system.

CLEANLINESS & MAINTENANCE

It is unit owner responsibility and expense to keep their unit's limited common areas clean and safe.

Examples of limited common areas are balconies, decks, patios and entrances to the front and rear of each unit.

Unit owners are required to keep proper maintenance of their units, and this maintenance is at owner expense.

This includes hot water tanks and regular servicing of HVAC units.

SPEED LIMIT

The speed limit is 15 miles per hour in Hidden Valley.

This limit is for the safety of all as we have many walkers here and also some children.

WINTER PROCEDURES

CHIMNEY CLEANING

PLEASE READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY!!

THIS IS FOR THE SAFETY OF EVERYONE IN HIDDEN VALLEY

MANDATORY to complete the chimney inspection/cleaning form **between September 1 and December 1** of **EVERY** year – regardless of whether or not you use your fireplace.

\$50 FINE FOR NON-COMPLIANCE

Chimney inspections and cleanings are NOT required if your fireplace does not get used or if it is gas.

HOWEVER – it is still necessary to complete this form every year.

It's important for HVCA to have these forms in case we are asked for them by our master insurance company. These forms show the insurance company that HVCA is taking steps to help prevent fires and keep the community safe. **Our insurance rate could increase if we are unable to produce forms if they get requested.**

IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING INSPECTIONS AND CLEANINGS:

For fireplaces that do get used a cleaning is required once every three years. The dated cleaning receipt must get attached to the completed chimney form for all the winter seasons that it covers.

IT IS NOT THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HVCA TO MAINTAIN THE CLEANING RECEIPTS FOR PREVIOUS YEARS.

IT IS OWNER RESPONSIBILITY TO KEEP THEIR OWN DATED RECEIPTS AND TO ATTACH THEM TO ALL APPLICABLE COMPLETED CHIMNEY FORMS.

This is obviously an extremely important rule since non-compliance could affect the safety of the entire community.

ICE MELT

Numerous containers of ice melt will be left outside each building prior to the winter season.

This is for use on steps and walkways.

Please **DO NOT** bring these containers inside your unit as they are to be shared by all unit owners.

The Board does not monitor these containers. It is the responsibility of the owners to contact the Board if a container is empty and needs to be refilled.

OUTSIDE WATER FAUCETS – SHUT OFF KNOBS

It is imperative that outside water faucets get turned off before extreme winter weather and freezing temperatures hit.

Failure to do this can result with frozen and burst pipes and expensive repair costs.

Please note that not all units have shut off knobs for the outside faucets.

If your unit does have a shut off knob:

First – Turn off the knob that is inside your unit.

Second – Open the outside faucet to drain the excess water. Keep the faucet open.

Lower level end units have two knobs.

One is for the outside faucet that is in front of the building. This knob is located in the front entry closet behind the vent that is near the floor.

One is for the outside faucet that is at the back of the building.

This knob is located with your hot water tank.

Second level cathedral ceiling units

The knob is located under the kitchen sink.

The water for the outside faucets will get turned on after winter ends and the temperatures get warm.

SNOW REMOVAL PROCEDURES

Hidden Valley recommends certain parking procedures for before snow begins and has mandatory procedures for moving vehicles after the snow ends.

These procedures were created to help both unit owners and the plowing crew.

During storms the plows always clear the main road first and then the parking lots. This continues throughout the duration of the storm.

Vehicles are to remain parked in the same space throughout a storm.

DO NOT move vehicles around the parking lots while it is still snowing as this makes it difficult for the plowing crew to do their job.

Unit owners can use Visitor parking spaces when there are snow storms.

If there are orange cones set around a specific area prior to a storm, please **DO NOT** park in the blocked off area. The plows sometimes need an area reserved to dump excess snow while they are in the complex working.

Any vehicles in the blocked off area will get towed at the unit owner's expense and a \$100 fine will be imposed.

Vehicles cannot park in the cul-de-sac before and during snow storms. This area is reserved for the plowing crew's equipment.

Very important that vehicles are not moved to the main road before the storm has ended and the main road has been plowed.

Failure to comply with this rule will result in a \$100 fine.

It is the unit owner's responsibility to advise any guests about the Hidden Valley snow removal rules and ensure that the guests do not park in spaces that belong to other unit owners.

Depending upon the severity of a storm the plowing and walkway cleaning may not begin until the heaviest of the storm has passed.

Please refrain from contacting the Board to ask when plowing crews are going to arrive.

Unit owners may have to shovel behind their vehicles if there is a storm with high accumulation.

The plows can only get so close behind vehicles, and the plowing crew does not do any shoveling behind or between vehicles.

This site's home page has a section for Snowstorm Procedures.

Please refer to the links in that section for vehicle moving instructions.

There is one link with parking suggestions for before the snow begins.

There is one link with the mandatory instructions for vehicles moving after the snow ends.

It is necessary for the Board to be extremely strict with snow removal procedure rules. Someone not complying will affect the safety of others if an area is not able to get cleaned.

All unit owners must work together to make it as easy as possible for the plows to get their job done.

If the plowing contractor determines that Hidden Valley is a difficult property to plow, this will get reflected in the price that the contractor charges us.

We would be considered difficult if vehicles don't move after storms and the plowing crew has to try and plow around a lot of vehicles.

It is much easier for the plows to clean large open areas of parking lots.

PLAN AHEAD BEFORE THE START OF EVERY WINTER SEASON FOR MOVING VEHICLES

There has to be someone to move your vehicle after a storm ends if you are not going to be able to do it yourself (such as if you are not going to be home or if you happen to be sick).

This is New England so we all know that snow storms can happen suddenly.

Storms are forecast days in advance. If you think you will have an issue getting your vehicle moved, speak with a neighbor, friend or family member.

It is not the Board's responsibility to help with moving vehicles.

Sending an email to the Board to advise that you will not be able to move your vehicle will not prevent you from receiving a fine.

We typically don't get hit with many storms so the inconvenience of having to move vehicles doesn't happen often.

If we make it easy for the plows to get their job done, there shouldn't be any reason for the contractor to want to increase his price.

LOWER LEVEL UNITS – ENTRY CLOSETS

The outside wall in the front entry closet for all the lower units contains the water pipe that leads up to the second level units.

There is insulation around the water pipe however there have been a few times that temperatures have gotten cold enough to freeze some pipes.

And in some cases the frozen pipes have burst which causes many issues and a lot of costly damage.

To prevent this from happening it is strongly urged that during the winter months the door on this front entry closet be kept open just a tiny bit – just enough so a bit of heat can get inside the closet.