

CAI - LI Chapter News

Serving Long Island, New York

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HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS FOR NEW YORK RESIDENTS

By DANA EINSIDLER, MARKETING DIRECTOR - EINSIDLER MANAGEMENT, INC.



When it comes to hurricane preparedness, it is always best to prepare and plan for your home ahead of time. In the event that a hurricane reaches New York, or we experience extreme weather resulting from a

tropical storm or hurricane nearby, all residents should review the safety tips below:

- ◆ **Pay close attention** to local and regional weather reports. Recommended Phone App: [NOAA Weather Radar Live](#).
- ◆ **When a storm is about to approach**, remove or secure all loose items from your terrace, patio, deck, etc. as high winds can cause loose items to damage your home or community association.

- ◆ Make sure that you know how to contact management and your superintendent (if applicable) in the event of an emergency. Additionally, **update your contact information** with your property manager if you have any changes or updates.
- ◆ **Be sure to have a first-aid kit** containing all medications necessary for your family should a storm hit the area. Additionally, stock up on important medications.
- ◆ **In case of a power outage**, stock up on canned food and have a manual can opener. Be sure to have enough food to last several days for each family member, including pets.
- ◆ **The recommended quantity of drinking water to stock per person** is approximately one gallon of water per person, per day anticipating coverage for at least three days.

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PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

By ROSEMARY CLAUS - SPRING MEADOWS AT HAUPPAUGE, AND CAI - LI CHAPTER PRESIDENT 2024



Ugh! The dreaded topic of increasing the maintenance fees. It is always “that time of year” again, at anytime of the year, month, or day. Many of us are familiar with what to consider when creating the budget. However, what drives the process? Is the focus on achieving a particular vision for the community? Avoiding conflict with the community? Solely looking to avoid increasing dues?

Deferring maintenance is a common way to keep dues steady, but it always leads to higher costs in emergency repairs and purchases later on. A slight increase in dues to properly maintain common areas and equipment now prevents a larger expense and bigger problems down the road. Things are getting more expensive: insurance fluctuates, utilities increase, and salaries go up. A loan or special assessment will be much harder on each resident than those small steady increases.

Every board wants to save as much money as they can, but using funds intelligently will end up saving more cash. It is said the best boards find a way to avoid getting comfortable with the status quo and address problems proactively.

As board members, we are aware of our duty to the community that includes protecting property values, and dues/maintenance fees are an investment that helps do just that. Raising maintenance fees or HOA dues is always a touchy subject. So how can a fiscally conscious board fulfill its duty to the community while keeping conflict and anger at a minimum? **Communication and consistency are the two key items.**

Reframe the topic so that community shareholders/homeowners see just how much increases in dues, especially small, steady ones, are in their best interest. A raise in fees/dues may be the most beneficial thing that a board can implement. In fact, many reports state that an increase every year is essential to the well-being of a healthy community.

Back in 2023, CAI published an article on condominiums, co-ops, and homeowners associations confronting rising insurance premiums, maintenance fees and operating costs. Inflation continues to drive up material and supply costs. The article stated that communities could be facing increased assessments due to growing operating costs and expenses. This article outlines best practices and considerations for communities when forecasting a financial plan, including current inflation conditions directly impacting condos, co-ops, and homeowners associations. <https://www.caionline.org/PressReleases/Pages/CONDOMINIUMS-AND-HOMEOWNERS-ASSOCIATIONS-CONFRONT-RISING-INSURANCE-PREMIUMS,-MAINTENANCE-FEES,-AND-OPERATING-COSTS.aspx>.

Hope everyone is having a great summer and please remember to register for our Long Island Trade Show - it’s Saturday, October 19th! ■

Rosemary

You may reach Rosemary via email at rec1227@verizon.net.

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- ◆ **If you have a cooler, fill it with ice** and perishables, i.e. —milk, meat, etc., prior to a storm. Additionally, keeping your fridge and freezer closed will allow for perishables to last longer.
- ◆ **Fill your car(s) with gas before a storm**, and stay off the roads during a storm. After a storm, use extreme caution when leaving or returning to your home.
- ◆ **Keep cash at the ready** in the event that ATMs are unavailable after a storm.
- ◆ **Make sure you have flashlights, a battery—powered radio, and extra batteries.** Additionally, charge your external power banks for your phone. Prepare your phone with useful apps for digital natural disaster preparedness.
- ◆ **If the local and/or state authorities direct residents to evacuate**, their instructions must be followed for your safety. Inform family, friends, and neighbors of your plans. Have an evacuation plan ahead of time so that you and your family are prepared in the event that leaving your home is necessary.

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CAI - LONG ISLAND NEWSLETTER

The CAI - Long Island Newsletter is published quarterly by the Long Island Chapter of Community Associations Institute (CAI-LI) and is distributed to its members and is available on the Chapter website (www.cai-li.org). This publication provides members of CAI with letters from the Chapter President, informative articles written by industry professionals and service providers, updates on current legislation, and business advertising. The Chapter strives to provide our members with timely information and tools needed to keep them informed on community association issues.

The Newsletter Committee is always looking for new articles to publish. Articles should be educational, non-promotional in nature, and have a suggested word count between 500 and 1,500 words. CAI-LI retains the right to edit articles to conform to content and space requirements.

If you are interested in submitting an article for possible inclusion, please contact Christine M. Majid, Chapter Executive Director, at info@cai-li.org.

Quarterly Deadlines

Winter Issue - January 31

Summer Issue - July 31

Spring Issue - April 30

Autumn Issue - October 31

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If you would like to reserve space in the next newsletter, just let us know the preference of your ad space:

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Annual pre-paid packages are available offering a 10% discount and include placements in 4 continuous issues.

Do you have an ad ready now? If so, send it along and we will keep it on file until needed. Any questions, please let us know.

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- ◆ **Before an emergency, register for local alerts** such as [Smart-911](#).
- ◆ **Don't forget to check in on elderly neighbors** before, during, and after a storm.
- ◆ **Plan for your pets if you have any.** Additionally, include pet food, pet medications, and ample water when planning an emergency kit for your household.
- ◆ Before or after a tropical storm or hurricane, stay cool during a heatwave should the temperature spike. ■

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CAI Long Island Chapter Educational Seminar - May 23, 2024 - Fairfield at St. James HOA Emergencies! What to Do?

Presented by Thomas C. Lowenberg, CPA, Partner - Fuller Lowenberg & Co., CPAs, P.C.
Dan Keegan, Assistant Chief St. James FD and Deputy Chief Suffolk County EMS
Suzanne Borelli - Belfor Property Restoration
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June 5, 2024 - Watermill in Smithtown, NY

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NO GOOD DEED GOES UNPUNISHED... THE UNEXPECTED, BUT REAL, LIFE OF A VOLUNTEER BOARD MEMBER

By NANCY FOX, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS - CAMCO SERVICES OF NY, INC.



So you move into an HOA community and just love it! You've just retired and have some time to spare so you decide to volunteer for the board.

You begin to learn about the intricacies of your community's finances, the infrastructure, you learn how to engage contractors and now you are starting to understand what a contract does!

You never spoke to more attorneys, accountants, engineers, and landscapers, in your life!

Someone explains to you the job description of a board member, and now this thing called "fiduciary responsibility" looms over you and compels you to rush in where angels fear to tread!

And this strange thing begins to happen...you expected your friends and neighbors to be appreciative of your volunteerism and your dedication, but instead, they are angry at you.

Wait, what??? This isn't what I signed up for. This isn't what I expected.

Allow me to state the obvious, aging communities across Long Island are facing some impressive challenges. Although many boards have diligently and faithfully put away monies toward reserves for future repairs, maintenance, and yes, capital improvements in their communities, no one could have foreseen the state of the economy we are experiencing now. No matter how conservative the budget, or how aggressive the saving plan was, board members are finding the cost of replacing roofs, resurfacing roads, renovating aging sewage treatment plants, or, for that matter, just day-to-day maintenance of their facilities, are far beyond what they expected, and would quickly ravage even the most impressive coffers of any reserve account. And don't even mention the cost of insurance premiums spiraling into outer space!

It's frightening.

Additionally, I believe that we are all suffering from what I call PTCS – Post Traumatic Covid Syndrome. Have you noticed that everyone is impatient, quick to lose their temper, and quick to argue with you? We have lost our ability to speak graciously with one another, with respect and with openness to hear one another's hearts and intentions. And surprisingly,

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this reaction seems to often be coming from me! Also, let's remember that many of us are still grieving the loss of loved ones from the recent pandemic. We feel vulnerable and many things around us are out of our control.

May I suggest that **we need to be kinder** to one another?

So, here you are, serving your community, trying to find ways to pay for things that **MUST** get done, because it's your "fiduciary duty", you spend untold hours in meetings, sleepless nights struggling for creative ways to come up with the funds needed, without having your wife leave you and your angry neighbors coming for you at night with pitchforks and torches! We can't afford to increase our common charges. We are struggling just to maintain our own household budgets.

So imagine your neighbors' reactions when you suddenly announce that the board has decided to borrow \$3 million to repave the roads and there will be a special assessment of \$15,000 per household, but don't worry, you can pay it in 3 months.

I can tell you what their reaction is. I'm seeing it happen across



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Long Island. Many of you can tell me of your own "war" stories.

They are angry, this is out of their control, and they don't like it. What happened to all that money they've been paying every month for the last 15 years and the Board has been putting into a reserve for this expense?

I watch good people, who are sometimes called board members, be accused of all sorts of despicable things when they announce that they are imposing a special assessment. Or worse yet, getting sued.

I wonder if there's a way to lessen the shock and move to an acceptance of this inevitable action in a less reactive way. I think we can try. I think the difference is that board members have had more time to process the situation.

TIME TO PROCESS.

I'd like to suggest that board members could begin to have more frequent "family meetings" to talk about impending decisions, and the challenges. Try bringing your neighbors into the process, like, "We have been talking about some big

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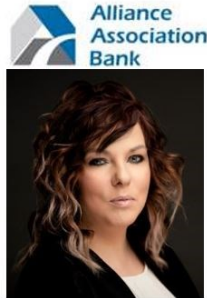
ticket items coming down the pike for our community, and after getting quotes, it is becoming very obvious that we don't have enough in our reserves, and this is why". This inclusion gives them time to process the situation as well as some sense of control over the outcome.

So, why not try it on? You will still have some who will insist that you do it their way, but hopefully, you will find more who will work with you in finding viable solutions for everyone.

I think it's a good place to start.

What do you think? ■

Do you have a question or a comment to share? You may reach Nancy at #631-476-2100 or via email at nancyf@camcoservicesny.com. Additionally, you may visit CAMCO Services of NY, Inc. online at www.camcoservicesny.com.



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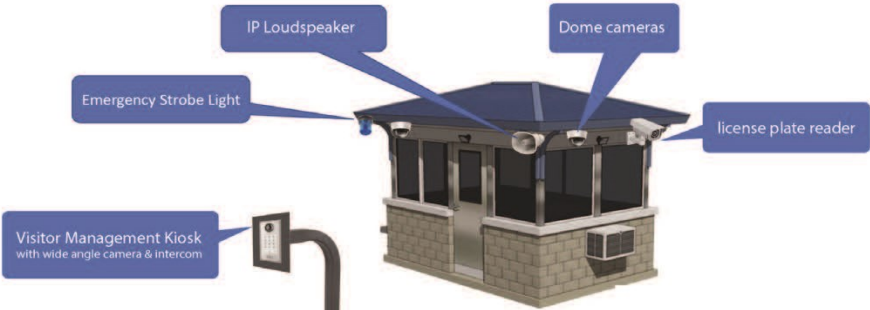
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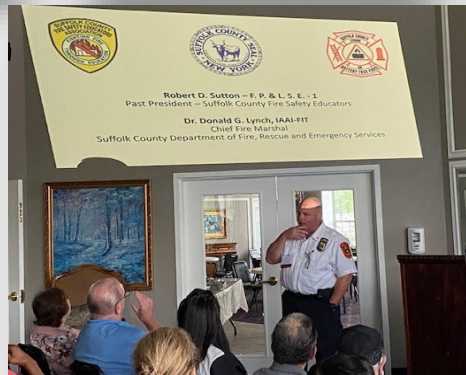


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CAI Long Island Chapter Educational Seminar - July 18, 2024 - Summerfield HOA Updating Your Amenities

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Dr. Donald G. Lynch, Chief Fire Marshal of Suffolk County Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services
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TURNING YOUR BIGGEST HEADACHE INTO YOUR BIGGEST ASSET

By SOLITUDE LAKE MANAGEMENT

Lakes and ponds captivate us due to our innate attraction to water, making them popular focal points in HOAs and residential communities. Unfortunately, weeds, algae, muck, and erosion can make your waterbody noticeable for the wrong reasons, potentially leading to complaints, safety hazards, infrastructure damage, and a bruised reputation. Healthy waterbodies contribute to happy communities and managing them should never be a headache.

For most communities, the ideal waterbody is balanced, functional, and beautiful—and achieving this trifecta can be challenging. However, proactive, environmentally-responsible management solutions can help stakeholders amplify its benefits and maximize the value that it adds to their property.

Promoting Ecological Balance

Nuisance weed and algae growth, bottom muck, and foul odors may signify nutrient imbalances in the water. Excess nutrients can enter the water through runoff from construction sites, fertilized lawns and gardens, agricultural land, dog parks, or polluted areas. Water quality imbalances jeopardize the health of aquatic ecosystems and can create prime conditions for cyanobacteria (blue-green algae), which produce toxins that are harmful to humans and potentially deadly to wildlife, livestock, and dogs.

If water quality testing reveals significant imbalances, several eco-friendly solutions are available to help counteract and prevent them.

Nutrient remediation

Nutrient remediation can help communities achieve cleaner water that's less hospitable to weeds and algae. Several eco-friendly products are available to remove excess nutrients from both the water column and sediments, leading to long-lasting improvements in water quality. To recommend the right solution, experts assess waterbody size, function, and degree of water movement.



Biologicals

Biological bacteria help make the decomposition of nutrient-rich bottom muck more efficient, which can help alleviate foul odors, improve water clarity, and prevent imbalances. More importantly, depth and volume may be restored as muck decomposes, reducing flood risks and allowing stakeholders to prolong the need for physical removal via dredging, which most communities need at least a decade to budget for.

Dissolved oxygen

Dissolved oxygen (DO) aids bacteria in the breakdown of muck and is crucial to support aquatic life. DO-rich waterbodies often provide fantastic fishing and beautiful views. However, DO can become depleted due to high temperatures, abundant sunlight, or stagnation. Submersed aerators are one of the more common solutions to promote DO, but other new technologies are showing promise by producing higher DO concentrations with longer-lasting results.

Promoting Functionality

One of the most important functions of waterbodies is the collection of water during rainstorms. Failure to do so can

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result in dangerous consequences like flooding in the community. It's important to conduct regular inspections to help stakeholders identify potential impediments and develop a plan to repair or restore them.

Shoreline restoration

Erosion is natural, but it can be accelerated by human activities. Beyond being an eyesore, eroded shorelines can collapse and injure residents, guests, or landscapers, leading to potential lawsuits. Professionals utilize bioengineering techniques to rebuild eroded shorelines by filling geotextile mesh with sediment, shaping it to natural contours, and anchoring it securely. Native vegetation or sod is then planted over the material, creating a living shoreline that restores waterfront land, helps improve water quality and enhances property values.

Muck removal

Eroded sediment progresses into muck that may clog stormwater equipment, reduce depth, and impede drainage. During storms, floodwater can damage building foundations, roads, and other infrastructure. Muck and debris removal are key to preventing this. A hydro-rake,



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similar to a floating backhoe, can restore depth to areas with high sediment accumulation. This may help prolong or prevent the need for more costly dredging, allowing communities to divert funds to more urgent projects.

Promoting Beauty

While naturally breathtaking, lakes and ponds can be enhanced through color, movement, and lighting to fulfill different aesthetic needs. Goals can vary significantly among stakeholders, and a wide range of options are available to customize waterbodies of all shapes and sizes.

Fountains

Often placed in high visibility areas like community entrances, fountains provide eye-catching beauty and intrigue that may make a community more desirable to new residents and help increase property values. With intricate water patterns, graceful silhouettes, and night-time lighting elements, they can be highly customized. Fountains also provide added benefits of circulation and adding oxygen near the surface of the water.

Vegetative buffers

Though native vegetation is primarily recommended to help

Continued on Page 17

Long Island Chapter Calendar of Events

Wednesday, September 18th - 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

*Chapter Membership Meeting
with Educational Presentation*

“Safety: Security and Emergency Planning”

Half Hollow Hills Library

Lecture Room

55 Vanderbilt Parkway, Dix Hills

Saturday, October 19th - 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Annual Trade Show

Free Attendance for Community Board Members

Hilton Long Island

598 Broad Hollow Road, Melville

Saturday, November 2nd - 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

*Board Leadership Development Workshop
for Community Association Board Members*

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

*Sponsored by Taylor, Eldridge & Endres, P.C. and
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Thursday, November 14th - 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

*Chapter Membership Meeting
with Educational Presentation*

“Special Assessments”

Summerfield HOA - Clubhouse

74 Summerfield Drive, Holtsville

Wednesday, December 11th - 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

*Chapter Holiday Party and
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stabilize shorelines and prevent erosion, they can also serve as a beautiful accent by framing a waterbody with colorful plants and flowers. Moreover, buffer vegetation helps filter stormwater runoff, reducing the influx of excess nutrients and promoting clean water that is less prone to weeds and algae.

Pond dye

Few things are as beautiful as the reflection of a sunset on glistening water. For communities that wish to maintain a vibrant look throughout the day, eco-friendly pond dyes are a great option. Customizable shades of blue can create a welcoming, pristine appearance while still looking natural. Pond dyes may also help limit the penetration of sunlight, slowing the process of photosynthesis and the subsequent weed and algae growth and DO depletion.

Overseeing a waterbody may seem like a blessing and a curse at times. As aquatic experts, we view it as an amazing opportunity to not only improve the appearance and value of a property, but most importantly, enhance lives. By focusing on proactive, sustainable management strategies, you can better sidestep the headaches and instead help your community enjoy the long-term financial, physical, and spiritual rewards. ■

If you have questions, or wish to learn more about this topic, please contact SOLitude Lake Management at #855.34.3545 or visit solitudelakemanagement.com.



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