

CAI - LI Chapter News

Serving Long Island, New York

Published by the Long Island Chapter of CAI

Issue No. 71 – Winter 2026

DON'T OVERLOOK YOUR DRYER VENT: A CRITICAL MAINTENANCE TASK FOR EVERY COMMUNITY

By EMMA AND MIKHAIL GRAYTSER - DRYER VENT WIZARD OF SUFFOLK COUNTY



When most property owners think about routine maintenance, the dryer vent is rarely the first item that comes to mind. Yet this small, often-forgotten system plays a

major role in building safety, appliance efficiency, and overall indoor air quality. According to the U.S. Fire Administration, thousands of residential fires each year originate from clothes dryers—most of which stem from improper venting or lint buildup.

For community associations, proactive dryer vent maintenance is not only a best practice but a vital step in protecting residents, reducing liability, and extending the life of shared or in-unit laundry appliances. Here's what every board and property manager should know.

Why Dryer Vents Matter More Than You Think

The purpose of a dryer vent is simple: remove hot, moist air and lint from the machine and expel it safely outside the building. When the vent is obstructed, the dryer must work harder, temperatures rise, and lint—an extremely flammable material—can accumulate in dangerous quantities.

A neglected dryer vent can lead to:

- **Fire hazards** due to trapped lint and overheating
- **Longer drying times**, leading to resident complaints and higher utility use
- **Increased wear on the appliance**, shortening its lifespan
- **Humidity problems**, including mold growth in laundry areas
- **Excessive heat**, affecting both equipment and nearby building materials

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By TODD WEISBROT - ACCREDITED PROPERTY MANAGEMENT AND CAI - LI CHAPTER PRESIDENT 2026



It is truly an honor and pleasure to introduce myself as President of CAI's Long Island Chapter for 2026. For those that I haven't had the pleasure to meet or work with, my name is Todd Weisbrot, and I am Principal of Accredited Property Management, a Property Management company proudly serving HOA, Condominium, and Cooperative communities across Long Island.

I couldn't be more excited for the year ahead and for the opportunity to serve as your Chapter President. I am fortunate to do so alongside a dedicated and talented Board of Directors whose guidance, collaboration, and commitment are invaluable. I would like to recognize and thank Christine Majid, our outstanding Chapter Executive Director. We are lucky to work with such a consummate professional and on behalf of our Board, I thank Christine for everything she does to keep our Chapter strong, organized, and successful. I'd also like to express my sincere appreciation to our past President, Joanna Pawlowska, and the entire Board for an exceptional 2025. The momentum created last year was tremendous, and I look forward to building upon that success to achieve even greater growth in 2026! That growth, however, can only be achieved through increased participation and collaboration from our community member leaders and our expanding Business Partner network. We want to hear from you!

Professionally, I have always been a highly driven and energetic leader, passionate about inspiring and motivating others to succeed. I am equally passionate about this Chapter because I truly believe in the impact our CAI Long Island Chapter can have on strengthening our member communities and empowering Board members. That impact is driven through meaningful education and access to a diverse and knowledgeable

network of Business Partner members who provide insight, expertise, and real-world perspective.

This new year provides an opportunity to focus on education as a tool to build stronger communities and more confident, informed Board members. When homeowners, unit owners, or shareholders alike understand the "why" behind decisions, compliance improves and conflict decreases. Prioritizing education aligns directly with CAI's mission and supports healthier relationships between Boards and their residents.

We strongly encourage increased community participation at our meetings and events. Greater engagement allows us to better understand your ideas, interests, concerns, and challenges, and ensures that our Board remains focused on what matters most to our members. In response, we plan to expand educational offerings, introduce more opportunities for community members to ask questions, and create forums where members can share knowledge and experiences to benefit others. We will also continue exploring additional online and remote educational opportunities for those unable to attend monthly meetings or seeking more targeted discussions.

Expanding our Business Partner network will remain a personal priority for me. While the Board and Business Partnership committee have done an outstanding job building a comprehensive network, my goal is to grow it even further. Our Business Partner members provide far more than services; they bring understanding, context, awareness, justification, and education as to the "why" that elevates our entire community. I encourage you to recommend vendors and service providers you believe would add value to the Chapter. I will continue to lead the Business Partner Committee this year, and I welcome anyone interested in volunteering. Should you be interested in joining me on the Business Partner committee, or to hear about other committee involvement opportunities, please reach out to me directly at tweisbrot@accreditedpm.com.

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Proper vent maintenance is not optional—it's essential.

How Often Should Dryer Vents Be Cleaned?

Most industry professionals recommend a full cleaning at least once per year, though certain situations warrant more frequent service:

- **Large families or multifamily buildings** with heavy laundry usage
- **Vents with long runs**, elbows, or bends that trap lint
- **Shared laundry rooms**, where lint buildup occurs faster
- **Units that share a common vent line**, requiring coordinated clean-outs

Annual cleaning keeps systems functioning efficiently and prevents small obstructions from becoming dangerous blockages.

Signs a Dryer Vent May Be Clogged

Property managers should stay alert for warning signs that a building's dryer vent system needs attention:

- Clothes taking longer than one cycle to dry
- Excess lint around the dryer or vent cap
- A musty smell from laundry or the laundry room
- The dryer or surrounding area feeling unusually hot
- Residents reporting repeated dryer issues



Never ignore these indicators; even minor symptoms can mask major vent problems.

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WHAT VIOLATIONS OR NEGLIGENCE ISSUES DO THE STATES COME AFTER HOAS FOR MOST FREQUENTLY?

By SOLITUDE LAKE

If you manage or serve on the board of a homeowners association, you have a lot on your plate, from property and facilities maintenance to administrative tasks and addressing resident concerns. Prioritizing can be difficult when seemingly everything demands your attention, but stormwater pond management cannot fall off your priority list. Neglecting to properly manage these important structures could lead to regulatory violations, fines, and costly equipment damage.

We understand that you're stretched thin. That's why we've put together a comprehensive outline of the most common stormwater pond violations among HOAs and expert tips to help ensure you pass your next stormwater pond inspection.

What is a stormwater pond?

Many property managers find themselves responsible for stormwater ponds without fully understanding what they are or why they matter. Most focus on cosmetic concerns like fountain spray patterns or keeping algae and weeds at bay. These are important things that residents care about and that help make a community look welcoming to new members, but aesthetics aren't the primary purpose.

These systems are designed to prevent flooding by capturing and filtering stormwater during rainstorms and then safely diverting it downstream. Stormwater ponds may be composed of many different components, including inflows, outflows, forebays, dams, and emergency spillways.

What are HOAs responsible for?

HOAs are responsible for ensuring their stormwater systems function as originally designed. However, in most cases, property managers don't have access to the "as-built" plans, either because they weren't transferred by the community developers or they were lost over time. Even when plans exist, reading them isn't intuitive.

What do inspections focus on?

Depending on the regulatory body, HOAs may or may not be given notice ahead of an inspection. Inspectors are there to assess if a stormwater pond is in proper working order. Fines typically come into play when structural damage poses immediate flooding threats and/or when required repairs are delayed or ignored. Fines can vary from \$50–\$100 per day to several

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Best Practices for Community Associations

To safeguard shared spaces and individual units, associations should implement clear policies around dryer vent maintenance.

1. Schedule Routine Professional Cleaning

DIY cleaning kits cannot reach the full length of most vent systems, especially in multi-unit buildings. Professional technicians use high-powered equipment to remove all lint, debris, and obstructions.

2. Educate Residents About In-Unit Responsibilities

Residents should clean the lint trap after every load and avoid overloading machines. Providing seasonal reminders in newsletters or lobby postings can go a long way.

3. Inspect Exterior Vent Covers

Every vent outlet should be clear of vegetation, nests, and obstructions. Louvers must open easily to allow proper airflow.



4. Avoid Plastic or Foil Flex Hoses

These materials can sag, trap lint, and even melt. Associations should require rigid or semi-rigid metal ducting, which is safer and more durable.

5. Document All Maintenance

Keeping detailed records not only helps with scheduling but also provides essential documentation for insurance and liability purposes.

The Bottom Line

A clean and properly functioning dryer vent system is one of the simplest—and most cost-effective—ways to reduce fire risk, improve appliance performance, and maintain a safe living environment for residents. By making dryer vent maintenance a regular part of your community's building care plan, you can help ensure safety, preserve property value, and avoid preventable emergencies. ■

You may contact Emma at egraytser@dryerventwizard.com, call her at #516.263.5712, or visit the company's website at www.dryerventwizard.com.



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Continued from Page 5

thousand dollars per day, depending on the particular violation and municipality.

The following are some of the most common problem areas that put HOAs at risk of violations.

Sediment build-up: Eroded sediment tends to build up around inflows and outflows, and limit a pond's capacity to hold water. During storms, this could result in flooding that endangers residents, damages surrounding infrastructure, and further destabilizes the shoreline.



Blocked inlets: Items like plastic bags, trash, lawn debris, sticks, and aquatic weeds often get caught in inlet structures, preventing stormwater from flowing properly.



Tree growth: This is one of the most common issues inspectors look for. Small inconspicuous saplings eventually become larger trees. If a tree falls on a stormwater pond dam during a storm, it

can cause significant damage and result in flooding.

Rock placement: Large rocks are often placed around outflows to slow water and prevent erosion. Inspectors keep an eye out for areas where rocks are missing or displaced.



Pipe separation: Over time, pipes made of concrete or corrugated metal can separate if the ground shifts, leading to dangerous bank collapses.

Animal activity: Rodents like nutria and muskrats burrow into pond banks. Their tunnel systems can weaken the structural integrity of the shoreline.

How can your HOA prepare for inspections?

Inspections are guaranteed sooner or later, and they often uncover stormwater pond issues that need quick action. Regulators may give as little as 30 days to make repairs—would your budget be ready to cover those unexpected costs?

A proactive mindset can help your community avoid these situations. Working with a pond management partner can provide peace of mind that stormwater pond issues are identified and addressed before your next inspection. For example, removing small trees from a dam or hydro-raking organic build-up is far cheaper than repairing a collapsed shoreline or dredging a pond that's filled in—projects that can cost upward of a million dollars and typically take decades to budget for.

Experienced aquatic experts understand local regulatory requirements, which can vary between states and municipalities. They're also trained in properly interpreting as-built stormwater pond design plans and can help you access certified copies if you don't have them on hand.

You juggle enough responsibilities already. Contact an aquatic expert to help make stormwater pond management one less thing to worry about. ■

You may contact Lynda at lynda.maschue@solitudelake.com, or visit the company's website at www.solitudelake.com.





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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

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Summer Issue - July 31

Spring Issue - April 30

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SMART UPGRADES, STRATEGIC SAVINGS: HOW LONG ISLAND CAN BENEFIT FROM ENERGY EFFICIENCY INCENTIVES

By ROB SEDAGHATPOUR - STRATCO PROPERTY SOLUTIONS



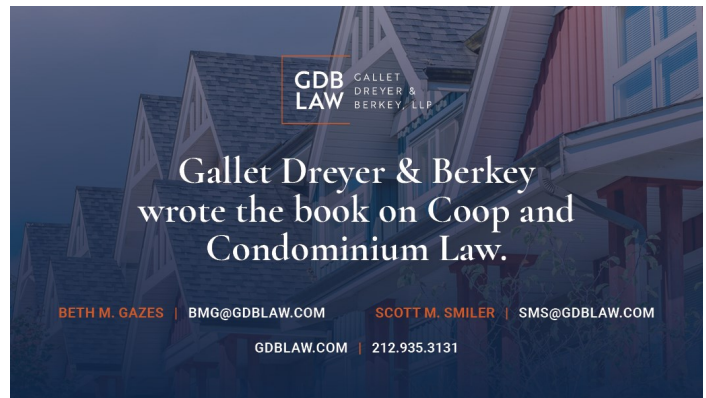
As Long Island communities continue to face rising utility costs, aging infrastructure, and new climate regulations, energy efficiency upgrades are no longer just “nice to have” they’re becoming essential.

Why Windows and HVAC Matter Most

Among the most impactful areas to address are windows and HVAC systems. Old, drafty windows are a major source of heat loss, especially in older buildings. Replacing them with high performance, energy efficient models can dramatically improve comfort for residents while reducing long term heating and cooling costs. But the value isn’t just in the energy savings there are multiple state and utility programs that offer significant financial support for these upgrades. PSEG Long Island offers incentives for multifamily energy improvements, and NYSEERDA, the state’s energy authority, provides tailored programs specifically for buildings that house low to moderate income residents or that fall within Disadvantaged Communities (DACs). In fact, the State has committed over \$1 billion through 2030 to support improvements like new windows, insulation, and HVAC systems in buildings just like these. What this means for community association boards is that long deferred projects may now be more financially viable than expected.

Unlocking Incentives for Smart Improvements

Windows, often one of the most visible and high impact upgrades, can now be bundled with building assessments and envelope improvements to qualify for prescriptive or performance based rebates. Boards that act proactively may also find themselves aligned with their municipality’s sustainability goals. More than a dozen Long Island towns and cities now participate in New York State’s Climate Smart Communities (CSC) program, which prioritizes energy efficiency and climate resilience in buildings. These programs aren’t just about



lowering emissions, they can lead to smoother planning approvals, access to additional grant funding, and stronger support from local stakeholders.

Preparing for the All Electric Future

HVAC is another critical area. Many Long Island co-ops still rely on aging boilers or individual fossil fuel systems that are expensive to run and difficult to maintain. With the All-Electric Buildings Act taking effect in stages beginning in 2026, the trend is clearly shifting toward heat pumps and electric HVAC systems. While full electrification may feel like a big step, it can be approached gradually starting with common areas, vacant units, or end of life equipment replacements. Heat pumps, whether ducted or ductless, are now more affordable than ever, with incentives from PSEG and NYSEERDA covering a portion of equipment and installation costs. Some programs even provide support for planning, design, and workforce training to ensure smooth implementation.

Act Now Timing is Everything

Timing is critical. Many of the most generous incentives are scheduled to expire or be revised by 2025 or 2026, in line with the rollout of new energy codes and statewide climate goals. The window of opportunity is open quite literally for Long Island co-ops to align essential upgrades with available incentives and long-term energy savings. While each building’s needs are different, starting the conversation early particularly around windows and HVAC is the first step toward a smarter, more sustainable future. ■



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WINTER WEATHER, SEWER SYSTEMS, AND PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE: WHAT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS SHOULD KNOW

By VINCENT ACCARDI - VECCHIO CESSPOOL



This winter on Long Island has been colder and snowier than what we've experienced in recent years. Prolonged freezing temperatures, snow accumulation, and repeated freeze-thaw cycles can place added stress on **community sewer systems, sewer laterals, storm drains, and catch basins**, particularly in multifamily communities with shared infrastructure.

During extended cold periods, issues such as partial blockages, root intrusion, restricted flow, or frozen sections of pipe may worsen. As snow melts and refreezes, storm drains and catch basins can also become obstructed, increasing the risk of backups or localized flooding that may impact multiple units.

A **preventative sewer or drainage inspection** typically involves assessing flow conditions, identifying blockages or buildup, checking for root intrusion or structural concerns, and evaluating stormwater components such as catch basins and drain lines. Inspections may include visual assessments, camera inspections where appropriate, and recommendations for corrective action.

Preventative maintenance can include routine cleaning or pumping, clearing debris from storm drains, addressing early signs of blockage, and planning repairs before systems are under peak stress. The benefit of these proactive measures is early detection, allowing associations to address minor issues before they escalate into disruptive and costly emergencies during winter weather events.

Understanding how winter conditions affect sewer and stormwater systems helps boards and community managers plan ahead, reduce emergency service calls, and protect shared infrastructure during the coldest months. ■

If you have questions, or wish to schedule an inspection, contact Vincent Accardi by phone at #631.451.6818 (office), #631.374.9600 (cell), or via email at vinny@vecchiocesspool.com.



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BOARDS MUST BE AWARE OF NEW REQUIREMENTS WHEN FORECLOSING LIENS FOR UNPAID COMMON CHARGES

By BETH M. GAZES, ESQ. - GALLET DRYER & BERKEY, LLP



The Governor recently signed Bill A3470/S7413, requiring that condominium Boards provide a pre-commencement 90-day notice to unit owners against whom a lien foreclosure will be commenced. This new mandate was effectuated by amending §339-aa of the Condominium Act. The legislation also adds that such foreclosures shall be

separate notices to all owners. It is worth noting that even if a defendant in a mortgage foreclosure does not raise strict compliance with the §1304 notice requirement in their answer, the foreclosing Bank's failure to strictly comply with the notice provision can be raised as a defense anytime during the proceedings until entry of a judgement of foreclosure and sale. It needs to be seen if this defense will also be available to unit

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brought "pursuant to article thirteen of the real property actions and proceedings law." As a result, the amended law may demand a host of other notices and procedures which will slow the process and increase the costs of collection and litigation.

Article 13 of the Real Property Actions and Proceedings Law governs bank foreclosures, and it includes notice and procedural requirements not currently required of foreclosing Boards.

Section 1304 of that Article maintains its own 90-day notice requirement instructing banks to send notices containing statutory language in specific font size. The new provision of §339-aa, however, does not require a condo Board to employ any specific language. Instead, under the law's new language, a Board's 90-day letter will simply have to convey to "the owner that the board intends to file an action for foreclosure to enforce the lien and shall state...the specific amount due," leaving it to the lienor to draft a notice that may or may not hold up to a challenge in court. Practitioners and Boards are reasonable to ask if these notices should be drafted and served in accordance with RPAPL §1304 since Courts have consistently upheld dismissals of foreclosure actions upon a Bank's failure to strictly comply with the §1304 notice requirement.

If so, a condo's foreclosure action for unpaid assessments could be dismissed due to an error, for example, failing to print the required notice in 14-point font. The action could also be dismissed for other reasons, including a failure to send



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owners under this new law.

Article 13 requires not just additional notices, but regulatory filings and settlement mandates. If the Legislature expects condominiums to follow Article 13 in its entirety, the Courts will likely be left with the task of carving out those directives that are impossible to meet or that conflict with Declaration terms, such as Department of Finance filings, good faith negotiations, and vacant property maintenance.

The legislation also creates a new Article 20-A within the Real Property Actions and Proceedings Law. This new law mimics the language added to §339-aa and applies it the Boards of homeowner associations -- but without any reference to Article 13. HOA lien foreclosures are generally litigated under the same decisional law controlling condominium foreclosures. The omitted reference to Article 13 in the new 20-A will likely lead to new questions of law.

Unlike a bank's commitment process, and due to the terms of the Declaration or a lack of funds to exercise a right of first refusal, condos and HOAs generally lack the power to deny a purchase in their association based on a purchaser's inability to pay common charges or assessments. The association's operating funds are limited and contingent on those collected from its members or unit owners. Ultimately, the new costs resulting from the new laws' added burdens and lengthier proceedings will likely trickle down to the unit and home owners. ■

If you have questions on this or other issues that may impact your coop/condo/HOA operations, please contact Beth M. Gazes, Esq. at her office #212.935.3131, via email at bmg@gdbl.com, or visit her firm's website at www.gdbl.com.

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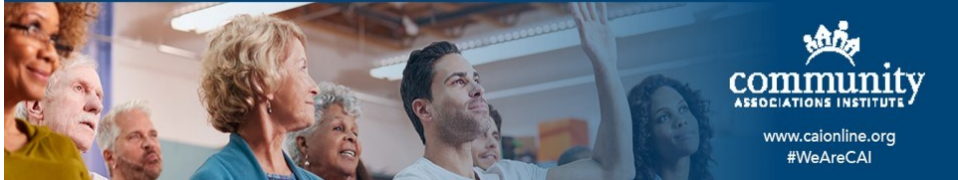
In October, we hosted one of our most successful CAI Trade Show's to date. My sincere thanks to Courtney Mcdermott and the entire Trade Show committee for an outstanding event. With nearly 100 exhibitors last year, our goal for 2026 is even more ambitious - 150 booths. Our Trade Show is the premier event of the year, offering education, networking, and relationship-building opportunities, and we encourage all community and Business Partner members to join us as we aim to set new records once again. We look forward to your participation in this year's show!

Finally, I would like to thank our sponsors, our steadfast supporters. Your continued support enables us to provide opportunities to learn, connect, and celebrate throughout the year, and we are truly grateful.

Thank you all for your ongoing commitment to the CAI Long Island Chapter. I am incredibly excited for the year ahead and encourage your continued participation, involvement, and collaboration. Please remember that we are here for you and

Five SMART reasons to renew your CAI Membership:

- SAVVY** community association managers hold CAI credentials.
- MOTIVATED** business partners connect with their clients.
- AMBITIOUS** homeowner leaders gain best practices for community success.
- ROBUST** education to reach your professional goals.
- TRUSTED** by nearly 40,000 community association industry leaders like you!



always welcome your thoughts, ideas and feedback.

Please feel free to contact me anytime at #631.270.3000 or tweisbrot@accreditedpm.com.

Cheers to an awesome 2026! ■

Todd Weisbrot, 2026 President, CAI – Long Island Chapter

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Long Island Chapter Calendar of Events

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

*Chapter Membership Meeting
with Educational Presentation*

*“Annual Meetings, Special Meetings, &
Notices – a Refresher on the Dos and Don'ts”*

*Half Hollow Hills Library - Auditorium
55 Vanderbilt Parkway, Dix Hills*

Thursday, March 19th - 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

*Chapter Membership Meeting
with Educational Presentation*

*“Board Member Roundtable: Practical Solutions
for Co-ops, Condos & HOAs”*

*Meadowbrook Pointe HOA - Clubhouse
1100 Corporate Drive, Westbury*

Saturday, April 18th - 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

*Board Leadership Development Workshop
for Community Association Board Members*

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

*Sponsored by Belfor Property Restoration
and Dryer Vent Wizard of Suffolk County*

Thursday, April 23rd - 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

*Chapter Membership Meeting
with Educational Presentation*

“Pest Control — Inside & Out”

*Blue Ridge HOA - Clubhouse
899 Golf Lane, Medford*

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and making sure that impact lasts in your absence.*



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SHOW**

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Saturday - October 17th