

April 2025

Dear Neighbors,

Here are some money saving home maintenance ideas you may want to consider:

This document provides homeowners with essential maintenance tips including inspecting attic insulation, soffit vents, and caulking to prevent drafts and save on energy costs. External window caulking is also important to prevent internal and external water damage to your unit. It emphasizes the importance of regular flushing of sanitary lines to avoid sewage issues and suggests contacting local plumbing services for assistance. Additionally, it discusses the local fire department's assistance with smoke detector issues, noting various homeowner experiences regarding battery replacements and detector lifespan. Overall, the document aims to encourage proactive home maintenance for long-term savings and safety for both the homeowner and the HOA.

Exterior Window Caulking: We must ensure the exterior window caulking is intact to prevent water damage, wood rot and mold. For any cottage over eight years old, it is perhaps time to replace the cheap original caulking and that which the painters used.

Windows and doors are excluded from the HOA's maintenance responsibilities in accordance with our CAW Covenants and Restrictions. The cost to repair stucco, stonework, sheathing and framing caused by water leaks around windows due to failed caulking is the unit owner's responsibility according to Article 8.2 Unit Owner Responsibility as an intentional failure to act and the cost for repair can be considered for a Special Unit Assessment on the Unit Owner.

Replacement windows are not immune to this issue. In fact, while replacement windows may be better quality than the original builder grade windows, the weather seal to the house is most often inferior to the original window installation. The waterproof tape and flange that sealed the original window to the water barrier house wrap is cut, compromised and not replaced by the replacement window contractor. The exterior caulking they apply becomes the only seal against water intrusion. They offer a lifetime warranty on the windows but a limited time warranty on installation issues knowing the acrylic caulk may only last a few years. **NOTE: If you plan to replace your windows, you must submit an architectural request form prior to purchase.**

Sergio Mora of TMC Stone and Stucco offered to remove the cheap acrylic caulk and install urethane sealant to all the windows on any unit for \$1,200. He has already done a few homes in the neighborhood. He can be reached at 913-620-4541.

Attic Insulation and Soffit Vents: Due to recent (unexpected, expensive) discoveries of construction issues that date back to the builder Rodrock, the Board requests that each homeowner do some inspection of your own home to ensure that the attic is properly insulated, soffit vents are properly installed, and windows are properly sealed externally.

Chris Blickhan's son, Brian Lear, is happy to do the attic inspection. He can also see if soffit vents are installed properly. As an example, my attic inspection revealed that the north HALF of my attic had NO insulation! I have lived here eight years and bought the cottage brand new. My electric bill has decreased, and my home is warmer since I had the new insulation installed.

Our homes have ridge vents installed for attic circulation. For them to work properly, soffit vents are needed to allow air into the attic.

For soffit vent installation, contact:
Johnson County Guttering and Roofing
Kevin Lutz - Owner
Phone: 913-764-4616 FAX: 913-764-4635
www.jocogutteringandroofing.com
kevin@jocogutteringandroofing.com

To eliminate winter drafts through windows, I used Seal and Peel caulk, available at Home Depot, on all interior window openings. By doing these maintenance items, we will all save money in the long run.

Sanitary Lines: For those of us in multi-plexes, splitting the cost of flushing the sanitary lines every couple of years eliminates potential problems of sewage back-up due to the bellies found under the sanitary lines. It is a minor expense—less than \$150 per unit in a 5-plex. A-1 Plumbing has a small hydro-jet machine that does the job. They can be reached at 913-423-3285.

Smoke Detectors: We have been informed that our local fire department may replace or help if they start to beep. Here are some cases various homeowners have experienced:

The Fire Department came to the house and replaced the batteries in the alarming detector which the owner had purchased. FD arrived and did not have a ladder tall enough. FD arrived and replaced all 5 detectors at no cost because they were 10 years old. FD arrived and told homeowner to replace battery.

This is the OPFD policy as stated on their website:

The Overland Park Fire Department offers and installs battery-operated smoke alarms and **specialized deaf detectors for older adults, individuals with disabilities or low-income residents**. If you have family members who can assist or the resources to hire someone to maintain your alarms, we encourage you to do so. If not, we're happy to help with annual battery replacements in your smoke alarms. Please note that we do not service hard-wired smoke alarm systems.

Smoke alarms save lives in Overland Park every year. In your home they should be placed:

- On every floor
- Inside and outside each sleeping area
- At least three feet away from air vents and exhaust fans
- Out of the path of steam or fumes from bathrooms or cooking areas.

Never hesitate to call the fire department if you see or smell any smoke, even if you cannot locate its source.

Radon Testing in Basements: This is more of a safety issue rather than maintenance. A few of the cottages with basements (built by Rodrock) have had to have radon mitigation installed. It would not hurt to have your basement tested for your own safety. You would be responsible for radon mitigation installed if needed.

Peggy Shults contacted Midwest Radon (<https://www.midwestradon.com/>) to discuss testing and mitigation (if needed). She spoke with Wes Hodgden, one of the owners. He could come out and set up an electronic testing system for \$132, but he recommended instead that we obtain a **home test kit from the KS State Extension Office for \$15** and do the test ourselves. Peggy confirmed with the **KS State Extension Office that they sell kits on a walk-in basis, M-F 8:30-5, cash, check or credit card, address 11811 S Sunset Drive, Suite 1500, Olathe KS 66061**. Wes assured her that the results should be just as reliable as the electronic test.

As for mitigation, he gave a range of \$1,000 - \$1,500 for a system, with a free home visit to check out details required to provide a system. There's about a 1-week lead time for that visit and 3-4 weeks for a system install.

He seemed very knowledgeable and has quite a few good reviews on NextDoor, so Peggy will feel comfortable going ahead with his company if indeed radon is discovered in her unit.

Our dues are the budget that pays for any service or issue for which the HOA is responsible. Thank you for considering completing these important safety and maintenance items. It is in our collective best interest to do so in order to keep our dues as low as possible.

Submitted by Cynthia Litwer, on behalf of the CAW HOA Board
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