



## January 2020 - The Sharper Focus



Thank you for reading our newsletter to all homeowners in Associations managed by Sharper Management. The goal of this newsletter is to touch on general ideas and helpful topics as they relate to living in a common interest community. We hope you find this information useful.

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## Advertising Directory

We strive to continually add valuable content and resources in our newsletters. We accept promotional ads from local businesses in this newsletter. If you own a business, or know a local business that could benefit from this, please pass this along.

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## Looking for a Winter Get Away?

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## It's Ice Dam Season

Let's face it, ice dams and Minnesota winters go hand-in-hand. An ice dam is a ridge of ice that forms on a roof, typically along the gutter line. This ridge of ice blocks melting snow (i.e. water) from draining off the roof and then that water refreezes. So what causes ice dams? Can they be prevented? What can we do once they form? Here are some ice dam basics:



Ice dams are the result of temperature variances on roof. Temperature variances may be due to a lack of ventilation, insufficient insulation, or simply radiant heat from the sun (even on a below freezing day, the sun can warm the roof enough to create temperature differences). When ventilation or insulation are lacking, the attic space below the roof warms up. The warm air in the attic then transfers heat to the roof, warming it above the outside temperature. Similarly, solar heat gain may also cause temperature differences at the roof. When the roof warms, snow begins to melt. As the water from the melted snow moves down the roof, it eventually hits a colder section (or the outside temperature drops) and the water refreezes causing the ridge of ice mentioned above. This cycle repeats day after day and the ice dam eventually increases in size and weight. If not treated correctly, this ice dam may cause roof or gutter damage, or force the water into the home causing internal water damage.

Opinions vary on the ability to completely prevent ice dams in our climate. Even with sufficient insulation and ventilation, radiant heat from the sun or the design of a roof may still allow ice dams to form. The first step in ice dam prevention is to ensure the attic space is properly ventilated and insulated. It also a good idea to seal any locations where air leaks from the living space into the attic. Local energy providers often provide energy audits of properties and can help identify any air leakage, ventilation or insulation issues. As a note, mechanical air ventilation is not recommended because it can cause other moisture and pressure issues within the home. Natural ventilation practices are recommended. In addition, gutters and downspouts should be clear of leaves and debris. This may not prevent ice dams, but will allow melted ice that reaches the gutter to drain away from the roof. Another prevention method is to remove snow from the roof. However, this can be dangerous and may cause roof damage, so hiring a professional is recommended. Your manager has access to these professionals. We do not recommend the board, manager or homeowner conduct snow removal!

If ice dams do form, removal may be necessary to avoid damage to the roof or unit interior. The best removal method is to have a professional remove the snow and steam the ice dams. This will temporarily solve the issue, but the prevention methods above should also be addressed to prevent future ice dams. The use of picks or other sharp tools is not recommended as it may damage the roof. In addition, the use of sidewalk salt (often seen as a sock filled with salt) should not be used on a roof as it may damage and discolor the shingles, and may void the warranty. Heat cables can be helpful; however they require installation prior to the ice dam formation, are visible year round, and will increase energy usage.

In general, when addressing ice dams, prevention is the best route. There may be some upfront costs, but the benefits outweigh the cost when considering roof, gutter and interior damage. When ice dams do form, consult your manager and we will guide you on the best way to address them and then help prevent future issues.

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## Spring Is Coming...And So Is the Home Selling Season

### Selling Your HOA Property

If 2020 begins your moving journey, there's a few things to take care of as you prepare your property for sale.

#### Staging

First of all, staging your townhome or condo is an important part of the process; this helps potential buyers visualize themselves and their unique style in the space. Prepare by hiding personal items like photos, toiletries, and knickknacks. As you start putting those away (or have decided to get a jump start on packing), make sure you label



everything. There are specialized apps or ways to utilize default apps (like Notes) to help keep organized. Take a snapshot of each box's interior so you know where all of your important items are kept.

In addition, make a list of things that can be packed in advance and what can be left for later. Decor, for example, can be some of the first packed away-especially if it's distracting to the eye. Plus, if your closets are too full as you're showing the space, remove about half of it to make the storage look larger. Try to do the same for any other spaces like your pantry.

### **De-clutter/Recycle**

A clean and minimal space will also help your sale while allowing you a chance to declutter. When you're packing, ask yourself if you still need this item. Whether you're downsizing or upgrading, it's good practice to go through your things so you're not dragging around unnecessary items through the years.

### **Re-arranging**

Ask your real estate agent how you should stage your furniture. They will most likely know what's popular in interior décor and how your property can fit that trend; see whether a piece needs to be moved to open up the space or put in storage if it's too distracting.

### **Quick Fix**

Look for any quick fixes like a leaky faucet or outdated hardware. A simple paint job or updated hardware can be the key to make your space look more modern on a budget.

We hope these tips will help you prepare for a successful sale and move. You may find resale documents on the Sharper Management website, or [click here](#).

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## **Pets, Winter, and HOA Living**

We still have a couple more months of winter to go, which means a lot of us will choose to stay inside where it's warm and cozy. For those who have kids or pets, this also means a little extra work so that cabin fever doesn't set in and cause disturbances. Similarly, if a resident has decided that this is the year to adopt or buy a pet, they should be sure to follow their HOA's rules before taking that big step.



Once a member has taken on the responsibility of a pet, they also take on the responsibility of following the HOA's pet policy. In most documents, the pet owners will be required to clean up after their pet to keep the association grounds well-maintained for everyone. For dogs especially who go outside a lot, excrement should be picked up and toys should not be left around in public areas. Keep all pets on a leash so they can be contained-even if the pet is well-trained, a noise could startle them and send them running.

Overall, be respectful of your neighbors. If your dog needs to burn off energy in the winter, try taking them to a doggy daycare. A pet who is constantly making noise can be a disturbance to the community. If you do go for a walk at dawn or dusk, wear some kind of reflective gear to keep you and your pet safe. Doing all this will help keep the order in your community so everyone can live comfortably.

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## **Things to Do Around Town**

We've highlighted some of the things we think will be fun to do this winter. We've also included a link to the City of Minneapolis for upcoming local events. Enjoy!

<https://www.minneapolis.org/calendar/>

**Sea Life at Mall of America**



Escape the cold and go on an underwater adventure at Sea Life in the Mall of America. Between feeding sting rays, getting a behind-the-scenes look of how the aquarium runs, and snorkeling with the fish there is something to do for all ages! Looking for something even more exciting? Spend a night in the Ocean Tunnel underneath sharks, sea turtles, and more!

When: Opens at 10 am every day; closes at 6 pm on Sundays, 7 pm on Thursdays, and 8 pm on Friday and Saturdays

### Walker Art Center

Come visit the Walker Art Center on the first Saturday of the month for FREE family day! Every month there are performances, art-making, games, and kids' films from 10 am to 3 pm at no cost for the entire family. They also have family friendly food options, or you could pack your own lunch to enjoy in the lounge! If night life is more your scene, every Thursday night is FREE from 5pm to 9pm. During this time there are exhibition-related events in the galleries, art-making designed by local artists, lectures, film screenings, performances, and more! Bring anyone you want and immerse yourself into Minnesota's finest contemporary art center.

Where: 725 Vineland Place, Minneapolis, MN 55403

### Saint Paul Winter Carnival

Come see the 134th edition of Saint Paul's jam-packed winter extravaganza. Our capital knows a thing or two about the cold here in Minnesota and the Winter Carnival showcases the season in all of its glory with parades, ice sculptures, live entertainment and more. There's also a Treasure Hunt sponsored by Pioneer Press leading up to the event. Check out the [calendar for events](#).

When: Jan. 23 - Feb. 2

Where: A variety of locations around Saint Paul (check the calendar for specifics)

### Ice Castles

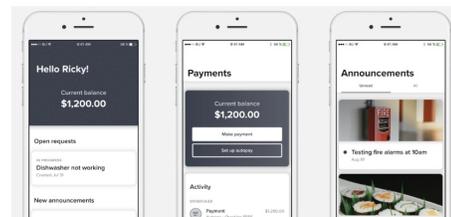
Ice castles is the must-see winter wonderland where fairy tales are brought to life with twinkling lights, magnificent archways and towers, ice-carved tunnels, fountains and slides ready to be explored. By day this frozen castle glimmers with glacial blues and after dark the ice formations create a magical glow. This year's installment is located in New Brighton, MN.

When: Opening sometime in January and goes as long as the weather permits

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## New Resident Center App

Sharper Management is excited to announce the new Resident Center mobile app powered by our software system, Buildium! A new mobile app made specifically for you and your members. Resident Center is designed with simplicity in mind. Homeowners can make payments, submit maintenance requests, contact your property manager and more--with just a few taps. The features available vary based on the permissions granted, but some of the key features are:



- One-time and recurring online dues payments
- Maintenance requests with photo attachments
- Announcements, texting, and other communication features
- Ability to provide proof of insurance coverage (when required)
- Access to governing documents

Be sure to check it out!

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## Need Help Renting and Managing

## a Townhome or Condo?

### Think Advantage Home



A sister company to Sharper Management, Advantage Home helps homeowners and investors manage their single-family residences.

Since your Association is already affiliated with Sharper Management, renting your home through Advantage would have extra benefits you wouldn't find in another property management company. Those benefits include:

- A thorough understanding of Associations
- Information sharing regarding governing documents, rules, and regulations is efficient between Sharper and Advantage Home - Advantage is literally right down the hall
- The Sharper Management maintenance staff is already familiar with your Association's property
- Our emergency response team is fast and effective

If you or someone you know is interested in renting their townhome or condominium, have them contact [jeff@advantagehomemn.com](mailto:jeff@advantagehomemn.com).

**Learn more at [advantagehomemn.com](http://advantagehomemn.com)**

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