

# **The Fair Acres Handbook**

A copy of this Handbook is given to each homeowner at Fair Acres, with the sole intended purpose of providing information that the homeowner may find helpful. A basic knowledge of the unit's mechanical equipment in some instances may save the expense of a service call. Always consult the owner's manual that was furnished with the appliance when it was installed. The information printed here is very basic and "user friendly". It is recommended that a service contractor be summoned for all but the simplest of repairs or adjustments.

Rev. October 13, 2009

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## Introduction to Condominium Living

### Condominium Ownership

Although all of the units in the Fair Acres complex are townhouses, this type of ownership is called *condominium*. Condominium ownership is an ownership of a single unit in a multi-unit structure, coupled with ownership of an undivided interest in the land and other elements of the structure. This undivided interest is held in common with other unit owners of the complex. Basically, a homeowner owns only the inside of the unit, extending just to the airspace between the walls, floors, and ceilings. All of the homeowners at Fair Acres collectively own the land, exterior, foundation, landscaping, etc., referred to as Common Areas or Common Elements. We are all part of the Fair Acres Homeowner's Association, to which we pay a monthly fee, earmarked for various aspects of these Common Areas and Common Elements, such as maintenance, insurance, attorney fees, landscaping, and snowplowing.

Life in a condominium complex requires some adjustments. As stated above, as a condominium owner, you actually own your unit only from the walls in, with a percentage interest in the "common elements." Since the land in the development is owned jointly by all unit owners, along with the grass, trees, shrubs, roofs, fences, as well as the street throughout the development, the nature of this type of shared ownership means that every homeowner has a vested interest in the way every other homeowner maintains his or her portion of the property.

New Jersey law requires every condominium development to elect a Board of Directors. The Board adopts a Master Deed and By-Laws (prepared by the original developer) to govern the community and may enact rules and regulations to clarify specific provisions of those documents.. Each homeowner should have received and acknowledged the Master Deed and By-Laws, both part of the Public Offering Statement, at the closing on the property. If you do not have a copy of the Master Deed, please contact the Property Manager to purchase a copy. The Master Deed defines these Common Areas and their use. The collectively owned areas have restrictions that apply to their use. It is the responsibility of the homeowner to read the Master Deed and become familiar with the rules and regulations at Fair Acres.

The Master Deed contains a lot of interesting information, and you may want to review it thoroughly. However, pertinent portions regarding "covenants" (or restrictions on the homeowner) can be found in Article 11, pages 95-98 of the Master Deed. (A copy of Article 11 is included in the Addendum section of this handbook for reference). These restrictions and some additional regulations enacted by the Board of Directors are designed to create visual harmony and soundness of repair, avoid activities harmful to the beauty or property values,

further the comfort of the unit owners and their guests, and promote the general welfare and safety of the homeowners.

## Important Information

The Board of Directors is required by its By-Laws to appoint a Covenants Committee to assist in enforcing these Rules & Regulations. Based on the Committee's recommendations, the Board may levy a fine for each day a homeowner fails to comply after a notice has been sent.

The following is not meant to represent a complete list, only a condensed explanation of the most pertinent rules and regulations. These rules are designed to permit more than 75 of us to reside in one small development without stepping on each other's proverbial toes.

1. **Use.** All units may be used as a private, single-family residence.

**Rental:** Units may be rented, but only for a period of no less than six months. All tenants are subject to the provisions of the Master Deed and By-Laws. A copy of each lease, as well as the new lease fee, must be provided to the Property Manager. Contact the Property Manager to request a copy of the Tenant Registration form and to confirm the amount of the new lease fee.

**Selling:** When a unit is offered for sale, the homeowner must notify the Property Manager of the intent to sell. Prior to settlement, while the unit is under Contract of Sale, the homeowner (seller) must furnish the Property Manager with the name and address of the new homeowner. A one-time fee must be paid by the **Buyer** to the Homeowner's Association at settlement. The fee will be three (3) times the current monthly association fee for the particular unit type.

**By-Law References: 11.1 Use, 11.19 Rental of Units, 11.8 Sale of Unit.**

2. **Pets.** Homeowners may have only one dog or one cat per unit. Do not allow your dog to urinate or defecate on the grass or shrubbery. You must pick up all excrement immediately and dispose of it in a considerate manner (in your own toilet or garbage can). Dogs must be on a leash at all times when out of the house. You may not construct a dog pen or run outside of your unit, since that is a common area.

**By-Law References: 11.3 Animals**

3. **Vehicles.** The following vehicles may not be parked anywhere in the development at any time: no vehicle larger than a panel truck, no mobile homes, RV (recreational vehicle), boat, or boat trailer, pick-up truck or any van with commercial lettering (except while service is being performed on your unit). This rule applies to guests of homeowners, also. As a homeowner at Fair Acres, it is your responsibility to ensure that your

guests comply with the rules and regulations here at Fair Acres.

***By-Law References: 11.21 Vehicles***

4. **Parking.** Parking at Fair Acres is limited. Each unit is allocated two parking spaces – one in the unit's garage and the other in the driveway – and these should be used for parking on a regular basis before guest spaces are used. The head-in spaces are not assigned and are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Residents and their visitors using those spaces are asked to be considerate of residents who live in the end units which have parking in front of their doors. Please make every effort to avoid pulling your vehicle too close to the front walkway.

When overflow parking is needed, residents and their visitors should be sure to use any available parking in the guest spaces, as on-street parking is strongly discouraged. We now have many young children residing in our development. When cars are parked on the roadway, visibility is restricted, and this poses a serious safety risk when children are playing outside or riding their bicycles. In addition, emergency vehicles may have difficulty navigating around parked cars, and there is a definite chance that a parked car – especially after dark – can be hit by a car entering or leaving the area. Under no circumstances should cars be parked on both sides of the street, a situation which would make the roadway impassable for larger emergency vehicles.

***By-Law References: 11.21 Traffic***

5. **Speed Limit.** The speed limit on Fair Acres Court is 15 miles per hour. Many of our homeowners have small children who are skating or learning to ride a bicycle on the street. Many of us walk on the street. Inform your guests of the speed limit.

***By-Law References: 11.21 Traffic***

6. **Maintenance.** The homeowner is responsible for the maintenance, repair, and replacement (if necessary) of windows, front door (including brass hardware and kick plate), garage door, and patio door. Windows include the skylights in the loft area.

***By-Law References: 11.10 Maintenance of Unit***

7. **Water and sewer pipes.** It is the homeowner's responsibility to drain the outside faucets in the fall to prevent the pipes from freezing during the winter. (More about this in the section "Outside Water Faucets"). If the homeowner's sewer line is obstructed due to negligence or misuse by the homeowner, requiring service by a plumber or other professional, the



homeowner bears the costs of all repairs.

***By-Law References: 11.10 Maintenance of Unit, 11.12 Other Equipment***

8. **Making Changes.** No changes of any type are permitted to the structure or appearance of the building unless you have written pre-approval from the Board of Directors. Keep in mind that once you step outside your door, you are on a Common Area, which is not yours exclusively to use or alter as you please. This area belongs to all of the homeowners at Fair Acres, not just you.

Before you do anything that would change the appearance of the outside of your unit, whether it involves the exterior of the unit, telephone/cable wiring, the soil, trees, shrubbery, slate walkway, concrete, etc., you must have written pre-approval from the Board of Directors, with the exception of annuals and perennials in existing beds or window boxes.

Nothing may be constructed without prior written consent from the Board of Directors. Requests for construction of patios, attic ventilation fans, gas lines to fireplace for gas logs, etc., must be submitted to the Board for approval 45 days in advance of planned construction to avoid any inconvenience to you or the contractor. Plans, specifications, all drawings, including the name and phone number of the contractor, must accompany the request, with everything submitted to the Board of Directors at least 45 days in advance of planned construction. Contact the property manager for Board meeting dates.

The Board will consider and vote on your request and advise you as to whether your request is approved, disapproved, or approved with changes. No work may commence until you have received an unconditional written approval. No decks, awnings, or loudspeakers are allowed.

No changes will be made to any unit that will cause the homeowner's association insurance rates to increase or cause the policy to be cancelled.

You may not burn anything in the development with the exception of firewood within your fireplace. You may not chop or cut anything in the development. No use of chain saws or power saws is allowed, except for service contractors.

***By-Law References: 11.2 Obstruction, 11.6 Exterior, 11.9 Building, 11.10 Maintenance of Unit, 11.11 Burning, 11.12 Other Equipment,***

### **11.13 Insurance, 11.16 Structural Change**

- 9. Planting flowers.** Keep in mind that the grounds are a Common Area. You do not have the liberty to dig and plant as you choose. Homeowners may plant annuals or perennials within the existing beds; you are responsible for care and maintenance of these items that you plant. The contour of any of the existing planting beds may not be changed, nor may any planting interfere with the mowing by the gardeners. You may not plant anything to grow up the chimney, walls, fences, or any other common element structure. (vines or ivy).

Trees, shrubs, or invasive plant materials may not be planted by homeowners. You may address questions, concerns, as well as suggestions about landscaping to the property manager.

No decorative lawn ornaments (birdbaths, birdfeeders, gazing balls, shrines, statues, hanging baskets, etc.) or lights are allowed except on your own patio.

Contact the property manager for clarification before you plant or alter anything to avoid misunderstandings and disappointments.

For the window boxes, the use of a liner must be used to protect the wood from rotting. As a guide, you must dispose of all plant materials in your boxes by December 1<sup>st</sup> every year in order to make sure they are empty for winter. Winter snow/rain will freeze and remain in the window boxes. Experience has taught us some costly lessons when these boxes have been unattended, leading to rotting or damage.

***The Common Area at Fair Acres is analogous to a park in a town. A park is not owned by one person; each resident in the town has an interest in the park and may use and enjoy the park. A portion of a resident's property tax is allocated to the maintenance and care of the park, as is a portion of our monthly fee at Fair Acres allocated to the maintenance and care of our Common Area. The use and enjoyment of a park does not include changing the appearance of the park with personal touches such as adding a statue, birdbath, trellis, shrine, bench, outside lights, or planting a shrub or tree.***

***Every condominium development has rules and regulations regarding the Common Areas. Each homeowner at Fair Acres is different from every other homeowner, with different ideas and different opinions. What one homeowner may think is enhancing and beautiful, a neighbor may find offensive. The rules and regulations are created to help homeowners at Fair Acres respect each other and live peacefully in a very small area.***

**Note.** Never instruct the gardeners or landscaping crew to do anything for you or for the development. The landscaping service has a specific contract with Fair Acres; their job is very clear and they have a foreman who “runs the show”. It does not matter if you see something that needs to be pruned or weeded. You must contact the Property Manager about any matters that are troubling you. The workers have been instructed to take direction only from their foreman.

***By-Law References: 11.2 Obstruction, 11.7 Display, 11.9 Building, 11.18 Use of Common Elements and Facilities***

- 10. Window Treatments.** Draperies, blinds, curtains, shades or other window coverings must be installed on all windows, except the octagonal window in the master bedroom closet and the panel windows flanking the entry door of the end units. All window treatments must show only white or off-white to the outside. Screens and mullions must be kept in the windows at all times.

***By-Law References: 11.17 Draperies***

- 11. Decorations, Flags, and Displays.** The appearance of the outside of your unit must remain unchanged. You may not hang clothes or laundry outside, erect an awning, canopy, clothes line, antenna, satellite dish (see Satellite #24), or install a window air conditioning unit. Nothing may be hung from the fence, nor can any screws, nails, or hooks be used on the fence or the exterior of the unit. The only exception is a flag bracket for a flag pole. Only the American flag may be flown; no “theme” or “seasonal” flags are allowed. Check with the Property Manager for the approved location of the flag bracket. You may display a wreath on your door.

During the December holidays, a garland may be displayed around the front entry door, but no nails are permitted. No decorations may be placed on the shrubs or trees. Garlands and wreaths are also permitted on the lights flanking the garage door. All December holiday decorations must be completely removed by February 1<sup>st</sup>.

***By-Law References: 11.7 Display, 11.18 Use of Common Elements and Facilities, 11.20 Clothes Poles***

- 12. Exterior Lights.** No lights other than those which came with the unit may be used. You may not use a spotlight on your door wreath during December holidays, for instance. For the brass lantern lights at the patio, garage, and front door use 60-watt clear bulbs. The lanterns are opened by the two brass nuts on top of the fixture. The glass should be cleaned regularly. An approved sensor may be installed on the rear patio light. The

Property Manager can provide information on this item.

***By-Law References: 11.6 Exterior, 11.12 Other Equipment***

13. **Snowstorms.** In the event of a snowstorm, we have contracted to have the street plowed. Please park all vehicles in your garage and driveway before the snowstorm. The snowplows need to plow the parking areas and they need space to pile the snow. Specifically, we need cars out of the guest parking areas in order for the plow to use that area for storing excess snow.

Homeowners are responsible for clearing their own driveways, sidewalk, and flagstone walks. If you wish, you may privately arrange to have your walk and driveway shoveled; however, no plows are permitted as they may possibly damage the driveway or Belgian block curbing. You are responsible for any damage to the building, shrubbery, or gutter downspouts caused by the contractor you hire.

**NEVER use rock-salt** on the concrete driveway or pavement. Use of “safer” ice-melt materials is permitted. Any damage caused due to the use of rock-salt is the responsibility of the homeowner who will bear the cost for repairs.

***By-Law References: 11.10 Maintenance of Unit***

14. **Smoke Detectors and Security Systems.** Each unit must have three smoke detectors to comply with the Fire Code of South Brunswick Township. If they are electrical, they must have a battery backup within the detector in case of a power failure. If the existing detectors in your unit do not have a battery backup, three additional battery-powered smoke detectors must be installed to support the existing detectors in the event of a fire during a power failure. (The original smoke detectors installed by the builder do not have a battery backup supply).

Some homeowners have installed security systems in their units that may or may not have the detectors wired into the security systems. Security systems have an APU (Auxiliary Power Unit) that will supply electrical power for 3 to 4 days in the event of a power failure. A security system must be registered with the South Brunswick Fire Marshall. The homeowners select and pay for the monitoring service. The police do not monitor security systems; the monitoring service contacts the police when a signal is received that an alarm has been activated.

**Note.** Unless it was specifically requested when the security system was installed, it is unlikely that the smoke detectors were wired into the security system. A completely different type of smoke detector must be installed

when the detectors are part of the security system.

***By-Law References: 11.12 Other Equipment, 11.13 Insurance***

15. **Barbeque Grills.** The Fire Code in South Brunswick Twp. requires that all barbeque grills be kept at least five (5) feet from the building when in use. Gas grills must always be kept at least five (5) feet from the building. Barbeque grills may kept within your patio area.

***By-Law References: 11.2 Obstruction, 11.7 Display, 11.18 Use of Common Elements and Facilities***

16. **Storage.** Nothing may be stored on or in any Common Area, with the exception of barbeque grills and patio furniture, which must be stored on your own patio, which is what is known as an “exclusive use” common area. *Failure to comply with this regulation may result in cancellation of our insurance policy.*

***By-Law References: 11.2 Obstruction, 11.7 Display, 11.13 Insurance, 11.18 Use of Common Elements and Facilities***

17. **Patio Construction.** Plans must be submitted to the Board for approval before construction begins. As it may take some time to get approval, it is necessary to submit plans no later than 45 days before the installation is scheduled to begin. Materials can not include poured concrete as it may be necessary at some point to get under the patio to access the irrigation lines or for another purpose. The patio must be no less than 12 inches from the fence on all sides, which will permit enough space for painting or repairs of the fence. Any irrigation heads that supply the patio area must be properly capped off. The air-conditioners drain-pipe should extend beyond the patio in order permit proper drainage. No wood landscape ties can be used for the border. This material will rot and cause the patio pavers to separate. Termites and rats building a nest under the wood is another issue that we have had in the past as a result of landscape ties being used as a border for a patio. The patio must not be installed in a manner that can create a drainage problem with a neighboring unit.

***By-Law References: 11.9 Building, 11.16 Structural Change, 11.18 Use of Common Elements and Facilities***

18. **Cables.** All cables to be installed in a unit must be installed at the point where all of the original cables enter the building and then be fed to the point that the homeowner wishes to use them. No new holes may be made into the exterior of the building. No cables may run along the outside of the building. Cable installation contractors will try to do the installation on the outside. It is the responsibility of the homeowner to make sure that

the cables are done as explained here. Any corrective action, if needed, is at the cost of the homeowner.

***By-Law References: 11.7 Display, 11.9 Building***

19. **Trash.** All trash and recycling must be out for collection no earlier than 6:00 PM on the day prior to collection. If the homeowner is away at that time, it is necessary to have someone else put it out for you, or store it until it can be put out properly for collection. All trash containers must have a lid that can be secured in order to keep the trash contained. Otherwise, the contents may be accessed by animals or may be blown about on windy days. All containers should be marked with the unit number as the wind frequently blows the empty containers completely away from the unit and it needs to be identified in order to facilitate its return. Heavy duty trash bags no less than 3 mils thick are permitted but must be put only out on the day of collection as they may also be affected by animals and wind.

***By-Law References: 11.5 Trash***

20. **Snow and Ice Removal from Driveways.** Rock salt product can not be used on the driveways to remove snow and/or ice. This product will erode the concrete. There are products that will not damage the concrete or the grass.

***By-Law References: 11.10 Maintenance of Unit***

21. **Attic Exhaust Fans.** Homeowners need to know that if a leak occurs with an existing fan or one you have installed it is your responsibility to have the problem corrected. As with any other change to the exterior of the building, the installation needs to be approved by the Board of Directors.

***By-Law References: 11.9 Building, 11.10 Maintenance of Unit,, 11.12 Other Equipment***

22. **Holiday Decorations.** With various spiritual holidays (Christmas, Chanukah, Diwali, etc.), the Board recognizes that it is customary for some residents who would like to display lights. The Board does permit placement of white lights within windows (inside of the unit) or about the exterior of your door. If lights are placed around the exterior of your door, they must be attached in such a way that will not penetrate or damage the wood trim.

Decorative garlands or wreaths are permitted on the lights flanking the garage doors.

Some holidays vary in date from year to year, therefore, the Board advises

that these lights may be installed up to 2 weeks prior and must be removed no later than 2 weeks afterwards. December holiday decorations must be removed no later than February 1<sup>st</sup>.

***By-Law References: 11.7 Display***

23. **Doors and Window Replacement.** It is the responsibility of the homeowner to maintain the doors, garage door, and windows (including the skylights) in each unit. If the homeowner wishes to install new windows or doors, the Board must be notified and the Property Manager will provide the correct specifications to be followed. All plans to replace windows or doors must be submitted for approval to the Board.

Painting of the front door must be with specific colors and the color of each unit entrance door must be different from your adjacent neighbors' doors. These colors are listed below this paragraph.

Benjamin Moore Paint – MoorGlo® Soft Gloss exterior latex:

Chrome Green #E-41	Charcoal Slate #E-86
Hamilton Blue #E-36	Cottage Red #E-22
French Blue #E-31 (may no longer be available)	

***By-Law References: 11.7 Display, 11.9 Building, 11.10 Maintenance of Unit***

24. **Satellite Dishes.** At the time of the publishing of this handbook, the FCC provided rules for the installation of satellite dish equipment in a condominium complex. The Board of Directors has set forth the following policy which is consistent with the FCC policy as well as meeting the requirements stated in the Master Deed for the Association.

As per FCC rules permitting satellite dishes: Dishes are to be restricted to only those areas that are “exclusive” to a unit. As such, satellite dishes shall be restricted to the patio area as this is the only defined “exclusive use area” for each homeowner.

It may be installed only on the patio no higher than the fence. It can not attach to the fence or abut the fence. The satellite company must use flat wire which may enter the building through the window or under the rear door but there can be no penetration holes drilled in the building.

A satellite dish may be installed in the area of each unit which is designated an exclusive use for that unit. That means an area used by the homeowner exclusively and not intruded upon by anyone unless invited to do so by the homeowner. In the case of the Association, it means the Patio area only.

To further clarify this provision, the satellite dish and pole on which it is mounted cannot exceed the height of the fence on the patio so as to make the installation out of view of any neighbor. The wiring must be of the “flat wire” type which can be placed under a window or door without drilling holes in the exterior of the building.

As with all matters outside your unit affecting the common elements, a request must be submitted to and approved by the Board prior to the installation of the equipment. Any damage to the exterior of the unit as a result of the installation will be the sole responsibility of the homeowner to pay for the damage and corrective action.

***By-Law References: 11.7 Display, 11.9 Building***



## Furnace Facts and Maintenance

**NOTE:** This information applies to the heating equipment **originally** installed by the developer. If changes have been made this section may not apply!

For the furnace to operate properly, a number of things have to synchronize. Here is a checklist.

1. **The Red Switch.** In the utility room on the second floor, there is a red light switch on the wall that has “Gas Burner Emergency Switch” written on it. This switch must always be in the “on” position. It only needs to be turned off when serviced by a heating contractor, or for an emergency.
2. **The Electrical Panel.** The electrical panel is the gray metal box located on the garage wall. Open the door of the panel to check if electrical power to the furnace is “on”. The location of this switch is indicated by the diagram on the panel door. The switch for the furnace must be in the “on” position.
3. **The Safety Switch.** This switch is inside the furnace. Remove the top door of the furnace by lifting it up and off. Remove the screw cap on the right side of the second door near the door knob. Remove this door. (This is also the method for removing the filter for cleaning). The filters are visible at the top of this cavity. There is a button at the lower part of the door frame – that is the safety switch. This switch is depressed by the second door when it is in position. This door has to be installed correctly for it to turn the switch on. You are checking to see if this second door was installed properly and thus the button (or switch) was pushed in.
4. **The Thermostat.** The thermostat for the furnace is on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. If you are cold, check to see if the right lever on top of the thermostat is set on the desired temperature. Push it to the right to raise the temperature higher. The furnace will turn on, as needed, to heat to the higher temperature. To lower the temperature, you can move the lever to the left; likewise, the furnace will shut-off, as needed, in order to allow the house to cool.
5. **The Gas Line.** In the utility room, there is a metal pipe approximately 40” from the floor that goes into the furnace. This is the gas line. There is a small rectangular handle on the top of this pipe 1.5” in length. This is the valve that allows the gas to go into the furnace for it to operate. This valve handle should align with the pipe for the gas line to open. If it is at a right angle to the pipe, the valve is closed and needs to be opened.
6. **The Second Gas Line.** Open the bottom door of the furnace by lifting up on the door and pulling it off. There is a valve with “on” and “off” markings.

Check to see if the “on” marking lines up with the tab marking. Replace the door on the furnace.

7. **Saving Money with the Furnace Thermostat.** If you do not have a programmable thermostat you may consider getting one. At the point of purchase or by the installer you can learn how to use this money saving device when you are not home and do not want to waste heat or air conditioning.
  
8. **Heating and Air Conditioning Contractors.** The manufacturer of all the original furnaces is Lennox. All are gas, forced hot-air furnaces. The company who installed the HVAC units is Fritze and Sons of Whippany, NJ. Fritze and Sons make service calls in the area and can be reached at (732) 887-0685. Any local heating and air conditioning company who services Lennox products could also service your equipment. Look in the Yellow Pages of the telephone book under Heating for local contractors. PSE&G offers several types of service contracts for major appliances. Their contracts generally cover all repairs and replacement parts. The number for PSE&G is (800) 350-7734.

## The Loft Area – Keeping Cool in Hot Weather

**NOTE:** This information applies to the equipment *originally* installed by the developer. If changes have been made this section may not apply!

1. **The Registers.** Close all the registers on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors of the house. In the loft, open all of the registers, making certain that nothing is obstructing the air flow, such as curtains (end units) or furniture. Even though the registers are closed on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors, there is sufficient cool air passing through these registers to keep these two floors cool. The idea is to direct as much cool air to the loft as possible.
2. **The Air Duct to the Loft.** The duct is located in the utility room and must be open when the air conditioning is used to allow cool air to each the loft. This duct resembles a rectangular metal box that runs vertically beside the furnace, curving into a soffit near the ceiling of the utility room. There is a lever on this duct about 4 feet from the floor that is attached by a wing nut. This lever operates the damper inside the duct, opening or closing the air flow inside the duct. First, turn the lever to vertical position. With the air conditioner compressor running, check the loft to see if you can feel cool air coming out of the registers. If not, try the lever in the horizontal position and check the airflow. Usually, the lever should be vertical in the summer and horizontal in the winter. (This duct should be closed during the winter to keep the loft from over-heating). Turn the water supply to humidifier off when operating the cooling system.
3. **Escaping Cool Air.** Check the duct in the utility room to determine if the areas where the duct is joined by metal straps are allowing air to escape. If you feel escaping air, purchase a roll of duct tape and wrap the tape around the areas that are leaking air. There is a register in the utility room that should always be closed – summer and winter.

### Safety Tips!

- Do not be tempted to leave the utility room door open to allow cool air (or warm air during winter) into the house. The door to the utility room is a metal fire door. Leaving this door open constitutes a fire hazard.
- The utility room is not a storage room! Do not store anything in this room except for laundry detergent. Remember! A gas appliance means an open flame. There are three gas appliances in the utility room: 1) a gas furnace, 2) a gas hot water heater, and 3) a gas clothes dryer. Never put anything flammable in the utility room! Sort the soiled laundry in the hall, not on the floor of the utility room.
- The lint filter in the clothes dryer must be cleaned before each load of clothes is dried in the dryer, as the directions state. Lint is flammable!

A build-up of lint in the exhaust pipe of the dryer also poses a fire hazard.

- It is suggested that each unit have at least 3 operational fire extinguishers – 1) one in the kitchen, 2) one in the hall outside the utility room, and 3) one in the garage by the entry door. Even small children may be taught how to operate a fire extinguisher, and made aware of where the extinguishers are located. Suitable fire extinguishers may be purchased at local home stores starting at under \$20; a small price for personal safety.
4. **The Thermostat.** The thermostat for the cooling system is located in the loft at the top of the stairs. It will help to cool the entire house by running the circulation fan continuously when operating the cooling system. This will also place less strain on the compressor, as the constantly circulating air causes the compressor to turn on less frequently. The switch for this fan is on the loft thermostat. On the left side of the thermostat there is a lever to adjust this. If the lever is turned to “auto”, the fan will operate only when the compressor (air conditioning unit outside) is running. If the lever is set to “on”, the fan will run continuously. The lever on the right side of the loft thermostat operates the compressor and should be in the “cool” position for operation of the cooling system.
  5. **Ceiling Fan.** Probably the most effective method of cooling the loft to a habitable temperature is the installation of ceiling fans in the loft and master bedroom. In order for a ceiling fan to be effective, it has to be large enough for the square footage of a room. For the loft and master bedroom, this has to be a 5-blade 52” fan with a 3-speed reversible motor. Anything smaller will not be sufficient. (For the smaller bedrooms, a 4-blade 44” fan with 3-speed reversible motor is sufficient. Fans may be purchased at local home stores. A licensed electrician should install the fans. Once the fans are installed, set the direction switch on the side of the fan to operate blades counter-clockwise, which will bring the cooler air up from the lower floors. The direction of the blades is most important to ensure the cooling effect. Setting the fan speed to medium and running continuously may produce the best effect.
  6. **The Temperature Setting.** Set the desired temperature by adjusting the lever on the bottom of the thermostat. If ceiling fans are used in conjunction with the air conditioning, you may find the setting the thermostat to 77 degrees works best.
  7. **The Skylights.** For optimum cooling (and to prevent your furniture from fading) the skylights should be covered with shades. Retractable shades are the most effective and may be purchased from any number of stores. Some homeowners may have shades installed already which include a long pole that may be used to lower or raise the shades manually. Our

skylights are not designed to keep rain out when left open! Therefore, you must be sure to close them especially when you are not at home in order to prevent any water damage.

8. **The First Floor Thermostat.** This thermostat controls the heating system in the unit. When operating the air conditioning, this thermostat should be set on the maximum low temperature so there will be no possibility that the furnace will turn on, because the 1<sup>st</sup> floor has chilled to the set temperature on the furnace thermostat! Therefore, push both of the levers on the furnace thermostat all the way to the left side in order to avoid this issue.
9. **The Filters.** The 2 filters in the top cavity of the furnace must be kept clean for the HVAC to operate efficiently. The circulation fan for the cooling system is the same fan for the furnace, only the temperature of the air it circulates differs. Mark a date once a month on your calendar as a reminder to rinse the filters. They may be rinsed in the bathtub, or outside with the garden hose, using plain water. Drain and shake the excess water from the filters, allowing them to dry a bit before re-installing them.
10. **Only Air is Coming Out of My Registers.** If you are operating the circulation fan continuously, the compressor will turn on automatically when the temperature in the loft rises above the temperature you have set on that thermostat. When the compressor turns off, having cooled the loft to your setting on the thermostat, the circulation fan will continue to run, keeping the cooled air moving, instead of allowing this cooled air to settle on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. If you are too warm, check the loft thermostat. See if the temperature setting on the bottom of the thermostat is set lower than the current temperature reading on the thermometer. If it is not, adjust the setting a couple of degrees lower than the thermometer, which will call for further cooling by the system.
11. **I Tried Everything But the Air from the Compressor is Not Chilled.** Now is the time to call the serviceman. Look in the Yellow Pages of the phonebook under Heating & Cooling for names of local contractors who service Lennox HVAC units, or call PSE&G if you have a service contract with them. The compressor might be out of Freon (a fluorocarbon used as a coolant in air conditioners). All compressors eventually run out of Freon and fail to operate. The line may have a leak, allowing the Freon to escape. Your serviceman will be able to diagnose the problem and make necessary repairs.

## Kitchen Fluorescent Light

**NOTE:** This information applies to the equipment **originally** installed by the developer. If changes have been made this section may not apply!

1. **Removing the Frame and Shield.** This is much easier with 2 people. There is a Philips head screw at one end of the wooden frame. This single screw holds the wooden frame in place. Be sure to hold the wood frame when loosening and removing the screw. After you have removed the screw, hold onto the frame by the end that had the screw, letting that end down slightly to allow clearance from the fixture. Both the frame and plastic shield should come down together.
2. **The Bulbs.** There are 4 bulbs that operate as teams of two. The 2 inside bulbs operate as one team and the outside bulbs operate as the second team. Unless the entire light is out, you will have to replace only one team. This will be determined by observing which bulbs are out when the cover is removed. The bulbs are removed by turning the bulb until the prongs drop out of the slots. Place the dead bulbs in the garbage, not with recycling materials. Replace with 4-foot fluorescent tubes.
3. **Replacing the Frame and Shield.** Again, enlist the help of another person, if possible. After installing the bulbs, replace the wood frame and plastic shield by inserting the lip at one end of the frame above the fixture and securing the screw at the other end.

**Important:** This is the only way to remove the white plastic shield. It will break if you attempt to remove it with the wood frame in place. The shield rests inside the wood frame.

## Operating the Garage Door

1. **The Push Button on the Side of the Garage Wall.** There is a button on the garage wall near the entry to 1<sup>st</sup> floor. Pressing this button will raise and lower the garage door. If you push the button while the door is raising or lowering it will stop. If you push the button again after stopping it, the door will operate in the opposite direction from which you started.
2. **The Key Switch on the outside of the garage** will operate the door in the above manner. Turning the key once will raise or lower the door; turning the key a second time while the door is moving will stop the door; turning the key a third time will move the door in the opposite direction from which it was initially moving.
3. **The Remote Control** operates the door by transmitting radio signals to the microchip located in the garage door motor housing. It works in the same manner as the push button and the key. Aiming the remote control at the garage door and pressing the button once will raise or lower the door; pressing the button again while the door is operating will stop the door; pressing the button again will move the door in the opposite direction from which it was initially moving.
4. **Rats! The Remote Control Does Not Work.** There are two things to check before you call a serviceman.
  - a. **The Battery.** The remote control is operated by a 9-volt battery. If the red light fails to light on the remote when the button is pressed, then the battery probably needs to be replaced. On the back side of the remote, open the small compartment labeled "battery access: and replace the battery, making sure to make the proper connections.
  - b. **The Antenna Wire.** This is the wire that hangs off the motor housing, and is the antenna for the remote. This wire should be hanging straight at all times. Straighten out the wire and try the remote again. If the door still fails to operate, a serviceman should be called. The garage doors were installed by Overhead Door. They may be contacted for service at (800) 722-5785.

**Important Safety Feature.** If the garage door is closing, and there is an obstruction in the way (garbage can, box, or child), the moment the door touches the obstruction, it automatically reverses and goes back up. If your garage door keeps rising when you attempt to close it, check to be certain that nothing is obstructing its movement.

## 5. Understanding the Garage Door Light.

- a. **How the light Operates.** When the door is activated, the light turns on and will remain on for approximately 2 minutes. This is to allow sufficient time at night for reaching the back door and entering the house.
- b. **Replacing the Light.** The light is located on the garage door motor. To replace the light bulb behind the white plastic cover, squeeze the top and bottom of the cover and pull the cover towards you. It is held on by two clips. Use a standard light bulb for replacement. Replace the cover in the manner in which it was removed.



## The Garbage Disposal

1. **Use of the Garbage Disposal.** Limit its use only to food scraps. Never use it to dispose of fruit pits, bones, banana or citrus peels. Put these types of items in your garbage. The plastic strainer that came with the garbage disposal should always be kept in place in the sink drain. This will ensure that unfortunate accidents will not occur. If a piece of flatware accidentally gets in the disposal, shut off immediately and retrieve it. Use caution as the metal utensil may have jagged edges. Dispose of the utensil carefully.
2. **Unit is Jammed.** If the unit fails to operate and makes a whining noise when the unit is turned on, turn the motor off and then on again, which reverses the direction of the blades. If this doesn't solve the problem, shut off the unit and check for an obstruction. (Perhaps a chip of bone, etc.) If you can not easily free the obstruction and turn the mechanism, it is recommended that a serviceman be called. Look in the Yellow Pages of the phone book under "plumbing".
3. **The Reset Button** is located underneath the bottom of the unit inside the sink cabinet.

## GFI Outlets

1. **What is GFI Anyway?** This is a particular type of electrical outlet that has a safety device to shut off the electricity when a small appliance plugged into that outlet is exposed to water. For example, dropping a hair dryer into a sink of water would shut down the electric current to that outlet, thus preventing you from receiving perhaps a fatal shock. GFI stands for Ground Fault Interceptor and these 2 outlets are located in the kitchen and garage. These outlets look different from regular outlets in that they have 2 buttons, one labeled test and the other one labeled reset.
2. **Understanding How the GFI Works.** The kitchen GFI controls all the receptacles that share the wall with this GFI. The GFI outlet in the garage works in conjunction with the receptacles in the three bathrooms and the receptacle outside the patio door. These two outlets, the kitchen GFI and the garage GFI, are the control centers for these other outlets.
3. **The Reset Button.** For the receptacles above to work, the red reset button on the two controlling GFI outlets must be pressed in. If you are not getting electrical power from a bathroom receptacle, check to see if the red reset button on the controlling GFI outlet in the garage is pressed in. Likewise, if an appliance is not working that is plugged into a kitchen outlet on the same wall with the GFI outlet, check the red reset button on the kitchen GFI outlet. (In some units, the refrigerator shares the same wall as the GFI outlet. The refrigerator, however, has a separate panel switch, and is not governed by the kitchen GFI).
4. **Electrical Storms.** The GFI unit sometimes shuts down during electrical storms. If you are not getting power from the bathroom outlets or from a kitchen outlet, check the reset buttons on the 2 GFI outlets. The red reset buttons must be pressed in.

## How to Tilt the Windows for Easier Cleaning (original windows only!)

The double-hung windows at Fair Acres are designed to allow the outside of the window to be washed from the inside of your house. It's easy, once you practice and get the hang of it!

1. Begin by carefully removing the mullions on the inside of the windows. The mullions are held in place by the pins at the end of the wooden pieces. Slide the pin back into the slot on the mullion to release the pin from the window frame. If the pin will not move, do not force it, the mullion may break. If you are unable to free most of the pins, it is still possible to remove the mullion. To avoid confusion, do only one window (both sashes) at a time. Lay the mullions in a safe place while cleaning the window.
2. Next, raise the window and remove the screen. Detach the screen and bring it through the window diagonally. (For the 1<sup>st</sup> floor windows, unhook the screens and stand them outside the windows against the unit.) Pull the top sash of the window down to about the middle of the entire window space. Next raise the bottom sash so that it is even with the location of the top sash. (The next step requires some strength). Grasp the 2 window sashes together at the top with one hand and grasp the bottom of the 2 sashes with the other hand. Pull inward with your top hand while pushing outward with your bottom hand. These 2 windows should come out of their casings and pivot from their centers. At this point, it is possible to separate the 2 windows by sliding them away from each other at their center pivot. This will give you the clearance necessary to access the outside part of the windows. Some of the windows may seem tight but with enough effort, all of the windows can be popped out this way.

**Hint!** After removing the screen, but before tilting the windows, raise and lower the windows, spraying a silicone lubricant on the tracks of the window casings to allow the windows to slide easier. It might be easier to spray the lubricant on a cloth and wipe it on the casings.

3. Reinstalling the Windows. To reinstall the windows, rotate both sashes together and pop them back into the casings. Raise both sashes to the top to install the screen. Remember, it is not necessary to take the sash out of the window frame. You can still clean the outside of the windows while they are in the tilted position.

**Hint!** When replacing the screen, the white metal cross-bar faces inside. Gently use this bar as a grip while trying to maneuver the screen into the position.

4. Cleaning the Inside of the windows should be left until last, as the inside would be smeared with fingerprints when rotating the sashes in and out of the casings.
5. The Mullions. When installing the mullions, check to be certain you have the side painted green facing the outside.

***Hint!*** Before replacing the mullions into the window frame, use a piece of coarse sandpaper folded in half to enlarge the slots for the pins. The idea is to make the slot wide and deep enough for the pin to slide easily. It will be much easier to secure the mullion to the window frame at all points. Use caution, as the mullions are fragile and can snap easily.

**Emergency Tip.** In an emergency situation, if you need a means of egress during a fire (or any emergency) you can rotate and pop out both window sashes if you are unable to get through the space allowed by raising only the bottom sash. For example, if you had to climb out holding an invalid or unconscious person in your arms. To pop both sashes out of the window frame, rotate both sashes out of their casings from their center pivot as if cleaning the windows. Then push down hard with your hand on the side of both windows at the casing. This will free both sashes to be tossed onto the ground allowing your egress.

## Difficult Window Locks

1. Always Check to make certain the both the top and bottom sashes are pushed as far up and down respectively, as possible. Holding the top sash against the top of the frame, push down on the bottom sash with your other hand, holding it in place with your forearm. This pressure on the bottom sash should enable you to catch the lock.

Sometimes, when the top sash of the window is pushed up, there will be a space at the top of the window which will make locking the window impossible. This is simple to remedy. Lower the upper sash about 12", grasp the top of the upper sash, and give it a quick pull inward. This will pop the window into the correct track of the casing. Next, push the top sash all the way up and it should now lock easily.

**Note:** When the windows are not raised for ventilation, keep them locked. This will ensure that the windows will continue to fit and lock without difficulty as the humidity changes.

## Outside Water Faucets

1. **Where are They Located? How Many?** Each unit has two outside water faucets. The inside units have a faucet located at the patio door in back and another one under the breakfast room window in front. The end units have a faucet located at the patio door in back and another between the chimney and the garage.
2. **Draining the Faucets for the Winter.** It is crucial that the water supply to the outside faucets be shut off during the winter to prevent the pipes from freezing. Burst pipes create a costly mess. The shut-off valve(s) looks exactly like the outside faucet handle, and is located underneath your sink. A unit may have one shut-off valve or two. A unit having 2 shut-off valves may not have both valves underneath the same sink. To locate the valve(s) , look under all of the sinks. Sometimes, this handle is painted red. (It does not look like the two chrome handles under the sink that are the shut-off valves for the hot and cold water for the sink)

The important thing is to shut-off the water supply to the outside faucets, and to drain the pipes of any water that remains. After locating the shut-off valve(s) in your unit, turn the water supply off around the middle of October. After turning off the water supply, open both outside faucets and let them drain leaving the faucet handles open all winter. Usually a reminder is sent to all homeowners in the fall regarding this maintenance need.

3. **Turning on the Water Back On** simply entails turning the valve(s) under the sink and closing the outside faucets. This should not be done until all danger of frost is past in the spring.

***Hint!*** Always turn the water back on first to allow the air in the pipes to escape before closing the faucets.

## Common Toilet Problems

### The Sound of Water Running in the Tank

1. **The Stopper.** The stopper (or flapper) is located at the bottom of the tank behind the toilet. Water will not fill the tank to flush the toilet if the stopper is not closing the opening at the bottom of the tank. This problem is usually caused by a kink or tangle in the chain attached to the stopper. Lift off the ceramic lid on the tank and set it aside. Look inside the tank and check to determine if the chain is caught or tangled in some way. Straighten out the chain and then test (flush) to see if the stopper settles completely over the opening at the bottom of the tank. It might be necessary to lengthen the chain. This can be accomplished by moving the hook attached to the rod on the flushing handle.
2. **The Overflow Pipe.** Water running in the tank can also be caused by water flowing from the overflow pipe at the top of the tank. This is caused by the bulb (or float being set too high when it is at its final stationary position, on top of the water. To set the bulb lower, gently bend the rod downward that is attached to the bulb. Flush the toilet with the top of the tank removed, checking that the water level in the tank does not rise above the overflow pipe.
3. **Other Problems** should be addressed by a licensed plumber. The company who installed the plumbing fixtures is Ciszak Plumbing in Carteret, NJ (732) 541-6985. For faster service, look under plumbing in the Yellow Pages of the telephone book to identify a local plumber.

## Operating the Fireplace

1. **The Damper.** This is a small door inside the top of the fireplace, operated manually by a small lever. This lever moves up or down regulating the opening of the flue (the center part of the chimney). Push the lever up to open the flue; pull the lever down to close the flue. The purpose of the damper is to allow smoke to rise up the chimney.
2. **Lighting the Fire.** After you have put wood in the fireplace, but before you light the fire, you must open the damper. Otherwise, smoke will fill your living room! Grasp the damper's lever and push it up to open the flue. Next, open your front door a few inches. Light one end of a rolled newspaper. Hold this torch with the lighted end up the fireplace flue. This steps starts the draft of smoke up the flue. Once you see the smoke flowing up the chimney through the flue, you can light your firewood. It is safe to close the door at this time.

***Hint!*** Make sure that the smoke is flowing up the flue before you light the fire.

3. **Maintenance.** If you use the fireplace at all, it should be checked annually and cleaned, as needed. This needs to be done as part of the homeowner's responsibility to maintain our insurance policy. Look in the Yellow Pages of the telephone book under chimney cleaning for a professional chimney sweep. Dirty chimneys can cause fires!

***Hint!*** When you are certain that the fire in the fireplace is completely out, and no coals remain, always close the damper by pulling down on the lever. This will prevent the warm air in the house from escaping up the chimney, eliminate a draft, and keep the house warmer. If your fireplace has glass doors, always keep them closed.



## Garbage & Recycling Information

This is general information regarding garbage and recycling. For further details, please contact South Brunswick Township for further information through their website <http://www.twp.south-brunswick.nj.us> or call (732) 329-4000.

### Garbage

1. **Schedule.** Pickup is once per week on ***Mondays*** usually around 8:00 AM. There are only a few exceptions due to holidays.
2. **Where and When.** You may place garbage in front of your unit by the curbside after 6:00 PM the night before collection.
3. **Garbage Containers.** Your trash should be placed at the curb primarily in at least one (1) plastic or metal container that will secure your garbage. This prevents animals, wind, or other interference from making a mess. If you have more garbage than fits in your container, then you may use heavyweight plastic garbage bags for your excess garbage only.
4. **Putting Away Garbage Containers.** You must put away your garbage can(s) no later than 6:00 PM the same day following the pickup.
5. **Large Items.** If you have large or oversized items such as mattress, chair, table, etc., please place those at your curbside as close to the collection day/morning as possible.

### Recycling

1. **Schedule.** Pickup is once per week on ***Wednesdays*** usually around 8:00 AM.
2. **Where and When.** You may place your recycling containers in front of your unit by the curbside after 6:00 PM the night before collection.
3. **Recycling Containers.** South Brunswick Township provides you with a large yellow container for your commingled recyclables, e.g., bottles or other containers made of glass plastic, aluminum/tin cans, and aseptic (polycoated) items from milk/juice. In addition, South Brunswick Township provides a blue box for your newspapers and other recyclable papers.
4. **Putting Away Recycling Containers.** You must put away your garbage can(s) no later than 6:00 PM the same day following the pickup.
5. **Special Recycling.** Refrigerators, Paint, Batteries, and other items follow special recycling rules. You must follow the latest guidelines published by South Brunswick Township. Please contact them should you have any questions about latest rules.

## Appendix 1: Fair Acres Master Deed and Other Documents Recorded with Middlesex County

## Appendix 2: South Brunswick Recycling Guide

## Appendix 3: Tenant Registration Form