

NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2025

♦ Birchwood Pointe Board of Trustees:

- Tracey Chalifour, **President**
- Alan Stern, **Treasurer**
- Frank Peluso, Maribel Umpierrez,
Linda Sauerman, **Trustees**

♦ **Gemini Property Management:** 978-346-8900
Anthony Castiglione, apc@geminiproperty.net

Unit Leasing Status:

As of September 1, the Association is **8 units** below the 25% rental limit. Always check with Gemini Property Management if you are considering selling or renting your unit, since there is a leasing restriction and the ratio can change at any time.



- **The Birchwood Pointe Condominium Association Annual Unit Owners meeting is MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 15th at 7:00 PM at Amesbury Council on Aging/Costello Transportation Center.**
- The meeting must take place as required by the Master Deed, and a quorum is required. BPCA bylaws state that we need attendance of 33.33% based on beneficial interest of owners to conduct a meeting and have an election, so it is especially important that you attend, or **give your proxy vote to someone that is attending**. Without a quorum, we cannot have an election, and we need elected Trustees to govern the community and conduct monthly business.
- The Annual Meeting is limited to deeded owners or those individuals to whom an owner has assigned their proxy.
- Owners should have already received the Annual Meeting packet in the mail. If you did not, please contact Gemini.

ADDITIONALLY, IN YOUR MEETING PACKET ARE FORMS THAT MUST BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED TO GEMINI ANNUALLY OR WHEN ANYTHING PERTAINING TO YOUR UNIT CHANGES. PLEASE BE SURE TO RETURN ALL DOCUMENTS, ESPECIALLY THE UNIFORM DATA FORM AND MASTER DEED 8A CERTIFICATE, AND REGISTER ALL PETS AS REQUIRED BY THE RULES GOVERNING THE COMMUNITY. ALL DOCUMENTS CAN BE MAILED OR EMAILED TO GEMINI OR BROUGHT TO THE ANNUAL MEETING.

MONTHLY CONDO FEE LATE FEES: Over the past few months, the Board of Trustees has been monitoring late condo fee payments. As a reminder to all, monthly condo fees are due on the first day of the month. There is also a 15 day grace period, to allow for slow mail, bank payment turn-around time, etc. We have a number of units that are consistently late paying their condo fees in full by the 15th of the month. This has prompted the Board to implement a new policy that will go into effect **September 1st, 2025**. Starting in September, if your condo fee is not paid IN FULL by the 15th of the month, you will incur a \$25 late fee on your account. This will happen automatically in Appfolio, the portal used by the Association, no matter what your monthly fee balance is on the 16th. For example, if you owe \$50, you will be charged a late fee. To avoid late fees, please consider the following to insure your payment arrives on time:

1. If you are not yet using the online portal to pay monthly fees, please register / set up your Appfolio account to pay your monthly fee automatically from your bank account.
2. If you use US Mail to send in your monthly fee, please allow time for slow mail delivery and send it in earlier than you are currently doing.
3. If you use your bank to electronically send the monthly fee, you should allow for the fact that banks are actually mailing a check to Gemini and that processing and mailing time can be longer than you realize.

Upcoming Important Dates:

Pool Closing: The pool closing will begin during the week of **September 8th** and necessary repairs will commence. Once repairs are completed, the pool deck will remain re-open for enjoyment as the fall season allows.

Garden Beds: All plants and personal items must be removed by Columbus Day, **October 13th** at the end of the day.

Motorcycles and Permitted Third Cars: Must be off property before **November 1st** for the winter season.

Mandatory Fire Alarm and Smoke Detector Testing: Will be held on **Saturday, October 18th**. The Fire Department must access every unit - if you do not provide access, a locksmith will be on site to gain entry into your unit, and your account will be charged for their services. If you need replacement devices, they will also be replaced if you are not home, and you will be charged for those, too. Please keep your eye out for a posting and emails in the coming weeks.

Lastly, **AC Sleeve** external covers will be installed sometime in mid- November, to assist with minimizing drafts and reducing energy costs.

REPORTING MAINTENANCE ITEMS... AND WHAT IS AN EMERGENCY ?

If you notice something that needs to be fixed in your unit or in a common area and it is not an emergency, please report it during normal business hours - M-F from 8AM-4PM. When Gemini or a vendor has to come on-site in the evening or on a weekend, we are paying premium rates. Some expenses may end up being your responsibility as a unit owner, not the Association.

Additionally, tenants should contact their landlords for routine non-emergency items, not Gemini.

> *Water on the floor near washing machines or hot water heaters is an emergency. Safety issues ARE emergencies. Please report items like these immediately. Smoke, fire = call 911. Emergency items should always be called in, not emailed, for a quicker response.*

> *A clogged bathtub/toilet - if it is not overflowing onto the floor and potentially the unit below - is not an emergency. A beeping alarm in your unit when there is no evidence of fire or danger is not an emergency. A building entry door closing too hard, a car parked in your deeded spot or laundry left in a washer or dryer is not an emergency, although they are all annoying! A unit lock out or a security panel that stops working is not an emergency. PLEASE USE COMMON SENSE AND GOOD JUDGEMENT WHEN CONTACTING GEMINI FOR MAINTENANCE ITEMS.*

Trash Management & Recycling—PLASTIC BAGS are not allowed in recycling dumpsters.

Recycling is mandatory in Amesbury. We have two recycling dumpsters on the property, located on either side of the pool for resident convenience. Please use the recycling dumpsters as required. This will save us from incurring additional costs for trash removal. Please make sure to close the side doors of the dumpster containers. The dumpster gate/enclosure should also be secured after disposing trash and nothing should be left in the enclosure outside of the containers. Please help by securing all areas and trash. It is not the responsibility of on-site maintenance to take care of your trash - if you can't fit yours in the dumpster, walk to another one. **Also, furniture and other large household items do not belong in the dumpsters.**

Acceptable Plastics and Paper:

- > All plastics #1 - #7, excluding #6 (Styrofoam).
- > Six- and twelve-pack rings
- > Newspapers and inserts.
- > Envelopes, including window envelopes.
- > Butter/margarine tubs, dessert/yogurt cups and plastic condiment containers.
- > All cardboard, with the exception of waxed cardboard—please flatten and if large cut into smaller pieces.
- > Cereal boxes, drink boxes, milk cartons, cake and gift boxes—please flatten.
- > Telephone books, brown paper bags, magazines, paperback books, office paper, computer paper, fax paper, notebook paper and covers (no metal rings or clips).

Unacceptable Plastics and Paper: IF YOU COLLECT RECYCLABLES IN PLASTIC BAGS, EMPTY CONTENTS INTO RECYCLE DUMPSTER

- > No plastic bags, styrofoam or packaging peanuts.
- > No napkins, tissues, toilet paper, or soiled food wrappers.
- > No plastic wrap, newspaper sleeves, or plastic film.

Acceptable Glass: Glass bottles, jars, food containers, beverage containers. **Unacceptable Glass:** No window glass or mirrors; light bulbs; ceramics.

Acceptable Cans and Foil: Clean aluminum cans and foil—please flatten; Tin and steel cans; Lids from jars; Empty and non-hazardous aerosol cans.

PLUMBING AND HEATING: Birchwood Pointe plumbing, heating and drain systems were designed and installed over 40 years ago, and each unit is connected to others by shared pipes in a stack. When one unit has an issue such as a drain problem or no heat, it can potentially affect other units and cause problems for the entire building.

Please notify Gemini when it comes to heat, water and drain issues, and to not let problems proliferate... because the inconvenience of no water or heat and the cost to all unit owners could be worse.

In mid - late September, the heat will be turned on in all buildings. Condo fees include paying for heat, so when you leave for extended periods of time and the outside temperature drops below 60 degrees (which is the external thermostat setting on the boiler), the heat will automatically kick on. Open windows can essentially be like throwing money out the window, and that is reflected in the heating budget line item and eventually, your condo fee. If you will be gone for an extended period of time, please close your windows, and/or lower your thermostat to below 60 degrees. Please help us contain condo fee increases by closing your windows - and hallway windows - when the heat is on.

After heating season begins, if you don't have heat, before calling Gemini, check to see if your neighbors have heat, if they do, the problem is in your unit - a bad thermostat or a faulty circulator valve in your baseboard, or something else. Be prepared - this will be your own expense to fix - but still call Gemini for assistance, or call your own vendor.

LAUNDRY ROOM ETIQUETTE: Please clean the washing machine gaskets and the dryer lint filters after you are done using the machines. Also, washing machine doors should be left ajar so they can dry out, and personal items & household trash should not be disposed of in the waste baskets. Lastly, please refrain from slamming equipment doors and laundry room doors- the adjacent units thank you!

WATER CONSERVATION IS STILL A TOP PRIORITY Birchwood water expenses are included in monthly condo fees. Every unit owner is impacted by the overall water use of all residents. We are asking everyone to do their best to help minimize water use - the cost affects the operating budget - your condo fee! Additionally, the City of Amesbury has increased water and sewer rates again this year. There are many ways you can help to conserve water and help to minimize condo fee increases:

1. Take short showers. Baths use 15-25 gallons of hot water compared with less than 10 gallons for a five-minute shower!
2. Run your dishwasher only when it's full, and avoid hand-washing dishes—it uses more water.
3. Repair running toilets and leaky faucets.
4. When brushing your teeth or shaving, turn off the faucet—don't run the water until you need it.
5. When cleaning with water, run water only when you need it.
6. Always be conscientious that the water is not "free" - we have to pay for it at some point, just like living in a house.

Birchwood Pointe Parking Stickers

All resident vehicles are required to have a parking sticker, as outlined in the Rules. You must obtain the sticker and put it in your vehicle window within 30 days of residency. Failure to do so will result in fines and possible towing of your vehicle.

Each unit is allowed no more than two vehicles. Vehicles without BP stickers cannot park in deeded spots, and vehicles without parking stickers that are parked in a visitor space are considered guest vehicles. When parking, pursuant to the rules, you should always use your deeded spot first. We have limited visitor parking and many vehicles on property, so please be considerate. Overall adherence to this policy is especially critical during the winter, when parking spaces are at a premium due to the need for allocating snow storage in the visitor spaces. Lastly, your sticker should be located in the lower right-hand corner of the rear most window on the driver's side of the vehicle (not the rear window). If it is not, please move it to the correct location—it can be easily peeled off and reapplied.