



**A Condominium  
Management Co. Inc.**  
(248) 650-8983  
[www.ACondoMgt.com](http://www.ACondoMgt.com)

# A Condo News

Volume 3, Issue 1

## First Annual Lighting Contest

by Brandi Lane

You may have seen him on the news this year, you may have heard about him from your friends. You may even live down the street from him! One thing is clear that there is an undisputed winner in the first annual A Condominium Management Company Holiday Lighting contest. The picture submitted below does not do this home justice. He has greater than 40 minute choreographed light show...wait, a better phrase is lighting spectacular! So, a link to the video is just below the photo. Congrats Brent Waldrep of our Paramount Association!!



[Video of light show](#)

Here are a few of the worst houses I could find and fortunately none were in our communities!



*This is what happens when you don't have an Association! Chaos!!*



*Each of Joe's personalities decorated one branch!*



*Skittles...not just a candy anymore! Now a holiday light set!*

## Rock Salt vs Ice Melter

By Brandi Lane

Recently due to the economy some association's have chosen to have unit owners take on the responsibility of salting their own sidewalks and porches. For some of you, you may simply want to know what is the difference between these products and why are some used on this surface while others are used on that surface. Rock salt or halite is the most common product used for ice maintenance and to assist with snow removal. It is only effective to roughly 16° F.

Calcium chloride or "ice melter" is effective to temperatures of -25°. Although no ice and snow remover is erosion proof, this material is preferred for cement surfaces and to aid in the melting of ice dams.

For those of you who are pet lovers, our family found a smelly but very effective alternative. It is called "Paw Pals" and is a copper colored, crystalline product. It smells like a barnyard but it had eliminated the irritation I've had on my dogs paws, works at even lower temperatures than either product listed above, and requires half the quantity of application. I only know of one supplier in the area which is the Washington Elevator. You can visit them on the web by clicking [here](#) or by calling them at (586) 781-4822.

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### QUICK TIPS

- Report any slick, icy situations to our office immediately. Our best offense is a good defense. Home owner participation is very helpful!
- Ice sticking to your satellite dish? My installer said to spray cooking spray on the dish to encourage water to slide off! (Ask your provider before.)
- If its snowing...enjoy the warmth...stay home!

**BUT, RUDOLPH LIKES A TAN! by Brandi Lane**

Probably one of the biggest items associations struggle with is holiday spirit representation. Some people want to proudly show off their religious beliefs. Some people pay hundreds of dollars for the latest, greatest inflatable lawn decoration with moving parts and 3 million watt LED lights. Then there is the great debate over white vs colored lights. Inevitably, most Associations bend the rules to allow for some holiday spirit in some form. However, when someone bends the rules others will always try and break them.

Some examples are on the first page, I mean can you imagine sharing an association electricity bill with someone like that?!? Still others are more subtle,

and the rule they stretch the most is date of taking down their decoration. In Michigan, it is true that the weather can be temperamental but if Rudolph is flying on grass instead of snow, he shouldn't be there. Obviously everyone wants you to be safe, but usually there is at least one good weekend between January 1st and 31st or at the latest mid-February to get them down.



So, if you want individualism then you have to play by the rules. This is a reminder if your lights are still twinkling or if Santa is still waving you needs to put them away. Thanks...Scrooge.

**ABOVE AND BEYOND : KEITH WALTERHOUSE by Brandi Lane**

At annual meetings we rarely have enough people volunteering to be on the condominium board of directors. It is just about as likely that you'll be struck by lighting as finding someone who is willing to serve their community year after year, after year. One such bolt of lightning, or should we say ray of light, is Keith Walterhouse of the Pine Knob Enclaves Condominium Association.

I am fortunate to have worked with Keith over the past two years but Jason recently told me that he has worked with Keith for almost a decade! Prior to moving to the Enclaves, Keith was a resident of our Pine Knob Manor Homes III community and also served on their Board for a length of time.

Keith was instrumental in assisting with a large repaving project for the master association this summer. He has been a wealth of knowledge for the newly appointed Pine Knob Enclaves board and continues to serve as it secretary. He has helped with numerous committees in both communities and is currently assisting with re-drafts of some of Enclave's outdated Bylaws so that he and his neighbors can enjoy their community

even more. Thank you Keith for all that you do and thank you for being a concerned neighbor! We look forward to many more years!!

**NOMINATIONS???**

*Know of a neighbor that goes above the call of duty for the betterment of your Association? Send us your nominations. It is important for us to recognize that there are still people willing to go the extra mile and make a difference in your community. Please send your nominations to*

[BLane@ACondoMGT.com](mailto:BLane@ACondoMGT.com)



**WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE A REFERENCE? DO YOU KNOW A COMMUNITY IN NEED OF OUR SERVICES?**



**Contact Jason Carey  
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**County Events & Sporting Events**

**MACOMB COUNTY**  
**MACOMB CENTER FOR THE ARTS**  
 2/25 CIRQUE SHANGHAI 8:00P  
 2/26 ANIMAL MAGIC 3:00P & 8:00P  
 3/5 THE WIZARD OF OZ 3:00P & 8:00P  
**WOLCOTT MILL METROPARK**  
 2/26 FAMILY FARM CHORES  
 2/27 MAPLE SWEETNESS  
**STONY CREEK METROPARK**  
 3/5, 3/6, 3/12-13 SCIENCE OLYMPIAD

**OAKLAND COUNTY**  
**PALACE OF AUBURN HILLS**  
 3/9-3/15 DISNEY ON ICE: TOY STORY 3  
**MEADOWBROOK THEATER**  
 2/9-3/6 REUNION: A MUSICAL EPIC  
**MEADOW BROOK HALL**  
 3/11 KIDS PAJAMA PARTY AT THE HALL

**SPORTING EVENTS**

**DETROIT PISTONS (21-36)**  
 2/26 UTAH JAZZ (7:30P)  
 3/9 @ SAN ANTONIO (8:30P)  
 3/12 @ DENVER (9:00P)  
 3/23 MIAMI HEAT (7:30P)  
**DETROIT TIGERS (0-0) \*SPRING\***  
 2/26-2/27 TORONTO (1:05P)  
 3/2 HOUSTON (1:05P)  
 3/6 PHILLIES (1:05P)  
 3/17 MINNESOTA (1:05P)  
 3/29-3/31 YANKEES (1:05P)  
**MICHIGAN ST. BASKETBALL (15-11)**  
 2/22 @ MINNESTOA (9:00 P)  
 2/27 PURDUE (1:00P)  
 3/2 IOWA (6:30P)  
 3/5 @ MICHIGAN (2:00P)  
**MICHIGAN BASKETBALL (17-11)**  
 2/23 WISCONSIN (6:30P)  
 2/26 OAKLAND UNIV. (12:00P)



## Outdoor Grilling by Community Association Underwriters of America, Inc.



*This article was provided to our office by a gentleman who specializes in loss assessments. It's winter so before the barbeques come out in a few months, I think we could all take something from this article.—Brandi*

### Introduction

One of the most enjoyable summer pastimes is cooking outdoors with family and friends. Nearly everyone would agree that a steak or burger cooked over the open flame of an outdoor grill tastes better than one prepared indoors in a broiler or frying pan.

However, residents in multi-residential housing must take special precautions to enjoy the benefits of grilling outdoors. Using open-flame grills or other similar devices on balconies is unsafe and, in most cases, prohibited by local fire ordinances. An open-flame grill can use gas, charcoal, wood or pellets as a fuel.

By taking a few simple precautions suggested in this guide, you could prevent a relaxing evening outdoors from turning into a fiery tragedy for you and your community.

For those of you who read no further, the most important suggestion is to cook with an electric grill. Electric grills burn almost as hot as gas or charcoal, but are safer, cleaner, and lighter in weight.

### What are the Hazards?

Remember, in multi-residential housing, you are not alone. The risk of fire to one homeowner is a risk to all homeowners sharing the same or nearby buildings. Failure to take adequate precautions to prevent the spread of fire can result in injury or death to fellow residents, and a large lawsuit against you.

When you use an open-flame grill located too close to a building, such as on a balcony, there is always the danger of fire getting out of control and spreading to living areas. In fact, according to the National Fire Protection Association

(NFPA), one-half of all structure fires started by gas or charcoal grills begin on an exterior balcony or open porch.

The smoke produced during grilling can be harmful, even fatal, and you cannot control the direction that the wind will blow the smoke. Lethal smoke can build up inside your unit without you ever knowing it.

There are predominant reasons why, for multi-residential housing, most fire codes and local ordinances prohibit using open-flame gas or charcoal grills on balconies, beneath combustible overhangs or within 10 feet of the building. These same codes usually exclude one- and two-family dwellings from these prohibitions.

### Charcoal Grills

The following are general precautions for outdoor grilling with charcoal grills:

- Purchase the proper starting fluid and store it out of reach of children.
- Never use any flammable or combustible liquid other than charcoal starter fluid to help ignite the charcoal.
- Never add additional charcoal starter fluid to ignited coals or instant light charcoal.
- If your bag of charcoal gets wet, leave it in a well-ventilated area outside the home. Charcoal can spontaneously ignite as it dries.
- Allow coals to cool at least 48 hours before disposing. Wrap cold ashes in heavy-duty aluminum foil and place them in a noncombustible container.

### Gas Grills

The following are general precautions for outdoor grilling with gas grills:

- Check the gas hose and couplings for leaks before using your grill for the first time each year. A light soap and water solution applied to these areas will quickly reveal any leaking propane by forming small bubbles.
- Always turn off the gas supply at the bottle after cooking.

- If you smell gas while cooking, move away from the grill and call "911". Do not attempt to move the grill.
- Never store propane gas cylinders inside buildings or garages.

### Electric Grills

The following are general precautions for outdoor grilling with electric grills:

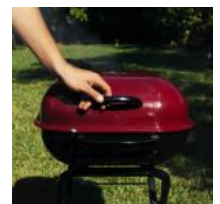
- Visually inspect the cord, plug and all connections for damage before operation.
- Only plug an electric grill into a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) outlet.
- Unplug the grill when it is not in use.
- Do not immerse the cord, plug, or heating element in water or other liquid.
- Do not use an electric grill in the rain.

### Conclusion

Whether or not local fire codes or ordinances restrict the use of open-flame grills on balconies and near combustible building components in multi-residential housing, it is a good idea for the association to do so. The association should adopt a resolution that prohibits grilling with gas, charcoal, or wood grills on or beneath elevated decks, balconies and roof decks. The resolution should also restrict grilling with these devices to grade level at least 10 feet from the building.

A safer alternative to conventional open flame grills is the electric grill. Local fire codes and ordinances will usually allow the use of electric grills on balconies in multi-residential housing, however, verify this with the local municipality before permitting them on the balconies.

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## Snow is over but now I Have Ice...Dams! By Brandi Lane

*That title attracted your attention didn't it! As February melts into March we are faced with constant freezing and thawing due to both increased sun and temperatures. This can create an ice dam. What's an ice dam? I leave it to the experts below...*

Ice dams are incredibly annoying natural occurrences. Michigan is prone to ice dams because our winters are often filled with a freeze-thaw-freeze cycle of temperatures. The question remains: what is an ice dam?

An ice dam occurs when melting snow from your roof freezes in the cold metal gutters. As the layers build up, they create an ice ridge. (See the illustration below.) Soon there is no place for the melting water to go so it pools up behind the ice thus the name ice dam. Water chooses the path of least resistance and as it builds can get underneath shingles. The water then finds any crack or crevice which ultimately can find its way to your drywall, carpet or personal items.



Picture Courtesy Tim Summers/The Detroit News

Although ice dams cannot be predicted, there are preventative measures. First, make sure you have adequate insulation in your attic. The colder the roof is the less likely that you will have ice dams. Heat rises - so inadequate insulation can allow warm air to rise into the attic space and melt snow down onto the cold gutters.

Next, make sure your attic is properly ventilated. Both ridge vents and attic fans are good ways to increase circulation as are clear, open soffit vents. The greater the air circulation, the less likely that warm air can build up in the attic space and cause melting.



Picture Courtesy [www.granitegeek.org](http://www.granitegeek.org)

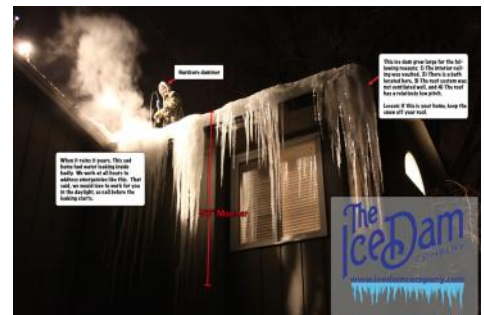
If you have proper insulation and ventilation you still could have ice dams. The culprit happens to be the sun and Michigan's unpredictable weather. As they say one day in Michigan it can be a blizzard and the next day its fifty degrees. This freeze and thaw from the heat of the sun and then the temperatures dropping can create enormous ice dams. The cheapest way to combat ice dams is roof raking. This is particularly important in roof valleys or where different levels of roofing are separated. Snow tends to pile up in these areas and creates the perfect scenario for an ice dam. Roof raking is taking a flat bladed, extended handle rake and pulling three to five feet of snow from the edges of the roofline. Taking away the heaviest, wettest snow and allowing for melting of ice in the gutters helps prevent the ice dam from occurring.

Obviously there is no way to prevent or predict every ice dam. So what do we do if they occur? Milder ice dams can be taken care of by additional roof raking. The combination of evaporation and reduction of snow behind the area will often clear up the smaller ice dams.

Large ice dams require a little extra work. Often vendors use calcium chloride "socks" to help melt the ice in the gutters. These "socks" are usually ladies hosiery that is filled with calcium chloride. Please be aware that you should never use rock salt on your roof. This can degrade the shingles immensely and cause more damage than the ice itself! Use of any chemical can have affect materials but sometimes the risk is worth saving the interior of your home.

In extreme cases, it may be necessary to use both "channeling" and the "socks". "Channeling" is the mechanical cutting of paths through the ice to allow for drainage. When combined with the "socks", this helps destroy the ice dam. I do not recommend that anyone perform the channeling themselves. Please contact a licensed, insured vendor.

The safest method for removal is the use of steam. High concentrations of steam can either completely eliminate the ice dam or create the same channels for drainage. As with any other method, adding warm water to a cold surface can have its issues as well. The pressure can force water upward under the shingles, around roof flashing, or even splash down and freeze onto walkways creating slippery situations.



Picture Courtesy [www.icedamcompany.com](http://www.icedamcompany.com)

If you see icicles, that is a very good indicator of ice dams. If you see these forming or if you see an ice dam, please contact your management company; or if your Association does not handle exterior maintenance of your home, a qualified and insured contractor should be retained to remedy this situation.

Ice dams may not present themselves as leaks inside your home right away. Between preventative maintenance like roof raking and quick response to the presence of ice dams on the exterior of your home, you can prevent costly drywall repairs and interior damage.

If you think you have an ice dam forming, please feel free to contact our office at (248) 650-8983. We will be happy to assist you. With any luck (and if the ground hog predicted correctly), the spring warmth and end of this snow should be coming soon!!!

## HELP WANTED

I am looking for a RN, Medical Caregiver, or Nursing Student, to stop by our home located in Washington Woods subdivision for 1/2 hr/day Monday through Friday for medical aid. I am a middle-aged man and am a paraplegic. This would be a good opportunity to make some extra cash for someone who is a student, a part time, or retired Nurse. Thank you and God Bless.

Please contact Clint Wellington.

**(586) 484-0434**



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## RESTAURANT ROUND-UP: THE GREAT CUPCAKE DEBATE ROCKIN' CUPCAKES vs BOHO CUPCAKES by Brandi Lane

Sometimes I get some very tough assignments for the Restaurant Round-up and none was tougher on all of us in this office (and on my family) than tasting cupcakes. A Condominium's headquarters is located in Rochester, MI which happens to be within five minutes of two of the areas newest cupcakes stores. So, instead of reviewing one, I decided to pit them against each other in a taste off! Depending on personal preference you may find you like one or the other and we suggest you test them yourself! So in one corner we have Rockin' Cupcakes and in the other corner Boho Cupcakes! Did I mention what a rough assignment this was...ha ha!

### BOJO CUPCAKES 304 East St, Rochester, MI

If you have young kids you will love this place. I am not sure how they twist the batter into tie-dyed whimsy but it makes you feel like a kid again. The cakes themselves are larger than the typical size. The frosting was extremely light, not overly sweet, and took you back to childhood. However, all tasters found that the larger size also left the bottoms slightly over cooked and the cake itself tended to be drier than expected. The picture below shows that Boho prefers a dollop of icing which we think may lead to the lessened shelf life. The location is close to us but not great for foot traffic and parking is not convenient. In my opinion this is great for younger palates and to their highest credit the staff is super friendly!



*\*For a link to their website click the picture above.*



### ROCKIN' CUPCAKES 6930 N. Rochester Rd, Rochester Hills, MI

Everyone knows the king of rock-n-roll is Elvis. And, believe me when I say Rockin' Cupcakes is the king of the Rochester Area cupcake battle. Each delectable cupcake received its name from a song or band. Although not as showy as their neighbor, they make up for swirls of color with moist, dense cake, amazing presentation, and hands down winner on taste. Ladies, may I suggest the Lexington. Picture a chocolate cupcake, gooey salted caramel filling, chocolate butter cream and sprinkles of salt on top...mmm...yep I proclaim the winner and heavyweight champion ROCKIN' CUPCAKES!!! Tell Mary and Jim that we sent you, and get a dozen...they go quickly.



*\*For more visit their website by clicking the picture*

**VS.**