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CAI president's message: The new normal

May 01, 2020 - Owners Developers & Managers

Edmund Allcock

As we all anxiously hope the COVID-19 curve will soon flatten and that states will be able to safely open and stay-at-home orders and closures will be slowly relaxed, we anticipate a return to what is likely to be a 'new' normal. The last several weeks have provided CAI and the New England chapter the opportunity to inform and keep condominium association residents, managers and business partners updated on important developments and best practices in a COVID-19 environment. In addition to what has already been done, CAI and the New England chapter will continue to monitor developments and provide resources to assist communities as they navigate unprecedented challenges.

I am proud to say that New England chapter board members, committees, staff and countless volunteers shifted into emergency mode in response to the pandemic. First, there were the COVID-19 emergencies in condominiums -what to do with confirmed and suspected cases, how to respond with protocols and disinfectant programs, etc.; CAINE hosted webinars and put out newsletters and articles to assist members with best practices and policies. Then, as in all emergencies, came the legislation and executive orders affecting how condominiums do business; much effort was given trying to figure out who and what was essential. Volunteers and local CAI Legislative Action Committee (LAC) leaders worked with legislators, lobbyists, governors, attorneys general, insurance professionals and the like to advocate on behalf of condominiums and the industry as a whole. Chapter leaders are now working feverishly to help condominiums and their industry partners to deal with the resulting financial crisis and navigate government sponsored loans and programs.

The bright side in this crisis is that our chapter and its members and communities have come together in an unprecedented fashion. One community had a group of residents form a "compassion committee" designed to help residents quarantined with the virus. I have seen another business partner, enact a program called #adopt a hospital, where they provide meals to our busy hospital workers. In the midst of the pandemic the positive stories are out there if you look for them. As a chapter, our effort has been immediate and strong but there remains much to be done.

The pandemic is not over. I hope that this event has opened our eyes. Condominiums and our industry, like the rest of the world, were not prepared for it. I feel that social distancing, masks, insurance, protocols, finances, reserves, disaster plans and common area policies will all become immediate priorities for our industry going forward. While we cannot go back to life as it was, hopefully we can get to a new normal.

I am proud of how our chapter has reacted in an emergency situation. The next step of the journey will be to prepare for the future so we can be ready next time. The CAI and New England chapter leaders will be at the forefront to prepare and position condominiums and the industry for this new normal.

CAI and the New England Chapter continue to monitor developments in the Coronavirus Pandemic and may postpone/reschedule the following programs and dates if necessary. Please contact the chapter office or www.caine.org to confirm program dates and locations.

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