

Newsletters and Websites

A comprehensive, proactive community association communications program will contribute to productive meetings, satisfied homeowners, balanced budgets, informed consultants, supportive residents, cooperative tenants, eager buyers, low delinquencies—and more. A monthly newsletter and a dynamic website are excellent places to start.

Here are some ideas on what to include:

- **Free newsletter articles:** This free-to-members service from CAI is a collection of more than 100 articles on community association living that associations can customize for use in their newsletters and on their websites. For more information, see below.
- **Status reports:** How's that repair project coming? When will the roof be finished?
- **Financial reports:** Keep to the bottom line. Financial reports can sometimes be dull, so use graphs and charts whenever possible.
- **Personnel notes:** Identify new employees, acknowledge promotions and recognize resident accomplishments.
- **Welcome newcomers:** Just remember to get their permission before printing their names.
- **Archives:** Put your old newsletters, meeting minutes and annual reports online.
- **Minutes:** Meeting minutes or recaps keep the community up to date on the business of the association and remove any mystery about the board's actions.
- **Events:** Publish a two- or three-month event calendar, including meeting notices.
- **Volunteer spotlight:** Give appreciation and recognition to individual volunteers. This lets them know they're valued by the community.
- **Contacts:** Print the name, address and phone number of the manager or appropriate contact person. Include emergency numbers.
- **Bad news:** It's best to deal with bad news head-on. Announcing it immediately gives you the advantage of getting the facts out before rumors and misinformation can circulate.
- **Member surveys:** Online polls are a quick and inexpensive way to sample member opinion on issues like how your residents feel about putting in speed bumps.
- **Forms:** Cut down on management processes by posting your forms online and allow residents to submit them electronically.
- **Local news:** Area news that affects residents, such as taxation issues or zoning changes, can make a strong contribution to your newsletter.
- **Marketing:** Include photos and information on units for sale and sell advertising.
- **Letters:** Publishing letters to the editor or board gives residents a voice. Give due consideration to all letters, and publish a mix of viewpoints. Get the sender's permission first.
- **Community interaction:** Message boards and chat rooms facilitate resident communication.
- **Message from the board:** Ask a board member to write a message for each issue.
- **Committee reports:** Keep owners informed and aware of the association's actions.
- **Rule reminders:** Rules can be highlighted and explained in a regular column or department.

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