

S U M M E R 2 0 1 4

# Black Creek Sanctuary Newsletter

Courtesy of:  
Property Management Services of NJ, Inc.



After closing in 1996, because of multiple personal-injury lawsuits, Action Park is back this summer. It was announced in early April that Mountain Creek Water Park was going back to its old name of Action Park. Along with its new name come some new rides. Plan your trip this summer and experience Action Park once again! Admission is \$40 per person but a few dollars cheaper if purchased online.

## Save the Date!

### State Fair Meadowlands

**June 20 to July 6**

NJ's Biggest Event! State Fair at the Meadowlands.

More information at:

[www.njfair.com](http://www.njfair.com)

### New Jersey State Fair

**Aug. 1- 10**

Sussex County Farm and Horse Show is also the NJ State Fair. Located at the Sussex County Fairgrounds.



## Make Pool Safety a Priority

Swimming is one of the many joys of summer, and we hope you're able to make good use of the association's pool. While we want to make sure all our residents and guests have fun in and around the water, our top priority is safety. Please take note of the associations pool rules, and follow them to help keep everyone safe.

Pool rules promote safety, but safety is largely up to you: please take precautions and be prepared for emergencies. Make sure you, your family, and your guests know how to swim. Consider signing up for a swimming class, if you don't. Always supervise your children while they're around the pool, no matter how well they can swim. Take note where the reach pole, emergency phone, and life preservers are located in the pool area. Consider learning CPR if you haven't already. This simple technique could save a life should an accident occur.

There is plenty of fun to be had at the pool, and knowing how to stay safe in the water will help make this a great summer. For more safety tips, go to [www.poolsafety.gov](http://www.poolsafety.gov).



## Love your Dog, Leash Your Dog

We love dogs – we really do. That’s why the association is committed to enforcing that all dogs be leashed on association property. According to the U.S. Humane Society, an unleashed dog has an average life span of less than four years. Allowing your dog to run free threatens your dog’s health and welfare and the happiness it brings to you.

We also love our community. That’s another reason the association is committed to enforcing that all dogs be leashed – so all residents may enjoy our community.

We trust we can count on you for voluntary compliance with leashing your dog. We don’t like to call animal control, but we won’t have any choice if your dog is running free.

### Property Management Services of NJ, Inc.

**Office Hours: 9AM – 4PM**

**Phone 973.864.9000**

**Email: [mglaeser@gopmsnj.com](mailto:mglaeser@gopmsnj.com)**

## Dog Safety in Black Creek Sanctuary

### Why Scoop the Poop?

Besides being a nuisance, uncollected dog waste is a serious problem for our association. Next time you are tempted to leave your dog’s droppings on the lawn, please remember these facts:

1. The Environmental Protection Agency is becoming aggressive about enforcing the Clean Water Act. Our association could be fined if dog waste goes uncollected.
2. Uncollected dog waste may lead to a special assessment. If fined by the EPA, the association could face a potential special assessment that would be levied against all members – not just dog owners.
3. The appearance and quality of the common areas are known to affect home sales – not just whether they sell and for how much they sell, but how quickly.
4. The more residents complain about dog waste, the more time the manager must spend on enforcement rather than serving the association.
5. Uncollected dog waste spreads disease.



## Understanding Special Assessments

There is no way to sugar-coat it: everyone hates special assessments. In a perfect world, there would never be a need for special assessments, but sadly, they are sometimes necessary.

Sometimes special assessments are levied when the association needs to make essential repairs, improvements or additions to the common elements, but lacks reserve funds to cover the costs. While the board makes an effort to keep a healthy reserve fund and to budget in advance for these types of projects, occasionally unforeseen expenses occur. When this happens, we have to call on our members to pitch in financially.

Unfortunately special assessments are not optional, and members are responsible for paying them in the same way they are responsible for other association assessments. Just remember, though, that these fees are

funding projects that will benefit all residents.

Of course, the board does not take levying special assessments lightly. They are a financial burden for all of us. That is why levying a special assessment is a last resort.

The bylaws set out regulations that we must follow before levying a special assessment. Sometimes we need owner approval for how the special assessment will be used. Make sure your opinions on these matters are heard by attending open board meetings and voting on critical projects when asked.

Special assessments are no fun, but they contribute to the greater good of the association. They are investments in your home and your community that will make this a wonderful place to live for years to come.

### Why A Fee Increase

It isn't news most homeowners want to hear: that assessments might be increased. But sometimes a fee increase is the best way to keep the association in good financial health – and, sometimes, increases are unavoidable. Here are some of the reactions homeowners typically have when they hear their fees are about to increase, followed by the related rationales for an increase.

- ***“I can't afford the increase.”*** When you live in an association, you need to be willing to share the costs, as described in the governing documents to which you agreed in escrow. Keep in mind that if the association does not maintain its property, real-estate values can decline.
- ***“I probably won't be living here in 15 years when the streets need repaving. Why should I have to pay now?”*** The problem with short-term logic is that these people are themselves benefiting from the use of the streets, pool, and other common assets paid for by members who lived there before.
- ***“Why don't we just have a special assessment for a specific project?”*** It can be difficult to collect money when you suddenly have a large expense. It's better to collect it gradually, so the funds are there when you need them. Also, special assessment unfairly penalizes homeowners who happen to live in the association at the time.

## Enjoy Summer at Black Creek

### Pool Hours and Rules

Summer pool hours are everyday 10 AM to 10 PM. Pool badges **must** be worn at all times while in the pool area. Wristbands may be purchased for \$10 per person per day through Property Management. Property Management holds discretion on whether to sell wristbands and how many depending on occupancy rates. No glass is permitted in the pool area.



### Grilling

Grills are located in the common area at Black Creek. The grills are for the use of everyone. There is a limit of one grill per unit for a max of one hour. Clean up after yourself and make sure to take all items with you when leaving. No one is permitted to use the grilling area for a large gathering without prior notification to Property Management and approval. Please remember this is a shared space.



### Fire Pit

The fire pit is available Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from dusk to 10 PM weather permitting. Please call Safety Patrol if you would like the fire pit lit. Please **do not** light your own fire. Safety Patrol can be contacted at 973.903.4267.

## Tips for Safe Swimming

Nothing says summer vacation like warm days spent at the pool or a quick weekend retreat to Black Creek Sanctuary. Whether you're jumping waves in the ocean or splashing around in the pool, these tips from the Federal Citizen Information Center will help keep you and your family safe this summer:

1. Teach your kids to swim. Check for swimming lessons in our area on USA.gov.
2. Keep an eye on your kids. With lots of kids splashing around in the pool, it's easy for someone to get dunked inadvertently.

Playing in the water should be a fun family activity. With the proper safeguards, your family can stay safe while cooling off.

## Are you Adequately Insured?

Condominium owners sometimes assume that the association's master insurance policy is all the coverage they need. The master policy actually only covers the building, not your personal belongings, or any upgrades you've made to your unit. It does not cover parts of the building that are used only by you - like the balcony or the pipes that feed into your unit from the main pipes.

All residents need their own insurance for the insides of their units, their belongings, and any damage that might be caused by something within your unit (such as a leaking toilet). In a few rare cases where coverage is provided under the master policy, you will still be responsible for the deductible. To have your personal belongings and any deductibles covered, you need to invest in a condominium owner's insurance policy, available from most carriers. Be sure to ask about water and sewer backup coverage. Sewer backups are not unheard of, and a standard policy won't cover the damage to your unit without a sewer backup rider.

If you have any questions regarding what type of coverage you need, please contact your insurance agent. The association's agent is also very familiar with the type of coverage condominium owners need and can help you avoid double coverage or gaps in coverage between your personal insurance and the association's master policy.



### Bear Safety

Black bears are common in New Jersey, especially the northern region. While in Black Creek Sanctuary please be aware for bears. There have been bears within Black Creek. If you do encounter stay calm. Here are some safety tips for bear encounters:

- Never feed or approach a bear.
- Remain calm if you encounter a bear.
- Make the bear aware of your presence by speaking in an assertive voice.
- Make sure the bear has an escape route.
- Avoid direct eye contact, which may be perceived by a bear as a challenge. Never run from a bear. Instead, slowly back away.

Bear attacks are extremely rare. If a bear attacks, fight back!