



# Edelweiss Maintenance Commission

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## Winter 2015 Newsletter

### Message from the General Manager:

The Board of Directors and Management of Edelweiss wish you all best wishes for 2015. We have enjoyed working with you all during 2014, and we are anticipating an exciting new year ahead. As a start, we ask that you respond promptly to the enclosed invoice. The funds will ensure that Edelweiss can continue to operate smoothly, and that the amenities that we all enjoy can continue to be provided unabated. If you have a credit amount due from last year's fees it will be reflected on the statement that accompanies your invoice.

**Budget** - The Board of Directors and Management have approved the Edelweiss budget for 2015, and it has been posted on the Edelweiss website. The public meeting for the ratification of the 2015 budget will be held at 10:00 AM at the campground building on January 31, 2015.

**Dues and Fees** - The Edelweiss By-Laws call for dues increases to be based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). However the CPI for any given year is never available until mid-January of the following year. In order for our budget to be established on a timely basis, as well as expediting the printing and mailing of invoices for 2015, the Board has used the Social Security - Cost Of Living Index (COLA), published September 30, 2014 as a temporary guide. The COLA for 2013 was 1.7% which resulted in a \$7.00 increase in association dues for 2015. If at the end of January we find that using the COLA index has raised the association dues more than \$5.00 over what the CPI would have, the difference will be refunded to all property owners.

As in previous years, fees and dues may be paid in installments, as follows:

**1 - The first installment** (association dues, amounts in arrears and the first snow plowing charge) is due no later than February 28<sup>th</sup>.

**2 - The second installment** (yearly water and garbage fees, where applicable) is due no later than April 15th.

**3 - The final snow plow payment** is due one month after it is invoiced in May. This final amount is calculated on the basis of all the snowplowing/sanding related charges that remain, (after the first \$100.00 billed in January) divided by the number of Edelweiss homes.

**Late Payments** - Dues, and fees which are more than one month in arrears are subject to accumulated interest at the rate of 10% per annum, plus a late fee of \$20.00 per month, both of which will continue to accrue until the balance is paid. Properties with balances unpaid by September 30th will be subject to lien.

A few property owners are habitually extremely late in the payment of their fees and dues. The State of Washington does not require a public utility (such as Edelweiss) to provide service when that service has not been paid for. The Board of Directors is developing a resolution that will permit the turning off the water service, after due notice, to homes whose owners are overly late in their payment of dues and fees. The exact terms of this resolution will be finalized at the next Board meeting - February 2, 2015.

**Pool Ballots** - We wish to thank all those who have returned their ballots for or against the construction of a new swimming pool. To date, with 97 property owners voting so far, the votes are approximately 79% in favor of the new pool. If you have not returned your ballot, either by email or by USPS, we encourage you to do so by January 15, 2015.

**Winter Driving Recommendations** - Edelweiss is a mountainside community, and winter driving here can sometimes be a challenge. We highly suggest the following for winter driving in Edelweiss:

A four-wheel drive or all-wheel drive vehicle with good winter traction (snow) tires is the most dependable means of traveling Edelweiss roads in winter. It's not a panacea, as even these vehicles can slide downhill on ice, but going uphill, four turning wheels are always better than two.

People disagree as to whether or not winter tires should be studded, but we've had good luck with either studded tires or the studless 'Blizzak' type. If your vehicle has front- or rear-wheel drive, do carry chains. They should be available at all times. And it's a good idea to practice putting them on before you need them! I've learned from experience that it's no fun trying to figure them out in the dark, and in the snow!

Consider carrying one or two bags of sand in your trunk. They can be used for traction and they can add helpful weight to the rear of the car. Kitty litter is also great for emergency traction. And, if you have a cat, you get double use for your money!

Drive slowly. Keep a light touch on the brakes and the gas. Oh, and drive slowly!

Anticipate stopping well in advance of intersections, especially going downhill at the Edelweiss entrance. The mailboxes are not good as a safety net!

There will be times, when conditions are too difficult to handle - when getting around in Edelweiss is almost impossible. That's the time to stay home, by the fire, with a good book.

**Plowing:** We contract with Palm Excavating to plow Edelweiss's roads. Normally, we call out the plow trucks out when the snow gets to 5" in depth overnight. We make every effort to have at least one lane cleared by the time people have to go to work or school. However, if it is still snowing hard by morning, the clearing may take longer. The main roads (Highland, Homestead, Cassal) are cleared first, followed by the peripheral roads. Typically, when it has been snowing through the night, the plow trucks are operating before 6AM. This year the first passes will be made by plow trucks, followed by snow blowers which will clean up the sides of the roads, maintaining proper road widths, and keeping the snow banks from sloughing into the roads. Every effort is made to avoid plowing a berm across your driveway entrance, but in some cases it is unavoidable. It's handy to have a snow-shovel at the ready for those instances.

**Parking:** Unless you absolutely have to park on the road, please absolutely don't! It will impede the plow trucks, you may get plowed in, and will be in danger of being hit. Your car's fenders are no match for the front of a snowplow! Please do not park in front of the mailboxes any longer than it takes to pick up your mail. If that area is not plowed, the mailman gets angry. You don't want the mailman to be angry! If you find it necessary, to park in the campground parking area over night, please parallel park on the west side of the parking area, and be aware that you might get plowed

in. The campground is a school bus turn-around, and needs to be plowed by 7:00am. The bus comes again at 3:30 pm. Also, we need to clear in front of the campground buildings, so please don't park there.

**Sanding:** Edelweiss has only one part time maintenance employee to address the conditions of all the roads in Edelweiss. Therefore it is incumbent on each resident and/or guest to be aware that road conditions may not be optimum at all times. As mentioned above, the right equipment and slow careful driving can go a long way toward dealing with bad road conditions. Remember, it's is not always possible to keep up with rapidly changing conditions.

Under icy conditions our aim is to have the roads sanded in the morning as people are going downhill to work or children are going to meet the bus. Many times, as the day warms up, melting of the surface occurs. This turns into a film of ice as temperatures drop during the evening. When we become aware of this, we apply sand as necessary to protect the evening commute. And in the morning we start all over again.

Sand is not a miracle substance. There are some conditions in which it will not be effective. If it's snowing, or about to snow, or if the road surface is soft (fresh snow, slush) we won't sand, as it will have minimal effect. If temperatures are in single digits, the sand grains can't penetrate the surface and will just roll around, giving no traction at all. The bottom line? When to sand will always be a judgment call.

Please note that the green sand boxes are filled in the fall and are for emergencies. Please don't use the sand in them for your driveway. When they are empty they can't be refilled because the sand we get in the winter is delivered wet and will freeze solid overnight.

**Finally-** After all these dos and don'ts, lets not forget that Edelweiss is a truly magical place in the winter. Skiing, snowshoeing or just plain walking on a snowy day are special activities that can be enjoyed by everyone. And to help with the skiing, one of our homeowners has been grooming a cross-country trail in the upper meadow. It's free, and it's available to everyone in Edelweiss, so check it out!

So - Enjoy our winter wonderland, and if it seems to be too cold for you at the moment, keep that in mind when it's 100 degrees in July!!

Happy New Year Everyone!

Dick Volckmann