

Wow, What a Winter...

Though not the coldest winter on record, it was in the top 10 since records began in 1862. By the time you read this, let's hope the crocuses are peeking their heads above ground. But we are very pleased to report that our new boilers were up to the task. We have not had a single outage for fault of any kind on the new systems.

We did have one surprising cold-related issue – a freeze-up of our laundry facilities. Longtime residents tell us that this has never occurred before, with some memories going back almost 40 years. This occurred because of the intense cold and the fact that our ultra-efficient new boilers do not throw off as much “waste” heat as the old boilers. We've found the spot where extreme cold is able to penetrate our basement, and have temporarily blocked it up. We will fashion a permanent fix in the spring. Cristian has planted over a hundred tulip bulbs in our tree planters. There are sure signs spring is just around the corner.

Fire Safety – Should I Leave or Should I Stay?

According to the NYC Fire Department, residents of a building with good fire-proofing and protections in place should generally follow these guidelines for fire safety:

1. Stay inside your apartment rather than entering smoke-filled hallways, especially if the fire is above your apartment.
2. If you do leave your apartment, do not take the elevator. Use the stairs.
3. If you are not in the building during a fire, do not try to enter unless you get a clear OK that all is safe.
4. Keep your door CLOSED. Our metal doors are designed to delay a fire's ability to spread.
5. Seal the doors with duct tape or wet towels or sheets. Seal any ventilators where smoke may enter.
6. Turn off air conditioners.
7. Unless flames or smoke is coming from below your apartment, open your windows a few inches.
8. Call 911 to provide a description of conditions in your apartment.

And Gas Safety . . .

This one is a bit simpler, but potentially just as dangerous and tragic, as we saw earlier this month in Harlem.

- If you smell gas from a source that you can shut off, shut it off immediately. Most common cause? You accidentally turn the burner on on your stove, and it does not light. Open windows to air out the space and do not light anything – no matches, etc. and do not use any electronic devices until all the gas is gone and the space is well aired out.
- If you cannot find the source of a gas leak, open windows, leave your apartment, close the door, and call 911. Do not return until help arrives.
- If you smell gas in a hall coming from another apartment, alert the resident. If no one is home, alert the super or the doorman. If the situation seems bad and you have no way to address it, call 911.
- Always let the doorman and super know of any gas situation.
- Alert neighbors if you can.

Door Refinishing

By the time you read this newsletter, we should be well on our way to completing the long awaited refinishing of the entrance doors to your apartment. The doors throughout the building are being taken to a lead paint safe stripping room in the basement, and then being returned to each apartment after having been stripped and repainted. During this process, a temporary door and lock is installed to secure your apartment while the work is undertaken. New apartment lettering will be added once the door frame repainting is complete.

Labor Negotiations

It's been four fast years since our last negotiations with the union representing our building employees and superintendent. April 20th is the day that the contract with local 32BJ of the Service Workers International Union expires. Like most buildings in New York, we are represented at the negotiating tables by a bargaining agent, the Realty Advisory Board (RAB). The RAB team has given us no indication one way or the other whether they will be able to reach agreement with the union before the contract expires. As you know, we have a great staff, and we hope that their union does not call them out on strike. But if they do, we must still operate the building. In the next weeks as the date approaches, we will keep you posted on certain changes that must be made during any strike that may occur. We may need volunteers to continue some building services. If we do, we will circulate sign-up sheets. Be advised that construction in the building, even if it has already started, will definitely not be allowed to continue if a strike occurs.

We might all need to pitch in to minimize any discomforts that may occur if a timely agreement is not reached.

Roof Top Terrace

As crocuses cede way to daffodils that make room for tulips, our attention turns once again to our glorious roof top terrace. If you plan to enjoy the roof this season (or any time) please keep these rules and courtesies front of mind:

1. Open from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. The door is locked and the alarm engaged at 11:00 p.m.
2. Guests must be accompanied by a resident of the building at all times while on the roof deck.
3. Minors must to be accompanied by an adult at all times.
4. Please try to keep all noise to a minimum in consideration of residents living under the deck.
5. Please remove any trash when you leave.
6. Do not drag the furniture around. If you must move it, pick it up.
7. At all times on the roof deck there is no:
 - SMOKING
 - open flame / candles
 - music
 - storing of personal property
 - tampering with or removing plantings, furniture, or fixtures
 - parties
 - throwing around ANY objects
 - placing objects on top of railings

A Legend Returns

For many not so old timers, an interesting sign of the changes happening in Chelsea was announced recently. Barneys New York is returning to the space directly across 7th Avenue from 201 – to a building still referred to as “The Barneys Building” though the store moved out 20 years ago! Barneys will take over the 57,000-square-foot space formerly occupied by Loehmann's that was for many years formerly occupied by Barneys. Opening is scheduled for 2017.

With the new old location, Barneys will retain its uptown store on Madison. Retail brokers quoted in the papers expect the upscale store's re-arrival to translate into a surge in Chelsea popularity among high-end retailers, maybe even a cronut shop or two.