

Deerwood Country Club Estates Homeowners Association

Managed by Target Property Management, 2215 Old Marlton Pike East, Marlton, NJ 08053
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December 22, 2009

Dear Neighbors:

This weekend, Saturday, December 19, through Sunday, December 20, we experienced the first major storm since 1996. According to the National Weather Service, the total snow accumulation for our neighborhood was 17.8 inches, all within a 24 hour period. Is it any wonder that many of us found ourselves pondering the fury as well as the beauty of Mother Nature during and after the storm?

We also experienced frustration with the snow removal efforts of the Township of Westampton, and our new snow removal contractor. Country Club Drive received limited snow removal by the Township's agent who also left the interior streets with one plow width cleared and some areas untouched. A phone call to the Township finally initiated a late afternoon cursory pass through the areas not previously plowed. As in previous years, the snow plow pushed mounds of snow and deposited them at the ends of driveways – compounding an already difficult removal process.

Our Landscaping/Irrigation and Snow Removal contract was up for renewal. An extensive search was conducted by the Landscaping committee and Quality Landscaping, Inc. was selected from several vendors who met personally with members of the Board and Landscape Committee who volunteered hours of their time. Quality's references met the criteria we as a community have demanded of our previous contractors, and a contract, beginning January 1, 2010, was signed. A meeting was set for Saturday morning, December 19 to outline and confirm all the requirements of the contract. Unfortunately, Mother Nature had a different timeline.

Even without the clarifying meeting, Quality stepped up to assume snow removal responsibility prior to the start date of their contract. Quality's management met with Landscape Committee representatives and the Board Snow Captain to go over a plan for the storm. At 6:00 am Sunday morning, the Quality team was on site and began the arduous task of snow removal to meet the requirement of completion within 24 hours from when the snow stopped.

In previous years, homeowners have complained regarding the damage to their driveways, garages, and property caused by front-end loaders and plows. Therefore, all bidders were told that our expectation was to use no heavy equipment. Unfortunately, without an opportunity to clarify that, Quality understood us to mean that only shovels were permissible. Large equipment was needed to move the snow piles and deposit them away from the driveways. Quality and the Snow Committee recognized this, but could not get the needed equipment here until Monday. The team started to clean out the areas as required, but was hampered by the township's snow plowing operation as well as the sheer volume of snow. Due to the volume of snow and because its removal was taking longer than expected, it was subsequently decided to clear out one side of each home's driveway so at least one vehicle could get out, then return and do the other side. In the process, some driveways may have been missed.

Your Board shares your concerns regarding the snow removal as we were affected as you. We will be meeting with Quality to address your concerns, evaluate their performance and formulate a plan to eliminate poor performance in the future. We will also notify the Township of our dissatisfaction with their agent's snow removal practices. Notwithstanding that Quality has to address improvements in their overall performance, they did demonstrate qualities lacking in our previous contractors by staying in constant communication with the snow committee Saturday, Sunday and Monday. They listened to our requests regarding limited use of large equipment (we will be addressing guidelines for future storms), and they stepped up before their contract start date. We are confident Quality will build a strong relationship with Deerwood and its residents in all aspects of their services contracts.

The Board thanks everyone for the community spirit demonstrated during the storm, where neighbors were seen helping neighbors. Please know that the issues of the past weekend will be addressed to improve our experience in the future. Should you wish to volunteer as we have, with the goal to continually improve our community, contact Target Property Management or send us a message via the website at www.deerwoodcarriagehomes.org. The next Homeowners Association meeting is 7:30 pm, Thursday, January 28 at Deerwood Country Club. This will be the Annual Meeting for the election of the 2010 Board of Trustees. We need to have a quorum of eligible voters either present or by proxy in order for the election to be official. We wish everyone a safe and joyous Holiday Season.

Sincerely,

Deerwood HOA Board of Trustees