

MALLARD LAKE REFLECTIONS



WWW.MALLARDLAKEAPTS.COM



■ JANUARY 1, 2009 ■ ISSUE 1, VOLUME 2 ■

YOUR FRIENDLY STAFF AT MALLARD LAKE

LEASING TEAM

SHELLY, APRIL, KELLY,
JACKIE, DIANE, STEFANIE

MAINTENANCE TEAM

KEVIN, JIM, ADAM,
ANDREW, HELEN, IRENA,
MAREK, MIGUEL

OFFICE HOURS

MON-WED: 9AM - 7PM
THUR-FRI: 9AM - 5PM
SAT: 10AM - 5PM
SUN: 12PM - 4PM

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

LEASING OFFICE &
MAINTENANCE
(847) 398-1200

Call the Leasing Office
for emergency maintenance
after-hours and
follow the prompts.

ONLINE WORK ORDERS

VISIT THE RESIDENT'S
TAB ONLINE AT
MALLARDLAKEAPTS.COM
TO QUICKLY ENTER
SERVICE WORK ORDERS.

USERNAME:
MALLARDLAKE
PASSWORD: FIXIT

**DON'T FORGET TO
RECYCLE THIS
NEWSLETTER
WHEN YOU ARE
FINISHED WITH IT.
THANK YOU!**



FOR LAST YEAR'S
WORDS BELONG TO
LAST YEAR'S
LANGUAGE AND NEXT
YEAR'S WORDS AWAIT
ANOTHER VOICE.
AND TO MAKE AN
END IS TO MAKE A
BEGINNING.

- T.S. ELIOT

Mallard Lake News & Notes

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Have a safe and happy New Year from all of
us here at Mallard Lake Apartments!

WINTER WEATHER SAFETY

Please use caution when driving through the
community during winter weather conditions.
Even cars and trucks with excellent traction and
anti-lock brakes still need to allow sufficient
time to stop on slick surfaces.

Also remember that although the sidewalks
will be kept shoveled to the best of our ability,
you must be extra cautious for slippery spots
that may have developed in spite of our best
efforts to keep them clear.

OFFICE CLOSINGS

The Leasing Office will be closed on January
1, 2009, in celebration of New Year's Day. Also
we will only be open on December 31 from
9a.m. to 1p.m. for New Year's Eve. Please
adjust your schedule accordingly for any
business you may have in the office.

TELL YOUR VISITORS YOUR ADDRESS

Please be sure to advise your visitors of your
unit number. It has been brought to our
attention that your guests are buzzing the
wrong units—sometimes in the middle of the
night. This can be avoided simply by making
sure your guest presses the correct buzzer for
your unit. Your neighbors thank you!

CHRISTMAS TREE BAGS

If you had a real Christmas tree this year plan
to pick up a FREE TREE BAG in the Leasing
Office for the disposal of your tree. Anyone
found disposing of their tree without a bag may
incur cleaning fines if needles, dirt, or tinsel are
left in the hallways.

FAT-FREE SEWERS

Never pour grease or food scraps down the
sink drain or toilets. Scrape food from plates,
pots, pans, and utensils. Make sure there are
strainers in the sink to catch food scraps and
other solids and empty the strainers into the
garbage can.

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Mallard Lake News & Notes

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POP-TAB COLLECTION

Don't forget that Mallard Lake is collecting tabs from pop cans to donate to a local hospital. For every pop-tab we collect, a minute of free dialysis will be given to a patient in need, and the tabs will be melted down to make new hospital equipment.

Store them in a sealed bag and bring them into the office whenever you like. This will be an on-going collection at Mallard Lake.

RENTER'S INSURANCE

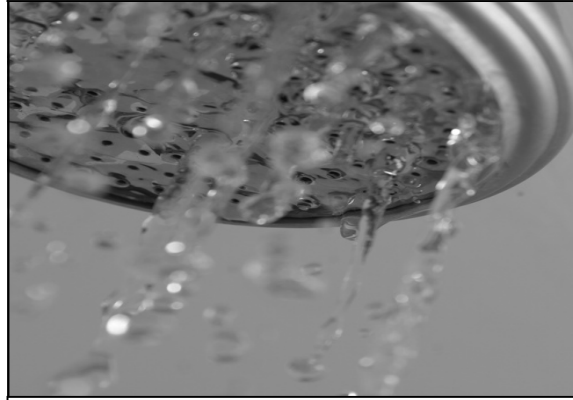
What would you do if you lost all of your possessions and had no place to live? In the recent fire that occurred at Mallard Lake, only three out of eight residents affected by the fire had renter's insurance, which means many were left with very few options.

Renter's insurance protects you from tragic events that, sadly, do happen. Call your insurance provider today and get the coverage you and your family needs!

FEEDBACK

Don't forget that if you want to make a compliment, complaint, or suggestion, just drop an e-mail to our manager at mla1572@aol.com or mail us at P.O. Box 95739, Hoffman Estates, IL 60194.

Hot Water is a Hot Commodity



PLEASE HELP
US CONSERVE
HOT WATER
THIS WINTER!

It has been brought to our attention that there is a problem with residents not being able to get any hot water in their apartment for long periods of time. The hot water tanks in every building have been tested and are working properly.

Mallard Lake wants to make everyone comfortable and happy. But, since the cold weather is here in full force, our maintenance team has a simple request:

We know during the cold winter months that a nice, long, hot shower in the morning feels great, but each building has a limited supply of hot water available at certain times of the day, and that supply can be run down quickly.

Since the morning seems to be

the time when showers are most frequently taken, please be considerate of your neighbors and limit your morning shower to a reasonable amount of time. This will help ensure that all of us get that refreshing hot shower in the morning

In addition, do not waste hot water. Please do not turn on any of your sinks for hot water and walk away leaving the water running. This wastes the hot water available to other residents for their shower.

Also, please refrain from using the laundry washer for hot washes and your dishwashers before 9a.m.

With all of us working together, this problem can be resolved. We appreciate all your cooperation.



January Rent Giveaway MANICURE SETS

Pay your rent in the Leasing Office starting December 27 to get your free gift! (Limited supply available.)

Rent Check Requirements

Before you submit your rent check, STOP! Have you completed all of the necessary items? Here is the information that we require:

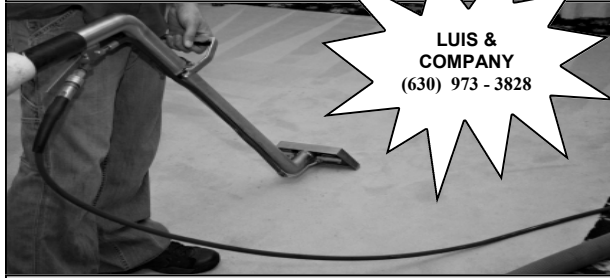
- ◆ Your CURRENT address. If your check has old information printed on the check, you MUST mark out the old information and print the CURRENT information on the FRONT of the check (not on the back or the front of an envelope).
- ◆ An appropriate date. Your rent check must be dated the

first through the fifth of the month.

- ◆ Pay to the order of: Mallard Lake Apartments
- ◆ YOUR SIGNATURE

If there is a delay in processing your rent check due to lack of information or an error in completing your check, you will be responsible for all late fees until the check is identified or corrected. Please help us avoid this issue by taking the time to have updated, accurate information on the front of the check. Thank you for your cooperation!

Apartment Cleaning & Repair Service



LUIS &
COMPANY
(630) 973-3828

Do you need extensive cleaning or repair throughout your apartment that is not covered by Mallard Lake Apartments?

Would you like your carpet cleaned again? Would you like your bathroom re-caulked? Mallard Lake would like to invite you to contact Luis & Company, our on-site contractor, for all your apartment cleaning and repair needs.

Luis & Company can clean excessive dirt from bathrooms, re-caulk tiles, grout tubs, clean carpets, and more! Luis & Company is available for you to hire directly.

Call Luis at (630) 973-3828 for a quote.

Crime Alert: Auto Burglaries

The Wheeling Police Department would like everyone to be aware that this area has been the target of auto burglaries recently. Vehicles are being targeted that are either unlocked or have *valuables in plain view*. The most common items stolen are:

GPS Devices (the most popular item taken), Radar Detectors, I-Pass Units, Briefcases, Laptop Computers, Cash, and Aftermarket Auto Stereo Systems

In order for criminal activity to thrive, the criminal must have three things: desire to commit the crime, ability to commit the crime, and opportunity to commit the crime. The only thing honest citizens can control is the OPPORTUNITY. Take away the opportunity by adhering to the following common safety tips:

- ◆ Do not leave anything of value in your vehicle (especially in plain view)
- ◆ ALWAYS lock your doors and close all windows
- ◆ Make it a habit to be aware of your surroundings
- ◆ Report ALL suspicious activity to the Police Department

The Wheeling Police Department is conducting extra patrols in the lots, but we need your help. Take away the demand by following the advice above and together we can make a difference.

If you are a victim, call 9-1-1. Otherwise contact the Crime Prevention Unit with any other concerns at (847) 459-2994.

Customer Service and the Employees of Mallard Lake

In today's world, good customer service is hard to find. At a retail store, pharmacy, auto repair shop, restaurant, etc., the ability and training of the employees waiting on you is often questionable. For whatever reasons, customer service has declined in the world on a whole.

We at Mallard Lake pride ourselves on continuing to provide the best customer service to you and your homes as possible. We are faced with challenges, as well, though. On any one given day, the leasing office might take over 100 phone calls and have 25 guests walk through the front door. Whether we give out leasing information, take a work order, find a package, or collect rent, we give each and every resident the time and attention they need and deserve.

The challenge is making sure the request can be met and the expectations are reasonable. We all have bad days when we are feeling under the weather, we are stressed and tired, or are having personal issues. This is no excuse for our customer service to be any less than 100%. The leasing office and maintenance department expect the same from you in return.

The Mallard Lake employees are the best asset of our property. Some of our residents have been treating them very poorly, referring to them as "stupid" or "uneducated", exercising unreasonable expectations, arguing about policies, etc. This has got to stop. As the property manager, I will not tolerate this abuse to my very carefully selected, compassionate, and educated employees. The employees are here to help you, not serve you. They are your friends, not enemies. They take no joy in seeing you unhappy.

But...when they are called names, hung up on, yelled at, told they are "stupid", how do you think they feel? Do you think they want to help you next time you call or come in? The staff does not make the rules, they just communicate them. So when you do not like what they are explaining to you, remember they are only the messenger.

You are always welcome to ask for a manager, although a manager may tell you the same thing. As a manager, I would rather you be upset with me than someone whose entire job responsibility is just to take care of you and your neighbors.

I share this with you because I am giving everyone a new opportunity to show his or her appreciation to an employee at Mallard Lake. Write them a note, return a maintenance survey card, or just smile and say "thank you." I want residents who enjoy living at Mallard Lake, and who we enjoy taking care of. I'd be very disappointed to non-renew a lease due to any disrespectful treatment to the office or maintenance employees.

Remember, you have a choice in your housing. If you chose Mallard Lake, our employees will do their best to make your homes the best they can be!

Happy Holidays and thank you for being an appreciative resident!

~ Your Property Manager, Shelly

Shelly's Inspections

During my recent unit inspections, I have had a chance to meet many of our residents. Everyone I have met with has been very nice and a pleasure to visit with. From admiring your home décor to visiting with your children, I have truly enjoyed my opportunity to be in your homes. If I haven't visited your home yet, I will be finishing my inspections during the first two weeks of January, 2009. Thank you again for being so cooperative during these inspections. They are for the good of the entire property and have been very successful in accomplishing our goals!

Security Deposit Confusion

Recently it has come to our attention that Mallard Lake Apartments may be gaining a negative reputation regarding our security deposit refund policies. Many feel we charge unfairly, and that our goal is to retain as much of your deposit as possible. We feel that this couldn't be further from the truth!

In fact, only 14% of all residents who moved out in 2008 were charged anything at all.

To help you avoid charges of any kind, we would like to let you know our process for assessing security deposit charges, and the top three things that force us to withhold a portion of your security deposit.

When the office is officially informed that a resident is moving, that resident is given two options for a move-out inspection: 1) the resident may schedule an appointment to be present when maintenance walks through the apartment to assess for damages; 2) the resident chooses not to be present,

TOP THREE SECURITY DEPOSIT CHARGES:

1. Damaged Carpets
2. Excessively Dirty Kitchens and Bathrooms
3. Marker/Crayon on Walls

and maintenance takes pictures of any damages found. Maintenance walks through the apartment after the resident has turned in keys to the office, as well.

Over the past few years, Mallard Lake has noticed several common issues in apartments where the resident has moved out. The most frequent type of damage we've found is stains and tears in the carpet. If we are unable to remove the stains with a professional carpet cleaning, it may have to be replaced entirely. Depending on the age of the carpet, we may pass those

charges back to the resident.

Our suggestion to residents who have concerns regarding the condition of their carpet is to avoid carpet stain removers that contain bleach. Bleach stains are impossible to remove, and are the number one cause of carpet replacement at Mallard Lake. Also, take advantage of your annual free carpet cleaning! When you renew your lease, you are given the opportunity to have your carpets cleaned for you. Let us help! An annual clean will minimize the damage that long-terms stains can cause.

In 2008 we saw an increase in charges due to lack of cleaning in bathrooms and kitchens. Your bathroom walls and floors are covered in tiles that are held together by grout. Without regular cleaning, grout begins to turn black with dirt and grime and can eventually become a permanent stain. If we must do extra cleaning in your bathrooms due to negligence, we will pass the charges onto you!

When you are busy, its easy to forget the little things like cleaning the shower, but consistent attention will prevent dirt and mold from costing you part of your security deposit. In this case, products that will help keep your bathrooms clean can be found at the grocery store and are better when they contain bleach (just be careful around the carpet!). Mallard Lake also has contact information for our contracted cleaners, who, for a fee, would be happy to help you keep your bathrooms clean!

Another problem we have found is that residents are allowing their apartment walls to be drawn on with pens, crayons, and markers. These marks are very difficult to remove from walls and are not easily covered by a single coat of paint. Make sure that your walls stay free of crayon and marker artwork and save yourself the charge for extra coats of paint when you move out!

Recently, Shelly, the Property Manager, has been conducting inspections in your homes. While she keeps her eyes out for things that

CLEANING SUGGESTIONS:

1. DO NOT use bleach on carpets. Take advantage of our annual free carpet cleaning or hire a professional cleaner.
2. Clean bathrooms and kitchens REGULARLY to prevent dirt buildup that causes permanent damage. Use of bleach is permitted on these surfaces.
3. **For Bathroom Shower Tile & Grout**—Scrubbing Bubbles Blaster or Lysol Soap Scum Remover
4. **For Kitchen Countertops**—Soft Scrub with Bleach
5. **For Oven & Range Tops**—EZ Off
6. The walls are not canvases. DO NOT draw on the walls with marker, crayon, pens, etc.
7. For extensive cleaning, call Luis & Company—our contracted cleaners—for a quote on cleaning services. (630) 973-3828

maintenance needs to repair, she is also letting residents know when they have something they need to fix too! Take advantage of her suggestions!

She has noticed carpet that has been worn well beyond its age, serious crayon damage on walls, and some lack of cleaning in bathrooms and kitchens. These are the top three items that cause a resident to lose their security deposit! We do not expect apartments to be in perfect condition when someone moves out, but normal wear-and-tear is all we anticipate. Anything beyond is considered excessive damage and can result in charges that take away your security deposit. If you are interested in what we charge for different damages, stop by our office for information! We will provide you with the checklist we use when you move out.

And as always, if you have any more questions, don't hesitate to stop by our office or give us a call!



RESIDENT ACTIVITIES



How would you like to forget about the freezing temperatures and snow covered grounds for a day?

Join your Mallard Lake neighbors for a FREE day-pass to the Mayan Adventure Indoor Water Park in Elmhurst!

This facility provides endless fun for all ages! You can zip down the Howling Monkey Body Slide, float down the lazy river, or just lounge in the pool. This is a GREAT deal!

The first 40 residents to register will get a FREE pass for **Saturday, January 24**, which gives you unlimited play time. A \$10 deposit will be required for each ticket and returned to you on the day of the event. This ensures that we have enough tickets for everyone who wants to join us.

Mallard Lake will not be providing the transportation to the facility, but carpooling will be organized. **DON'T MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY! STOP BY THE LEASING OFFICE TODAY!**



MOVIE DAY: HORTON HEARS A WHO

MALLARD LAKE CLUBHOUSE
FRIDAY, JANUARY 9
3:00 PM



Over 50's Club

Anyone interested in joining the Mallard Lake Over 50's Club should contact the Leasing Office for details. This lively and energetic group gets together once a month for dinners, activities, and other social outings. New members are always welcome! Call (847) 398-1200 today!



APPLE-RAISIN BARS

INGREDIENTS

2 cups all-purpose flour
 2 teaspoons baking powder
 1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 2 cups packed light brown sugar
 2 eggs
 1/2 cup butter or margarine, softened
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 1 1/2 cups diced Golden Delicious apple
 3/4 cups raisins

DIRECTIONS

Heat oven to 350. Liberally coat a

13x9x2 inch baking pan with non-stick cooking spray; set aside.

In a medium-size bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, cinnamon and salt; set aside.

In a large bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed, blend together sugar, eggs, butter, and vanilla for 3 minutes or until smooth.

Reduce speed to low and gradually add flour mixture; mix for 2 minutes or until

just incorporated. Stir in diced apples and raisins and spread into the prepared pan.

Bake at 350 for 35 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool completely before cutting into bars and serving.



JANUARY 2009

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 New Year's Day Office Closed RENT DUE	2 Chicago Wolves vs. Rockford, 7:30pm	3 Trans Siberian Orchestra, Allstate Arena
4 Blackhawks vs. Flames, 6pm	5 January is National Book Month!	6 RENT LATE	7 Chicago Wolves vs. San Antonio, Allstate Arena, 7pm	8 See <i>Grease</i> on Broadway at the Auditorium Theater.	9 MOVIE DAY <i>Horton Hears a Who</i> , 3pm, Clubhouse	10 AMA Arena MotoCross Championship, Sears Center, 7:30pm
11 Open Gym, Wheeling Park District, Twain School, 1-5pm	12 See <i>Bride Wars</i> in theaters now!	13 Senior Bingo Lunch, Wheeling Park District, 11:30am	14 Chicago Wolves vs. Toronto, Allstate Arena, 7pm	15 Bulls vs. Cleveland, 7pm	16 Blackhawks vs. Rangers, United Center, 7:30pm	17 Chicago Winter Bike Swap, Harper College, 9:30am-3:30pm
18 Winnie the Pooh Day	19 Martin Luther King Jr. Day	20 Inauguration of Barak Obama	21 Cirque du Soleil <i>Saltimbanco</i> , Sears Center (thru Jan 31)	22 Monty Python's <i>Spamalot</i> at the Auditorium Theater.	23 Bulls vs. Toronto, 7:30pm	24 MAYAN INDOOR WATER PARK TRIP
25 Final performance of <i>Wicked</i> at the Oriental Theater in Chicago.	26 Chinese New Year	27 Metallica, Allstate Arena	28 Disney on Ice, United Center	29 <i>Inkheart</i> in theaters now!	30 National Inane Answering Machine Message Day	31 Get your game face on! Super Bowl 43 is tomorrow!

