

La Vita Homeowner Association – Plumbing Overview & Update

The Association is responsible for common area piping and individual homeowners must support this effort through best practices in your homes. As always, the Association continues to actively maintain and repair the common area plumbing as required.

Although you can and have been impacted by common area failures, mostly related to construction defects, we can also experience plumbing issues when you clog a toilet, put grease down your sink or use the garbage disposal. Unfortunately, we have also found dog hair in the kitchen sink lines, discovered laundry detergent suds in toilet lines, and other oddities.

The purpose of this communication is to present a high-level overview of our plumbing efforts. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Sabrina.

What is the settlement account and how much money did we receive?

The La Vita Homeowners Association received \$7,350,000 from Developer Intergulf for construction defects. Generally, the defects included plumbing, waterproofing of the planters, the courtyard lawn area, and the pool deck, drains and the replacement of the two cooling towers. Although the litigation award was sizeable, it has unfortunately been insufficient in terms of fully covering the potential costs for future construction defects. The balance of the account is now \$313,290 which means we will begin relying on the Reserve account to fund repairs and replacements. The Reserve balance as of March 31, 2024, is \$4,379,787 and as of December 31, 2023 La Vita was 70.37% funded.

How much money have we spent on plumbing repairs?

From the Settlement account, the Association has spent \$4,532,555 on several critical plumbing defects.

What are the plumbing terms we use?

- Tower or Midrise Stack: The word “stack” generally refers to the plumbing/vents in all units, from the top of the building, descending vertically to the bottom, that end in a particular number. For example, the Midrise 04 Stack is all the units, from the top to the bottom of the building, ending in 04. The top floors of the Tower may deviate from this pattern slightly.
- All 10 Stacks: This refers to plumbing/vents for all units in the Tower building.
- Yoke Vents and Speed Bumps: Tall buildings like the Tower require pipes to be vented to drain properly. Unfortunately, the developer installed speed bumps which caused backups in the kitchen and clothes washer lines.

What’s a pinhole leak?

In 2015, and unforeseen, the copper piping began developing pin hole leaks, which can only reasonably be detected when nearby walls/floors become damp or damaged. Per professional recommendations, the Board decided to add phosphate to the hot water lines. From the inside, phosphate helps protect the copper pipes from further degradation. The preventative measure is common in high rise developments and the number of pin hole leaks has decreased significantly.

Annual Cost for Phosphate: \$8,796

What major plumbing projects has the Association completed?

2013 – Tower All 10 Stacks: Yoke vents were installed every five floors and all cast iron pipe upsized and replaced.

2015 – Tower 05 Stack: Yoke vents installed, laundry stack speed bumps removed, and all cast iron pipe replaced.

2018 – Midrise 04 Stack and 07 Stack: Pipe size increased and sloped properly and yoke vents installed.

2023-2024 – Tower 10 Stack clothes washer lines: Yoke vents installed and speed bumps removed and all cast iron pipe replaced and upgraded to 4" pipe.

What general repair and maintenance is completed?

- Throughout the years, various issues with gurgling and suds have been reported in the Tower and Midrise. In each case, the problem was lack of venting and improper sloping and the repairs have been completed.
- To resolve balance issues and meet the Plumbing Code requirements, all circuit setters were replaced with ball valves and all pressure reducing valves were replaced and reset according to the manufacturer's recommendations and building pressure requirements.
- To minimize pipe failure due to sudden changes in rate of flow, variable frequency drives have been added to the pumps to reduce pressure during periods of lower demand.
- To keep the lines clear, the kitchen lines in the Midrise (all 10 stacks) are snaked every two years.
- Every two years, all P1 Garage plumbing lines are jetted. These horizontal lines in the garage are jetted to clean the kitchen lines, bathrooms and the clothes washer in the Tower and Midrise.
- During all construction projects, inspections of common area pipes are conducted when the walls are open. As deficiencies are identified and based on professional recommendations, the Association funds the replacement of additional plumbing components as necessary.
- All garage plumbing is frequently inspected and tagged by the Association's Building Engineer if there are visible signs of rust and/or developing cracks. When identified, the Board contracts for replacement.
- Due to recent increased storm activity and the building's age, various stormwater pipes have leaked/failed and as required, have been replaced.
- Last year, to bolster the funding for plumbing repairs, a new Reserve funding strategy was implemented at an increased cost of \$20 per unit per month.