

**INSIDE:**

**BUILDING INSPECTIONS ► PROPERTY RESTORATION**

# BUILDING Management

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**JANUARY 2019 | \$4.95**

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TENANTS WILL  
LOOK FOR IN  
THE FUTURE**

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OAHU'S MATRIX  
REQUIREMENT**



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in Hawaii*



# Piping Nightmares

What You **NEED** to Know About Pipes in Hawaii  
What You **DON'T KNOW** About Piping Failure  
What You **SHOULD KNOW** About Re-Piping


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*“Property managers  
and HOAs increasingly struggle  
with horrific emergency issues.”*

## What You NEED to Know About Pipes in Hawaii

Nothing lasts forever. In Hawaii, apartment and condominium dwellings are approaching 40 years of age or more. Property managers and HOAs increasingly struggle with horrific emergency issues including water infiltration, sewage leaks and kitchen/bath repairs.

The closer your building is to the ocean, the sooner you will experience pipe failure. In Hawaii salt, climate and soil conditions can contribute to the degradation of all plumbing and sewage pipes. Though plastic, cast iron, copper, and galvanized pipes were once thought to last forever, it is now known their lifespans in Hawaii may be less than 45 years.







## What You DON'T KNOW About Piping Failures

Catastrophic plumbing that can cause millions in property damage may have quickly shifted from leaking pipes to a flood of water or raw sewage. Though repair—as opposed to re-piping—may be advisable, labor costs for emergency response can run two to three times the cost of scheduled repair while problems re-occur with increasing frequency.

While there may be several reasons to re-pipe, action is often deferred until problems start—with corroded water pipes that result in low water pressure, or rusty colored water, reduced water flow, and pinhole leaks. Acidity from food and human waste causes corrosion of cast iron waste lines—inside and out—while elements from Mother Nature attack from the outside in.

## What You SHOULD KNOW About Re-Piping

Plumbing that is out of sight should not be out of mind. If your building was built 40 years ago, it is likely that an inspection would find broken, corroded and rusted bands as well as cast iron and PVC that is brittle to touch—or blistering, cracked, fractured or just hopelessly plugged with sediment. Excessive leakage may be temporarily prevented only by waste built up inside over the years to form a tenuous coating.

If your system is 25 years or older, your manager or HOA should begin thinking about budgeting for emergency plumbing or increasing reserves.

## The AFFORDABLE, EFFECTIVE, and FAST WAY to RE-PIPE

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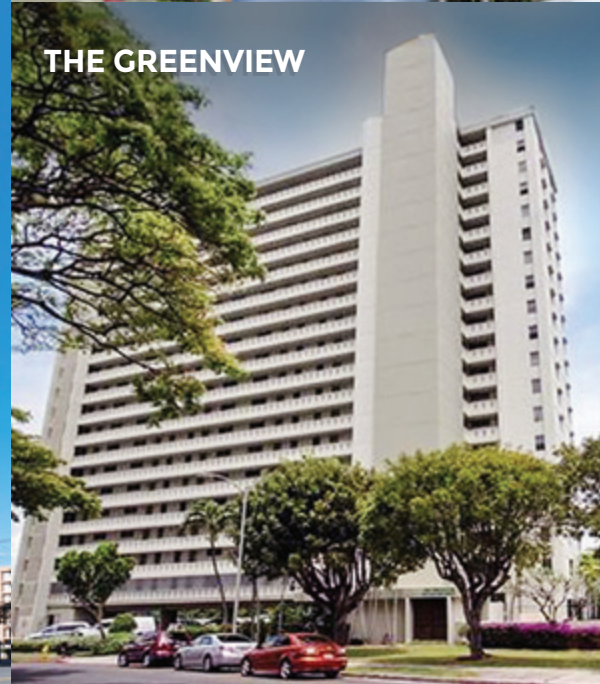
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TOWER**



**WILDER  
AT PIIKOI**



**THE GREENVIEW**



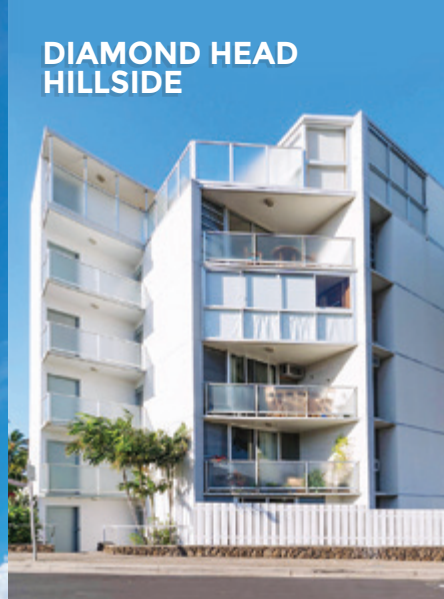




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## Deterioration Detectives

Our experts excel in detecting deterioration, in order to prevent the rupture of cracked or rusted pipes that can cause water or waste leaks, resulting in extended periods of disruption and chaos!

Our highly skilled, professional plumbers have completed with remarkable efficiency and unrivaled materials and products countless re-piping projects for AOAOS, HOAs, low rises and track housing.



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*“From concept to completion you deal only with HPG professionals.”*



## No Other Piping Firm Matches HPG for Turnkey Efficiency

Widely admired for our professional service and quality work, HPG is a General Contractor with a track record of turnkey excellence. When we say ‘turnkey,’ we mean everything: minimal disruption and inconvenience during the most complex projects large and small. Whether a family dwelling or large apartment building, no one is asked to move out, and water is not shut off except during work hours.

Our process includes asbestos abatement, wall removals, potable water, waste and vent replacement, fire stopping, tile repair, drywall repair and paint. From concept to completion you deal only with HPG professionals.

Many owners are not aware of the complexity of a re-pipe project and the potential delays or cost overruns caused when inexperienced or incorrectly licensed contractors are hired.







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## **COST EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS**

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- **Unrivaled On-schedule Performance**
- **Affordable Work, Free Consultations**

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*“As a homeowner, one of the biggest concerns I had was at the end of each day wanting my home back in full operation. HPG came through with flying colors.”*

– **JOHN WALLS** | Property Owner

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*“When I look at a plumbing contractor, I look at their attention to detail, the technology they are utilizing, their expertise and customer service. I recommend HPG!”*

– **ALEX MENCH** | C2C Engineering



# Why Choose HPG?

**HPG** is Hawaii's preeminent plumbing and re-piping company. Licensed as a general building contractor HPG is proud to count so many of Hawaii's leading businesses among our clients. At HPG our mission is not to re-pipe every project; rather, our mission is to provide unrivaled re-piping service to Hawaii at a reasonable cost.

*Our pledge:*

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We will be here for you down the road

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Once a customer, always a customer for life

## SERVICE

We will not leave you in the lurch

The HPG promise includes solutions and alternatives to every plumbing situation. A repipe project can be huge. It can be stressful, and if done incorrectly it will be costly.

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It's a new year, and *BMH* is starting 2019 by introducing a new columnist, attorney Jane Sugimura. Regarded as the "queen of condo law," Jane knows the field as well as anyone. We're proud to add her byline to the magazine.

We also asked some top building managers for their New Year's resolutions, either for themselves or for their buildings. I'm guessing you'll find some worth emulating. Good luck to all in keeping them.

Our cover subject is Lance Wilhelm. As developer of the new Ritz-Carlton Residences in Waikiki, he's had a hand in changing the local condo scene. And he sees a growing need for good managers as condo living increases in Hawaii and more businesses cater to them.

Many people tend to associate building management with condos and office complexes, but there are many other kinds of buildings that need managing. In this issue we meet the guy who, well, "Keeps Kaiser Operating," Rob Tuchman, who oversees all Kaiser Permanente facilities throughout Hawaii.

Medical marijuana seems here to

stay, and legalizing recreational use looms on the horizon. Does your building have a policy for dealing with pakalolo smoke? It probably should.

As always, we're pleased to present a variety of experts, in this issue writing about plumbing problems, property restoration and the new fire code. We appreciate their contributions, and think you will too.

And check out all the happy people at BOMA's holiday party in our Faces section.

Here's wishing you a happy, healthy and well-managed New Year.

Mahalo,

**Don Chapman**

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Rob Johnson

## 2018 HAWAII BUILDING OF THE YEAR AND ACCREDITED RESIDENTIAL MANAGER® MEMBER OF THE YEAR WINNER

Congratulations to Rob Johnson, General Manager of The Ilikai, for winning both prestigious IREM® awards in the largest building size category. The Institute of Real Estate Management (IREM®) recognized Johnson at their Awards and Installations Masquerade and Casino Night Gala on October 26. Hawaiian Properties has managed The Ilikai since 2010.



The Ilikai Apartment

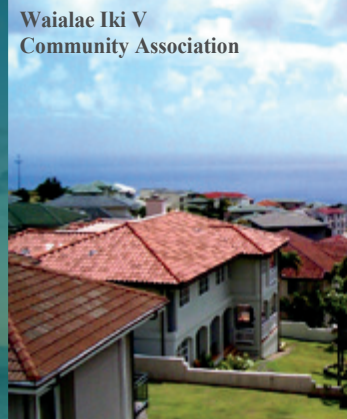


(L-R) Ryan Nitta, Kristi Hirota-Schmidt, Daniel Kent, Dass Ramadass, Selkie Khoo, Jeff Dickinson, Rob Johnson, Sandra Lebat, Kanani Kaopua, Suwadee Nitta, Shaunagh Haiola, Kevin Agena

## New Clients in 2018

- Crest at Wailuna
- Ke Noho Kai Townhomes
- Ke Noho Kai Community Association
- Pearl Ridge Gardens and Pearl Ridge Tower
- Pearl Manor
- Maili Beach Place
- The Hausten Inc.
- Oceanside Manor
- Sky Tower Apartments
- Nohona at Mililani Mauka
- Harbor Pointe
- Crown Thurston
- Village on the Green at Waikēle
- Waialae Iki V Community Association

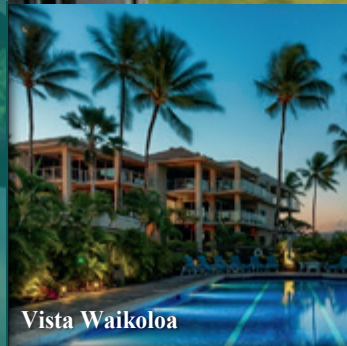
### Waialae Iki V Community Association



- The Sovereign
- Nahoia Apartments
- Azure Ala Moana
- Mauna Lani Terrace
- Kona Sea Villas
- Kona Westwind
- Kona Pacific
- Keauhou Resort
- Vista Waikoloa
- Na Hale O Keauhou
- Kona Bali Kai
- Alii Lani
- Bayview Estates
- Seascape Condominium
- Hale Pohaku
- Waikoloa Fairways
- 49 Black Sand Beach
- Hale Kehau
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- Kona Sunshine



49 Black Sand Beach



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***Mahalo to our dedicated Board Member clients and Residential Managers. We are grateful for your support. As we embark upon this new year, Hawaiiana's team of over 90 property management professionals are here to serve you!***



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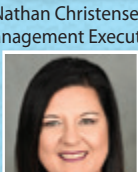
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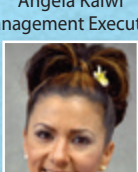
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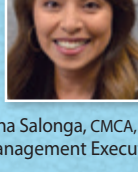
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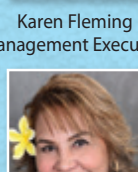
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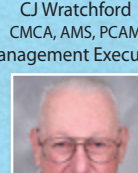
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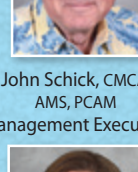
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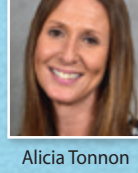
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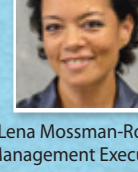
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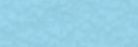
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# BYU Cannon Activities Center

2017 RCAH Commercial Steep Slope Tile Roof Award Winner



"We contracted with Commercial Roofing and Waterproofing to remove the old and install new concrete roofing tile system on the Cannon Activities Center here on our campus. This building is one of our largest buildings on campus with a roof that is very high. The biggest challenge and concern for this project was the safety of our students, faculty, staff and visitors. This building was in use the entire time of the re-roofing project, with heavy pedestrian traffic. Because of the excellent professionalism and the safety awareness of the staff and employees of CRW, we had no incidents with any of our patrons. It has been a pleasure to work with CRW and we would highly recommend them to anyone for future roofing projects."

Billy Casey Jr., Design & Construction Manager  
BYU Hawaii Facilities Management, (Retired)

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

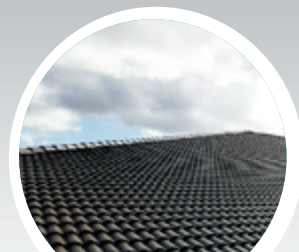
BYU's Cannon Activities Center was the largest tile re-roof on campus. As the sports auditorium, the interior is almost as large as a football field with rafters 240 feet in length. Due to the size of this project, special methods were implemented to get the job done safely and efficiently. A total of 730 squares of concrete tile roofing were removed and replaced.

## PAST PROJECTS FOR STEEP SLOPE TILE ROOFING

- Punahou School
- Eaton Square
- Hilton Waikiki
- Embassy Suites
- Sheraton Poipu
- Fairmont Kea Lani
- City Hall
- CSWo Kapolei
- Kalapawai Café
- Kamehameha Schools



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EXTERIOR



Roofing



Waterproofing



Solar PV



Rain gutters  
& Downspouts



Maintenance  
Repairs



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# Why All Buildings Must Pass the New 'Life Safety Evaluation' Inspection

*Looking ahead at life in the 'Matrix'*



**O**rdinance 18-14 was signed by Mayor Kirk Caldwell on May 3, 2018. This ordinance was in response to the horrific Marco Polo fire in July 2017. The ordinance was a compromise bill based on recommendations from a Residential First Safety Advisory Committee (RFSAC) appointed by the City Counsel. The RFSAC included the Honolulu Fire Department, various City agencies including DPP, the Board of Water Supply, Department of Budget and Finance and representatives of Community Association Institute and Hawaii Council of Committee Associations.

The ordinance requires all residential high-rise buildings to install fire sprinklers throughout—unless the building is exempt or it gets a passing score in a Life Safety Evaluation (LSE). Buildings are exempt if they are under 10 stories or have open exterior corridors. All buildings—even though exempt from installing fire sprinklers—must pass a LSE. An LSE is an inspection by a licensed professional to determine that the building is relatively safe from fire hazards. The licensed professionals are required to record their findings on an Excel spreadsheet called the “Matrix” that was developed by the Honolulu Fire Department. Before negotiating a proposal to do an LSE, building managers should familiarize themselves with the Matrix by reviewing it or downloading it from the Honolulu Fire Department’s website:

<http://www.honolulu.gov/hfd/resourceslinks.html>

HFD estimates that the cost to do an LSE will vary from \$30 to \$50 per unit (for example, \$3,000-\$5,000



for a 100-unit building). The Matrix is being made available to licensed professionals at no cost, so the only cost to the buildings is for the time that the licensed professionals spend in completing the LSE. The Matrix will be downloaded to the licensed professional’s device, i.e., a laptop or tablet, and the scoring can be done as the building is inspected. This means that that more you know and understand the Matrix, the more time and money you can save for your association by (i) having building plans and documents ready for the licensed professional and (ii) by having your site/building manager prepared to guide the licensed professional around the building to inspect the items on the Matrix.

The Matrix includes 17 items that are inspected and scored as part of the LSE. Eight of those items cannot be changed—i.e., height of building, the construction (concrete/drywall); exit access; standpipes; no fire sprinklers; egress routes; smoke management (in exit stairwells); interior corridors or exterior corridors.

There are two items—the number and location of smoke alarms in units and unit fire doors—that building staff can inspect and document. The Matrix provides for scoring smoke

alarms (one in each bedroom and one in the hallway) and unit doors (solid core 1 3/4” thick with a metal closure). The LSE will not require the licensed professional to access individual units except for a “representative sample,” and this would be negotiable between the licensed professional and the Association.

Associations should consider scheduling their LSE after completing a high-risk component inspection (HRS514B-138) or dryer vent cleaning. Use that opportunity to send an association employee to accompany the plumber/contractor to inspect and document the location/presence of smoke alarms in units and unit fire doors with closures so that information can be provided to the licensed professional, who can use a “representative sample” to confirm that information. Also, if Association reserve studies include elevator renovations, now is the time to do it since this work will require upgrading the fire alarm system and this will result in “plus points” in the LSE scoring.

If the building doesn’t get a passing score, it can work with the licensed professional to find out what they can do to get a passing score and make those changes. More than 360 high-rise buildings on Oahu have to get LSE and that’s why the ordinance allows for three years to complete the LSE and six years to get a passing score.

For questions on the Matrix items, contact HFD Battalion Chief Wayne Masuda at 723-7151 or [wmasuda@honolulu.gov](mailto:wmasuda@honolulu.gov).

*Reach Jane Sugimura at [Hcca.hcaa@gmail.com](mailto:Hcca.hcaa@gmail.com)*



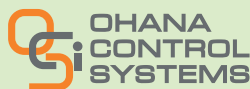
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Lance Wilhelm confers with Jesse Dowsett on plans for a new project.

# Visions of an Urban Future

Central to the development of Oahu communities, Rail ‘has to happen’ says Lance Wilhelm, who knows a thing or two about buildings and management

BY DON CHAPMAN

**I**f you’re a property manager, whether residential or commercial, you should be all for the success of the Honolulu rail project. Transit-oriented development means that new housing and new retail outlets will open along the train’s route, creating hubs of human activity around stations. And someone will have to manage those properties.

That’s the vision Lance Wilhelm has for the future of Honolulu. President of The Wilhelm Group, a full-service development consultancy and construction management firm, he is also a

trustee of Kamehameha Schools. And he thinks a lot about the future.

“Your perspective cannot be near-term,” says Wilhelm, Class of 1983, of his work on behalf of his alma mater. “It has to be 50 years out, 100 years out.”

More on that in a moment.

Wilhelm has already helped alter the Honolulu condominium scene. Between a 25-year construction career at Kiewit and opening his own firm two years ago, Wilhelm worked for Irongate and oversaw development of the Ritz-Carlton Residences in Waikiki.

“The Ritz-Carlton is unique on several fronts,” he says from his Bishop

Square office. “Start with the product, a hotel-condo, which means individual units in the building are sold as condos, and they’re part of an association, and in many ways act just like a condominium. But it’s also a hotel. So the unit owners can choose to be in the hotel program or not. Ritz-Carlton runs the property like a hotel—they take reservations, people come and stay. The only difference is they’re staying in someone’s condo.

“The product is somewhat unique. There are several examples of condo-hotel projects—some combine ownership and a hotel by saying the first few floors are for condo, the upper floors for hotel, but there is no common ownership. Some do it more like a time-share. At the Ritz, some people have bought units with the intent of living there full time, but most people who buy want to participate in the program because they’re part-time residents of



Hawaii. When they are here, they want to participate in a Ritz experience. The service is outstanding, and Doug Chang, the general manager, does an unbelievable job. For people who don't want to live there fulltime, the rest of the year your unit can be productive, generating income, so you get the best of both worlds."

Condos, he believes, are the future: "It's still a more affordable option. And there is a trend toward urbanism, not just in Hawaii. Single-family homes, your own picket fence out in the suburbs, that is not necessarily what young people have in their heads when they think about their future. They're more inclined to live in higher-density places. Public transportation is part of what they see in their future. They want a more urban lifestyle, proximity to entertainment and community. That trend is likely to continue for some time. High density means more condos, closer together. And it lowers the cost—I can deliver a unit in a high-rise cheaper than I can individual homes. Economics support it.

"More importantly, the younger generation's lifestyle expectations are supporting it. I do believe there will be more of that. But we have to find a sweet spot from the upper end to the lower end of the scale. . . . There's tremendous demand on the middle to the lower end of the scale."

Rail is central to all that, Wilhelm says. He has a unique perspective—when he was Kiewit's senior vice-president of operations in Hawaii, he helped build the Farrington Highway and Kamehameha Highway guideway portions, as well as the base yard in Waipahu.

"HART didn't exist yet," he says. "The first contracts we took at Kiewit were with the City & County of Hono-



Younger people desire to live in a high-density, urban lifestyle.

lulu. I became responsible for all that."

Asked if he believes the rail project will succeed, his answer takes another track:

"It has to happen. We as a community need it to happen. Transit can do things for us in terms of helping to guide and shape how our community develops over the next 50 years. We talked about condominiums and higher-density living. A lot of that is made possible because of mass transit, the way you can build projects. One of the ways to reduce costs, frankly, is to reduce the amount of parking you have to build. But the only way to do that responsibly is to give the people who will live there an alternative to cars. Transit helps provide that. And technology—bike sharing, car sharing, Uber, Lyft—is

changing the way people move themselves around. And as an efficiency is gained as those things take hold, you're not going to need as many cars and won't need as much parking, and that will help us drive the cost of condominiums down.

"Transit is necessary, whether you're pro-transit or anti-transit."

It's with an eye to the future that The Wilhelm Group has been working with the City & County of Honolulu to redevelop the Neil Blaisdell Center.

"We helped with the master planning stages to come up with a cost structure, and then we participated in design-development as well estimating so we could provide input into how the design is coming together. It's a giant project, about \$700 million."





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Pauli Wong, PCAM®, RS®  
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*Waiekele Community Association, comprised of 2937 homes, is among the 46 new association clients who switched to Associa Hawaii during 2018. **Photo credit: Terry Reis***

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# Is Your Building Going to Pot?



## Marijuana is a Sticky Subject for Boards

**Q:** I serve on the board for my Condominium Owner's Association (COA). Where I live, medical marijuana is legal, and we suspect there is recreational use happening as well. A few condo owners are expressing concern that marijuana smoke drifts into their units from neighboring units. Some concerns relate to potential health risks associated with the secondhand smoke, while some owners just do not like the odor. Is there anything the COA board can do to stop the drifting smoke?

**A:** This issue poses some real challenges for your board. Among others, the challenges include:

- complying with both state and federal law;
- addressing the differences between recreational and medical marijuana; and,
- since legal marijuana is relatively new, wading through the uncertainty that conflicting state and federal laws create.

Given that the legal obligations of COAs in cases like this are unclear, it may be tempting for a board to wait and see how other COAs handle the

problem. **Sitting back and waiting may not be the best approach, though. Smoking marijuana is not a fundamental right. In fact, marijuana remains illegal under federal law.**

Additionally, secondhand marijuana smoke, like secondhand cigarette smoke, contains carcinogens that some experts worry may have adverse health effects. Interestingly, COA boards have been held liable for not taking action to protect owners from cigarette smoke. While there is a direct link between secondhand cigarette smoke and negative health consequences—such a link has not been made with secondhand marijuana smoke—it is possible courts will still require COA boards to take action to protect owners and tenants from secondhand marijuana smoke.

### Keep Detailed Records of All Complaints the Board Receives

As support for any decision it makes, your COA board should maintain a record of all marijuana smoke complaints it receives. At a minimum, keep information such as the date and time of the complaint, the name of the parties

involved, and any health concerns expressed by the complainant. Without having a record to support whatever decision it makes, the board's decision may look arbitrary to other owners and, if a lawsuit is filed, the court.

### Medical Marijuana and the Fair Housing Act

One question that is yet to be answered by the courts is how the Fair Housing Act (FHA) may impact owners' rights to smoke marijuana in their units. The FHA is a federal law that prohibits discrimination based on, among other things, disability, race and religion. In the case of a condominium owner with a disability, a COA may have to make a reasonable accommodation to its rules and policies to provide the person an equal opportunity to use and enjoy the condominium unit. For example, a rule prohibiting owners from having dogs may need to be relaxed for an owner who is depressed and needs a companion pet.

In the context of medical marijuana, a condominium owner may claim smoking marijuana treats a disability and that by prohibiting the smoking of marijuana, the COA is violating the FHA. While this issue has not made its way through the courts yet, related issues have. For instance, the Oregon Supreme Court ruled that an employer does not discriminate



against an employee when the employer fires the employee for smoking medical marijuana because marijuana is unlawful under federal law. In that case, the employee claimed he had a disability that justified the need to smoke marijuana. It is possible courts will apply a similar rational in the housing context, by ruling that since federal law still makes it unlawful to smoke marijuana, a COA is not obligated to accommodate an owner's disability by letting that owner smoke marijuana.

## Review the COA's Governing Documents

As the board begins to look for answers, it should carefully review the COA's governing documents. These typically include bylaws, covenants, conditions and restrictions (CC&Rs), and rules and regulations. As you review these documents, look for any provisions that relate to "smoking" or "cigarette smoke." There may already be a rule that prohibits smoking in units or in common areas. Or there may be a rule that prohibits smoking cigarettes that the board can piggyback on if it also wants to prohibit smoking marijuana. Also, look for language that prohibits owners from creating nuisances.

## Amending the Governing Documents

If the COA's governing documents are silent or unclear about smoking marijuana, the board's task will be more challenging. However, the board may still be able to take action to appease the complaining owners.

First, the board may be able to declare marijuana smoke a nuisance. A "nuisance" is something that interferes with someone's use of their property by being irritating, offensive or dangerous. Many CC&Rs prohibit owners from creating a nuisance. Keeping a detailed record of all complaints, including information about how the marijuana smoke is interfering with other owners' use of their condominiums, may help show that marijuana smoke is, in fact, a nuisance.

Another option is to say that since marijuana is unlawful under federal law, smoking marijuana is not permitted in the condominium development. If this is the position your board wants to take, it may need to adopt a rule prohibiting



smoking marijuana or amend its CC&Rs to prohibit smoking marijuana. This will require strict compliance with the procedural requirements under both state law and the COA's governing documents.

## Other Options

There are other options your board can consider that might not be as controversial among owners. For example, there may be a better way to filter the air that is shared between units. Or perhaps individual units can be sealed better to prevent the transfer of smoke from one unit to another. Mediation may also provide a forum for individual unit owners

to resolve complaints among themselves, or for the COA and owners to sit down to address the issue.

## Your COA Board Should Receive Legal Advice

Due to potential liability and legal uncertainty this issue poses, the COA board should seek legal advice from its own attorney. Regardless of what action or inaction the board is considering, legal advice is critical to help make sure the board does not get involved in a lawsuit it does not want.

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# Keeping Kaiser Operating

The Kleenex Test is just the start of what makes Rob Tuchman's job different from most building managers'

BY DON CHAPMAN

**T**he Kleenex Test is just the start of what makes Rob Tuchman's job different from that done by most people in the building and facilities management business in Hawaii. He's director of engineering support services for Kaiser Permanente in Hawaii. That means overseeing the 250-bed Moanalua medical center plus 20 clinics statewide. Together they serve a quarter-million Kaiser members.

"One of the key differences, and I've lived in condominiums and managed office complexes," Tuchman says, "is those people are healthy. They don't demand the type of services that I need to provide here. For example, if I were to lose air conditioning at my apartment, it's probably not a big deal. I can choose to go elsewhere. I could open windows. But here people are stuck, if I can use that word. They can't go anywhere else. And the AC system provides comfort to them as part of their, I would like to say, healing process and helping them be comfortable. But also for their family



Rob Tuchman

and friends who come to visit the facility."

He describes losing AC at a Texas hospital he previously ran on a humid summer Friday afternoon.

"Because of the nature of the business, I can't wait until Monday," he says. "I can't put everybody on hold. So overnight we rebuilt our (system) so I could bring in a mobile unit and connect up."

He's ever aware that "it could potentially be a matter of life and death."

Said another way: "I don't know the condition of every single patient, but I have to maintain our systems at the highest states of readiness."

Temperatures inside a hospital also involve infection-control issues—germs tend to thrive in warm, moist environments:

"I'm maintaining temperature and humidity, and have very strict requirements from the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air Condi-



tioning Engineers, which every state adopts as their guidelines on required temperature ranges, air change rate, room pressure."

Which brings us back to the Kleenex Test.

"As far as requirements for air pressure, I don't know of anything like that in condos," says Tuchman (pronounced tuckman). "Whereas here, my ORs have to maintain certain air pressures that are positive to keep infections out of that room. We're dealing with specific types of patients, such as AIDS patients or others who are more susceptible, so we need to keep the settings different for them. I have very specific requirements. With positive pressure, we're trying to keep as much out as possible. If you're doing a surgery, we're trying to keep the germs out. I was working on electrical equipment during an open-heart, all gowned up, and it brought home to me why it's so important to keep everything out of that space."

Ye olde Kleenex Test isn't the most high-tech, but it works:

"If you crack a door open ever so slightly and hold a Kleenex there, if it's





blowing away from the door, it's positive pressure inside the room. If it blows in, it's negative pressure.

"It shows the importance of our mechanical systems."

Like many who end up in building and facilities management, it was never Tuchman's goal. But while earning both an undergrad degree and then an MBA at Oregon State University, he worked in a local hospital's maintenance department: "I'm working at the hospital turning a wrench to help pay for college." When he enlisted in the Navy after college, his first commanding officer noticed his medical background.

"I'm going to send you to the hospital," the officer told Tuchman, and did he ever.

"That's how I ended up in health-care," he says. "I was doing the exact same thing in the Navy I'm doing now, facility engineer. I took care of various Naval hospitals—Naval Hospital Lemoore, Naval Hospital Oakland, Naval Hospital San Diego and up at Naval Hospital Bremerton."

He would retire with the rank of commander, and then embark on a career in the private sector, running hospitals for Hospital Corporation of America in Texas, including "mega" hospitals with more than 500 beds. That led to opportunities outside the medical field, including managing "the largest private, non-high-rise office complex in the world, 5 million square feet, in San Antonio. Along the way, he picked up a master's degree in engineering from the University of Pittsburgh.

"I traveled a lot, worldwide, offices in Europe, Korea. But my wife Connie (his college sweetheart) got breast cancer. Seeing what she was going through—she was in the hospital for 10 days—the care she was receiving, the doctors and nurses, the whole thing, I knew two things. One, I needed to re-engage with healthcare and, two, I needed to stop traveling. I had to be more at home to support her. So I returned to hospitals.

"I came to Hawaii because Kaiser was my draw. I saw an ad for Kaiser and it sparked an interest in me and I started the application. Then my wife and I came here on vacation, and she said, you know, I'd like to live here. I said funny you should say that, I just saw a job at Kaiser but I didn't finish the application. She said I think you should finish it."



A surgery room at Kaiser Moanalua

Air temperature and pressure isn't all that separates hospital management from other types of buildings.

"I have emergency backup power systems," Tuchman says. "If we lose power from Hawaiian Electric, not every outlet here transfers, but I have emergency generators that have to start and transfer power to selected outlets, the red outlets. We run live exercises every month. It's scheduled so the nurses know it's coming, but they can see what real life is like. If they need to switch from a beige outlet to a red one, they know that's where emergency power is going to come from... within 10 seconds... for nurses on the floor it seems like eternity... but it's usually a second and a half to three seconds.

"There are specific paints that we buy that are anti-bacterial. It's even down to the electrical outlets we buy. I can't just go to the hardware store and buy outlets, I have to buy hospital-grade outlets, a little higher quality. Even television sets, they're hospital-grade, so you're less apt to get shocked. They are a higher-grade TV and we do pay a little more.

"Hospitals have adopted the National Fire Prevention Association's life-safety code and healthcare code, they're very specific on fire rating for our flooring materials, for our curtains, for our cubicle curtains, for sheets, bedspreads, paints, very specific standards for flammability. So I can't go to Home Depot and buy curtains without checking flammability ratings."

The job pays well, but Tuchman says

there is "a drastic shortage of hospital facility managers, nationwide. You get calls, requests, every week, somebody is interested in if you want to go work for them. Right now I have five openings, including manager here at Moanalua."

Generally speaking, having a background in non-hospital buildings will not be a big help, he says. But he suggests a few other potential paths into the field:

"Obtain a bachelor's degree in either engineering or business. Complete high school vocational/specialized training and/or associate's degree in a technical trade, such as electrical, HVAC. Complete courses related to plant engineering and facilities maintenance/operation. Obtain American Hospital Association certification as a Certified Healthcare Facility Manager. Seek opportunities to gain experience in the electrical/mechanical field of hospital engineering or facilities maintenance—this was how I put myself through college. Look for opportunities to gain experience and/or training reading and interpreting blueprints, manufacturer's specifications, schematics, purchase requests, equipment and materials for installation and repair of equipment and facilities systems. Gain knowledge of life safety codes for healthcare and applicable NFPA codes. Work to set yourself apart to show your interest. Sometimes you just get lucky, and with some of the tools above someone is very willing to take a chance."

Or you could join the Navy.



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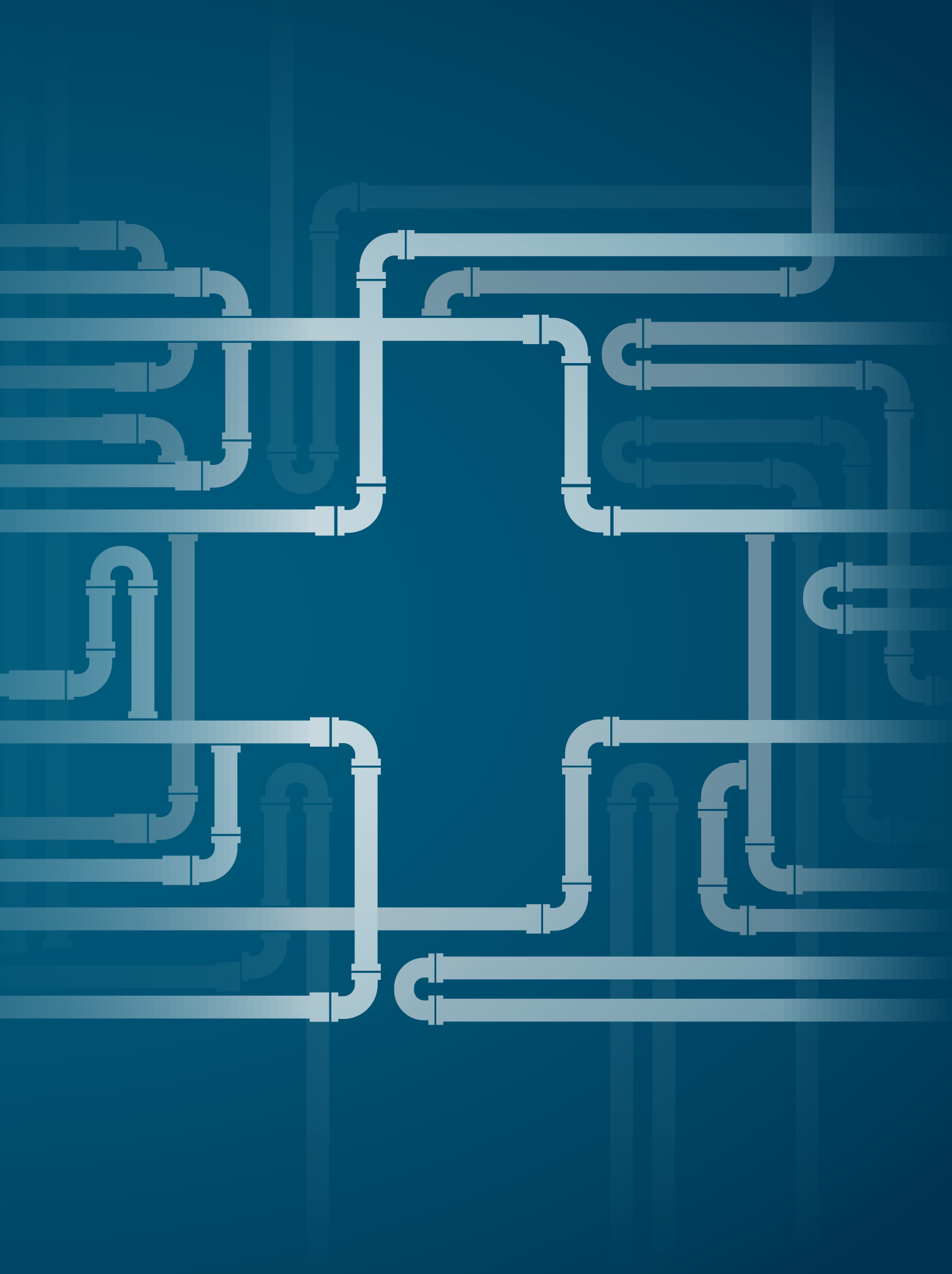
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# New Year's Resolutions for Building Managers

A fresh outlook for managers, buildings in 2019

**W**ith a new year upon us—so soon?—*BMH* asked several top building managers, both residential and commercial, to share their resolutions for 2019, whether for themselves or for their buildings.



**Jacob Roller,**  
*GM, 801 South Street*

My New Year's resolution is to earn more smiles from residents of the property I manage. I don't always have

time to stop and talk to every passerby, but if I get a smile when I make eye contact, it brings me peace thinking that nothing may be troubling them at that moment.



**Steve Sullivan,**  
*VP of operations, Shidler Pacific Advisors*

We established a 2019 mantra for the new year: Provide excellence in service in all we do!

It's important to include our teams and building staff in the process of deciding what does it take to deliver exceptional customer service. They will likely have the first direct contact with a customer or client and meet them most often, and that is why they usually have the best ideas concerning this issue. If staff has an opportunity to communicate these ideas, they take ownership and become responsible for the service—they want it to be as good as possible.



**Cindy Streb,**  
*site manager, 400 Keawe AOUO*

Frankly, when asked to submit my New Year's Resolutions for 2019, I was stumped.

What would make this New Year better for me and my owners and residents? I thought about this day and night, couldn't get it out of my head. I have been blessed to work for Associa Hawaii and the associates and team members are always willing to go the extra mile for their own customers and work mates. I manage a beautiful new building filled with "ohana" who look after me and each other, as well as a neighborhood with other managers

who share information and insight for our community.

So, after much consideration, here are my two resolutions for the new year: **(1)** I resolve to enjoy each day of the year whether at work or at play; and **(2),** I will not sweat the small stuff!

Those resolutions sound so good, I'm not waiting for Jan. 1—I'm starting right now!



**Gerald Nakashima,**  
*general manager, Park Lane Ala Moana*

My goal for Park Lane in 2019 is to implement innovative initiatives

to cultivate and grow our residential community by planning meaningful gatherings and to raise the bar in creating our residents' ideal lifestyle.

Also, taking our employee engagement to the next level by creating a healthy and sustainable work environment to become the employer of choice. Mentoring and embracing a collaborative work environment will be the key to our success.

Finally, be the change by giving back to our local community with outreach goals to allow Park Lane to support those in need.





## Industry Job Titles—What's In a Name?

BY CHENTELLE S. BROOKS

During the past few years, thanks to our recent condo building boom, many new job titles have been created. While the job descriptions vary at associations and at management companies, the following are the most common titles and descriptions used in Hawaii.

**Managing Agent** is the company contracted to serve the association.

**Association Manager** is usually the Association's direct employee who serves on-site and is responsible for day-to-day management and administration of the association. There are also cases where the job title of Association Manager refers to the Managing Agent's employee assigned to a contracted association.

**Community Manager, Management Executive, Property Manager, Portfolio Manager** usually refers to the Managing Agent's employee who is assigned to multiple contracted associations.

**Resident Manager or General Manager** is the Association's highest-ranking site employee who usually lives on the property and is responsible for overseeing the maintenance and repair of the building, grounds and amenities.

**Site Manager** can either be an Association employee or, in some cases, is employed by a site management company to provide day-to-day management at the property.



**Dan Gomez,**  
general manager,  
Diamond Head Sands

Here are two New Year's resolutions that I have personally made for 2019:

(1) To remind myself that if it can't get done today it can wait until tomorrow—it will still be there! (The smaller stuff of course!)

(2) Develop two mentor relationships in 2019 with more seasoned building managers to learn from their experiences and to bounce ideas off of.



**Jose Roberto Dominguez,**  
general manager,  
Keauhou Place

Every year we look for ways to improve our lives, both for the build-

ings we manage and for the lives we lead. We often get so obsessed with our daily routines, so we end up overlooking ourselves. An integral part in how our building functions lies primarily in how we take care of our own wellness.

So for 2019, I am looking for a balance for both my building and for my own personal life. Often, we look for ways to manage our properties to near perfection, and although this may be valuable to the community, it can lead to burnout—something our industry barely talks about as this can be seen as a failure among one's peers. Admitting to being fatigued, and the anxiousness often felt by many, are rarely discussed. So for me, I plan to manage more time

to surf, skate and hike with my family. Blending with the outdoors and taking the time to disconnect from work and reconnect with nature are within reach for all of us, considering we live in paradise. My personal connection between work and play will be the focus of 2019, and I am certain that anyone reading this will feel the same motivation to improve their quality of life.



**Ralph Shumway,**  
general manager,  
The Waipuna

(Editor's note: Anyone who knows "The Ralph" will understand his

tongue-in-cheek tone here. For those who don't, welcome to the wit of this 30-year veteran of what he calls "The Property Management Wars." Seems like a good note to end on.)

(5) I wish to represent a kinder, gentler demeanor to all my residents, whether they deserve such treatment or not.

(4) As much as they may ask for it, I will not do grievous harm to any of my residents.

(3) I will strive to carve out some semblance of a personal life (though I am not sure if that can fit into my schedule).

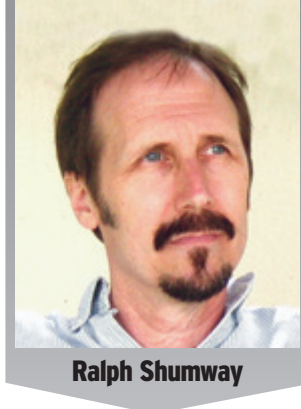
(2) I will continue to expand the boundaries of my profession and spread my experiences with Oahu's property management community.

(1) I will seriously consider quitting this crazy job and move to the mountains where I only have to converse with bears and the only plumbing I will do is to dig a new hole!



# It's Been a Real Fire Fight

Consider alternatives to a sprinkler retrofit



Ralph Shumway

**W**e all remember those horrific scenes: flames lashing out of Marco Polo apartments... fire trucks and hoses littering Kapiolani Boulevard... news crews scrambling to broadcast the tragedy... and HFD and the mayor immediately proclaiming, “If the building had sprinklers, this would have been prevented!”

Mayor Caldwell found himself in a “darned if I do, darned if I don’t situation.” We can understand that. But to make such a premature statement without knowing any facts of the situation, even if later facts support his assumption, showed



Kirk Caldwell

that he was going to use this disaster to push an old and ongoing agenda. Every few years, whoever is in charge of our great city comes out with a proposal to have every high-rise in Honolulu fitted/retrofitted with a sprinkler system.

In a perfect world, we all would have plenty of money and ability to make every aspect of our lives as safe as can be. But we do not live in a perfect world. We fall short of resources to ensure our safety, not only for fires, but for pedestrians, for drivers, for bicyclists, for our First Responders, for our ambulance service, for so many aspects of our life that I cannot list all that is needed.

As Mr. Mayor’s edict to retrofit sprinklers in high-rises began to evolve, and change, it became clear that this “good idea with good intentions” was a lot more complicated than originally thought. The legal



The minimal water consumption of water mist systems significantly reduces water damage.

limits of what the city government, as well as individual associations, can impose on individually owned apartment homes came into the spotlight. The law had to be changed from installing sprinklers everywhere to just a high-rise’s common areas (hallways). And that morphed from all hallways to just completely enclosed hallways (letting “open” hallways off the hook). And, thanks to our City Council, much of that Draconian edict eroded as well.

I wish to make perfectly clear: there is not a single residential manager, board member, or high-rise resident that opposes safety. My goodness! My whole life for three decades has been devoted to trying to make as safe as possible the lives of my residents. But to financially ruin those people’s lives is something that we just can’t allow to happen.

Here is the heart of the problem: installing certain systems, like sprinkler systems or emergency generators, is physically and economically fea-

sible when designing and building a project. But in most cases, retrofitting can be virtually impossible and always extremely expensive. When we buy our home, we buy it as is, knowing the positive attributes as well as what it lacks. Every homeowner that owns a pre-1975 condo knows that there is not that extra water system installed in their ceilings.

The year is now 2019. The old-fashioned water sprinkler system is very old technology. New systems that do not flood a fire (and all the surrounding property and below) are being used in museums and computer rooms. There are mist systems and non-harmful gas systems. There is even a detection and mist system being used in England that is run off of an apartment’s own water line. To mandate an old, extremely expensive and difficult to install technology when newer ones are being developed is just not a prudent idea.





Carol Fukunaga

The Honolulu City Council, in particular Councilwoman Carol Fukunaga, listened to hundreds of homeowners who would be affected by the proposed retrofitting.

Because of the Council, the proposal went through many versions until compromises were made. The “fire safety evaluation” stipulation for so many of us to pass in the next three years came from all parties coming away with a modicum of victory. Whether we all agree to the validity of “the matrix” or not, this compromise is a lot more palatable for each homeowner than tearing open their ceiling and assessing them for tens of thousands of dollars.

I was honored to be a part of this process through my personal testimonies and public speaking, as well as having the ears of some of our representatives. It seems that reason



The Marco Polo fire spurred the debate to retrofit fire sprinklers in high-rises.

and financial responsibility won this battle. It was not a perfect victory, but one that we all can live with.

*Ralph Shumway, ARM®, has been a residential manager for three decades*

*in Hawaii. He has received numerous awards and recognition from the state legislature for his work in property management and crime prevention. He currently is the General Manager of the Waipuna and is one heck of a blues harmonica musician.*

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# Navigating the City's New Fire Safety Rule

A step-by-step guide for condo boards



Dana Bergeman

**T**he fact is fire sprinklers save lives, reduce property losses and can often help cut insurance premiums.

Even a single sprinkler triggered by a fire can be enough to contain or snuff out a fire before heat, flames and smoke spread through the building, allowing people time to escape and the fire department time to respond.

It is also true that many owners fear the cost of retrofitting existing buildings with fire sprinklers.

Honolulu's new fire safety ordinance is designed to address both issues, and also provide some relief with the cost of improvements. It compels older buildings to install fire sprinklers while providing an extensive timeframe to do so. The ordinance also provides a new fire safety assessment (FSA) process designed to improve fire safety through alternative building improvements, and ultimately provides a method for opting out of installing fire sprinklers altogether.

The new ordinance is complicated. There are numerous requirements, noteworthy exceptions and the aforementioned new FSA procedure. To make this easier to understand, we have broken down the process of becoming compliant into a series of steps.

## STEP 1

Most existing high-rise residential buildings are required to provide notice of intent to comply in writing to the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD) within 180 days from the effective date of the ordinance. All buildings in Honolulu approximately 75 feet in height or greater must comply. This notice was technically due in late 2018, so if your building has not already notified HFD of your intent to comply, you should do so.



The new ordinance deals with the cost of retrofitting sprinklers in older buildings, but also provides a new process to opt out of installing fire sprinklers altogether.

## STEP 2

From the effective date, each building will have three years to complete the FSA, six years to achieve a passing score, and twelve years to install sprinklers if required. In other words, by the time this article reaches print, there will be about 32 months remaining to complete the assessment, an additional three years to achieve a passing score, and an extended timeframe to install sprinklers, if ultimately required.

Your FSA will need to be completed by or under the supervision of a design professional or consulting firm with architects and engineers on staff. Contractors generally do not qualify to complete the FSA. All existing high-rise residential buildings will be required to complete the FSA fire and life safety evaluation process. However, upon passing, sprinklers are not required

if the building qualifies for one of the following exceptions:

- a. Any existing high-rise residential buildings already protected by an approved automatic fire sprinkler system (per NFPA 13R) will be exempt.
- b. Buildings less than 10 floors in height may be exempt from installing sprinklers if the building receives a passing score on the building fire and life safety evaluation.
- c. Buildings may be exempt from installing sprinklers if all dwelling units have exterior access, including a continuous egress path to exit the building, and have no full-length interior corridors.
- d. Other special circumstances as indicated in the ordinance.

Please see page 46





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# High-rise Fire Sprinkler Retrofit Roadmap

There's no avoiding the new law, so AOAOs must act now



Jason Blinkhorn

**O**n July 14 2017, a devastating fire took the lives of three local individuals at the Marco Polo condominium in Waikiki. A fourth would die days later. Paling in comparison to the loss of life, the fire presented more than \$100 million in property damage, forcing residents to evacuate for months.

In the hours after the incident, the chief of the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD), as well as the mayor, both spoke out regarding the need for fire sprinkler systems to protect these older high-rises. Several months later, the Residential Fire Safety Advisory Committee (RFSAC) was formed to bring this important life safety issue to the forefront of our community. Their intent is solely to increase the life safety of the occupants in our city's residential high-rises, as well as the lives of the firefighters who selflessly run into these buildings to protect us. With the help of the RFSAC, Mayor Kirk Caldwell brought forth Bill 69 for council approval. The bill mandates that all high-rise condos in Honolulu must retrofit their buildings with fire sprinklers, with the exceptions of buildings under 75 feet in height and those having exterior egress corridors.

Although not all Honolulu condo owners are thrilled with these laws being pushed into place, the law has been passed, and every AOO that falls within the guidelines must find a way to deal with it.

On May 3 2018, Honolulu's fire sprinkler retrofit Bill 69 was voted into law. It became very apparent to HFD that the bill would not pass through council as it originally stood, so the final draft came with one caveat: a "fire sprinkler opt-out provision." This provision gives high-rise condos the opportunity to have a life safety eval-



uation (LSE) done on their building by a licensed engineering firm. This past month a group of private citizens, as well as several council members, lobbied to extend the proposed deadlines by two years, but they were met with very strong resistance from the mayor. He promptly vetoed the bill and pleaded for council members not to overturn the veto because he felt the existing durations were suitable, and that a sense of urgency must be created to improve these buildings as quickly as possible.

The life-safety evaluation takes a holistic look at the overall life-safety condition of each residential condo building. Along with a passing score on the LSE Matrix, AOO boards must also vote to opt out of retrofitting their building with a fire sprinkler system. After being involved in the discussions with HFD regarding implementation of the LSE Matrix, it is very clear that they want these high-rise buildings retrofitted with fire sprinklers, because the opt-out provision is not a push-over. The evaluation looks in depth at such aspects as fire alarm systems, fire-rated doors, fire caulking around

vertical shafts, egress means and other fire-and life-safety aspects that affect evacuation of residents, and prevention of rapid flame spread during a fire.

Here's the timeline for compliance with this provision (Ordinance 18-14).

**1. Nov. 2, 2018** — Intent to Comply Letter sent from the AOO to HFD.

This date has passed, but a letter to comply with the HFD must be sent in from each AOO.

**2. May 2, 2021 (3 years)** — Life Safety Evaluation (LSE) must be completed and submitted.

**3. May 2, 2024 (5 years)** — High-rise condos must be in compliance with passing of LSE.

**4. May 2, 2030 (12 years)** — If your AOO chooses to sprinkle your high-rise, the installation must be completed within 12 years.

The fact is this bill is now law, and the mayor and HFD have no intention of deviating from it. I urge facilities directors to get with their AOO board members and be proactive. The first, most important step, is to hire a licensed engineering firm to complete the evaluation for you. Having an engineering consultant work through this Matrix, can help you find out which upgrade option best suits your building, and most importantly, your budget. The State has put together some incentives, tax credits and breaks on permit fees, so be sure to explore all financial options when making the best decision for your building.

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*Jason Blinkhorn is the fire protection operations manager at Dorvin D. Leis Mechanical. He has 15-plus years of experience in the fire protection industry in North America as a firefighter, fire protection engineer and fire protection operations manager. Reach him at 792-0416 or [jasonb@leisinc.com](mailto:jasonb@leisinc.com).*



# You've Had a Disaster. Now What?

Whether it's a fire or a flood, here are basic first steps to follow



Jessica Miriga

**Y**ou've experienced a disaster. What now? The basic actions you take may depend on different factors (cause and condition) but there are some general rules that can be applied to practically all types of damage.

## Basic Guidelines

► Life safety issues should always be addressed prior to beginning property recovery.

► Shore up, secure and/or evacuate all areas in danger of collapse.

► Secure the scene to prevent unauthorized entry.

► Install protection barriers or secondary containment systems to prevent pollutants from flowing into drains or absorbing into the soil.

► Switch off all equipment immediately. Do not reconnect them, even for test purposes, until it is safe to do so.

► Shut down all systems: power, water, gas, compressed air supply and air conditioning systems. Do not reconnect them until it is safe to do so.

► Document the damage with photographs and written records.

► Notify your insurance company.

## Water Damage

► Extract water as quickly as possible to stop any water-related damage which cannot be reversed (i.e., swelling, discoloration).

► Remove soaked objects (furniture, curtains, floor coverings, etc.)

► Apply corrosion control prevention agents to protect and preserve technical equipment, machinery, and electronics.

► If walls, floors, and ceilings are very wet or totally saturated, demolition or special drying efforts are essential.



► Reduce the relative humidity to less than 40 percent as quickly as possible to slow down the corrosion process and discourage mold growth.

► Raise furniture and insert plastic wedges or Styrofoam blocks underneath to prevent moisture wicking up from below.

► Begin drying as soon as possible with dessicant or refrigerant dehumidifiers as appropriate. Use a professional for these services as some items can be damaged by inappropriate drying techniques.

► Pack books and documents in cardboard box lines with a plastic trash bag.

► For valuable items and bound materials, use a wax paper sling to prevent color transfer.

► Maintain a good inventory of wet materials.

► Freeze any wet books or documents as quickly as possible. A refrigerator freezer or upright/chest freezer is acceptable.

## Fire Damage

► Open doors and windows to air out facility. Turn on fans/install fans to assist.

► Organize a fire watch.

► Cover facilities, machines and equipment as long as extinguishing

water is flowing or dripping.

► Pump out or extract residual extinguishing water into tanks for temporary storage.

► Remove objects soaked by water (furniture, curtains, floor coverings, etc.)

► Place electronic devices, machines, stock and inventory in dry storage.

► To minimize further corrosion, try to keep the relative humidity at less than 40 percent in the room or inside polyethylene sheeting tents erected to protect valuable items (machinery, etc.). Blow in dry air or set up an air dehumidifier.

► Apply corrosion prevention agents to machinery and technical equipment.

► Safeguard unaffected areas.

*Jessica Miriga is marketing manager at BELFOR Hawaii and brings several years of agency, retail, broadcast, and online marketing experience to the job. BELFOR restores property due to fire, water, mold or storm damage and is truly a one-stop shop for all property restoration needs. Through real-life trials and R&D, BELFOR has become the standard-bearer for recovery in the insurance, risk management, and reconstruction fields.*



# Waterproofing to Prevent Spalling

Helpful tips for maintaining your building and keeping spalling to a minimum

BY LIONEL SIANGCO

Spalling happens. But it doesn't have to be that way.

## How does concrete spalling occur?

During the construction process, concrete buildings are reinforced with bars or mesh made of steel. Though enveloped in concrete, steel can corrode because concrete is a porous material, constantly absorbing the elements around it. Any exposure to air and water can cause this steel to corrode, forcing it to expand, and the surrounding concrete to crack. The term "cancer" is used as an analogy because the cracks further expose the steel to the elements, speeding up the level of corrosion, and the deterioration of the building. If left untreated, the deterioration can grow exponentially. This condition, known as spalling, can impact the strength of the building.

Even environmental factors, such as the natural movement of the earth underneath the building can cause cracks in the structure, exposing the steel to the elements, and allow water to enter the building from the ground. Additionally, exposure to a marine environment can cause chlorides from salt water spray to enter the concrete and corrode the steel.

Construction quality could also be the cause of concrete spalling, especially in older buildings where the materials used in the concrete may not meet the standards applicable today. Also, the environment and climate have changed since these older buildings were built, and the materials and concrete used then may no longer be appropriate to handle current conditions. Frequently we see concrete



reinforcing steel without the recommended inch and a half of coverage, which leads to increased cracking and eventual spalls.

## Signs of concrete spalling

Typical signs of concrete spalling include cracking or crumbling concrete, rust stains seeping out from the concrete, bubbling in the concrete coating or paint, and leaks in the roof or internal walls. Often mistaken for general wear-and-tear, they can be signs of something more serious. For a more in-depth assessment of the magnitude and overall location of the problem, professional spall repair contractors will use sounding methods like Horizontal Chain Dragging, Vertical Hammer Sounding or Overhead Awl Tapping to detect delaminated areas that have not yet broken loose. Based on these on-site assessments, the identified problem areas, both visible and invisible, will then be marked for partial, selective demolition. Spalling can be generally classified as either cosmetic or structural. While both types should be dealt with to avoid longer-term issues, structural spalling is typically far more critical. Structural repairs usually will require an engineer to assess the deterioration and determine safety.

## Prevention is the best cure

The best cure for concrete spalling is preventing the issue entirely. Early detection and quick remedial action can arrest the condition and prevent the problem from deteriorating further. Regular and timely maintenance can be very important. Buildings need regular maintenance, especially to seal the concrete and prevent water damage and general wear-and-tear.

Be sure to fix any standing water issues, internal leaks and drips immediately. Cracks in the building's structure must be dealt with immediately. Consult with a professional on an appropriate sealing solution that would prevent the crack from developing to such an extent that it exposes the steel to the elements.

A good waterproofing job can help prevent or delay concrete spalls as well. Buildings that have not been waterproofed, or are poorly waterproofed, are likely to suffer from concrete spalling as they do not have sufficient protection in place. High-quality waterproofing membranes are extremely resistant to tears and punctures, minimizing water leakage into the structure. Membranes can also have exceptional elongation properties which can help prevent any water leakage condition from building



movement. Waterproofing membranes have a long lifespan with the durability to withstand extreme weather conditions. When waterproofing is not in place, or has not been executed to high-quality standards, the building will be more susceptible to concrete spalling, potentially leading to serious structural damage.

Builders are constantly exploring solutions that would prevent concrete spalling, including changing internal reinforcements to a material that's resistant to corrosion, such as fiber-reinforced polymer (FRP) rebar. Another solution being implemented in some markets involves painting the concrete, using paints specifically formulated to resist chloride and carbonation. This is especially recommended for buildings near the ocean, as it will lower the risk of saltwater-related corrosion

## How to fix spalling

While prevention is the best cure, concrete spalling may show up regardless of the precautions implemented during the building's construction and maintenance. Cost-effective remedial solutions include removing the rusted steel by chipping away the spoiled concrete and clearing out the loose material. The rusted steel is then cleaned and coated or removed and new steel installed, depending on the condition of the existing steel. New concrete is poured with extra thickness so the new steel is reinforced. The new concrete is then painted or coated with waterproofing membranes for added protection.

Be sure to select a qualified contractor to perform your spall repair. Ensure that the contractor is licensed with a C-31, C-31A or C-31D classification. Check the contractor's insurance coverage and the bonding capacity for client protection purposes, review the contractor's past projects of a similar scope and ask for a list of the contractor's clients and referrals.

---

*Lionel Siangco is the superintendent at Kawika's Painting in Kihei, Maui. He has 40 years of painting experience and 20 years of concrete repair experience. Reach him at 808-242-1327 or [maui@kawikaspainting.com](mailto:maui@kawikaspainting.com).*



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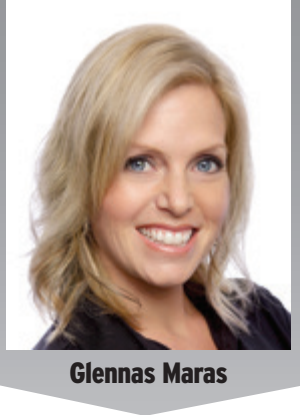
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# The Confounding Truths About Mold

Call a qualified professional when mold invades your building



Glennas Maras

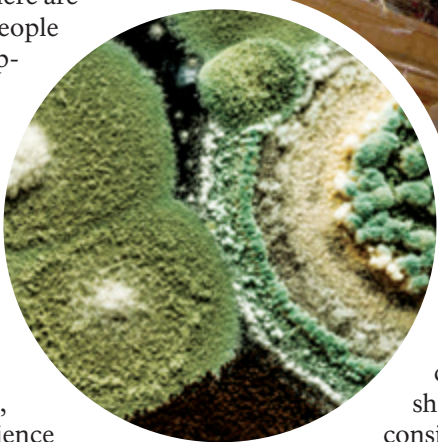
**T**he age-old mold problem is always present here in Hawaii. Do these statements sound familiar? “It’s making me sick.” “It’s harmless.”

“It’s everywhere in Hawaii, so there’s nothing that can be done about it.”

Well, what if I told you that there is truth to all of them? That doesn’t seem to help much, does it?

Let’s start with “It’s making me sick.” Yes, mold can make people sick, in some cases very sick. There are categories, if you will, of people who are much more susceptible to having health-related issues due to mold exposure. These categories would be young children, the elderly and individuals with compromised immune systems due to illness or medical conditions. Keep in mind not all people respond to mold exposure, the same way; some experience no effects of mold exposure, while others do. The problem is that there is no way to tell which person will have a negative reaction to mold exposure and which one won’t, leaving every moldy situation needing to be addressed as though it is a health risk to everyone that may be exposed.

As for “It’s harmless,” this can be a true statement as well. Consider this: We eat mold, we use it for medicine, plus it grows naturally in our very wet environment. Seems as though this statement is true then, yes? In these settings, yes, this is a true statement. But mold that grows in places it doesn’t belong, e.g., inside a home



or commercial building should not be considered harmless. The most common

molds found indoors here in Hawaii are *Penicillus Aspergillus* and *Stachybotrys*. Both warrant health concerns. They each can be linked to respiratory issues, neurological issues, bleeding in the lungs and internal organ damage. Just search for them on the Internet; there is enough scary info out there to scare the pants off just about anyone. Now please remember, this is not to say everyone exposed to these indoor molds will get sick.

So here’s the rub on indoor mold: When indoor mold is found, you really need to have a qualified Indoor Environmental Professional (IEP) test the

affected area. They will take surface samples of the affected areas as well as take air samples. These will be sent to a lab for thorough testing. Then and only then can you be sure you know what you are dealing with and how to properly mitigate the affected area.

Once the affected areas are professionally mitigated, your IEP should perform post-tests to insure all the mold has been removed or restored to normal levels. Do not skip the post-test—mold can be invisible to the human eye and still be present in the area. Your post-test is your “insurance policy” that the home or business has been restored to healthy living conditions.

As for “it’s everywhere in Hawaii so there’s nothing that can be done about it,” mold is found in virtually



every place on our planet, and serves many important purposes. But it's when there is an overgrowth of mold that it becomes a problem. The key word here being "overgrowth," and there is definitely something that can be done to prevent an overgrowth of mold. Mold will stay dormant unless it has the right conditions and right food source to reproduce. Take away the mold-loving conditions and its food source and you don't have a mold overgrowth. Mold loves wet, dark places, and its favorite food source is cellulose materials, meaning plant based materials, as well as particles that live in house dust. Did you know that sheet rock, paints and flooring plus many more building materials contain cellulose? Yup, mold likes wet paint, wet sheet rock, wet flooring, even wet cabinetry and dust.

The most common mold issue arises after a property experiences a flood or a water leak. Mold can begin to grow in as little as 48 hours after a flood, so calling in a mitigation company to dry the property ASAP is your best move to avoid mold issues. Mitigation companies are not all created equal, so you will want to be sure to call for a IICRC (Institute of Inspection Cleaning and Restoration Certification) firm to handle your flood or leaks. They will be skilled with the most up-to-date science of drying technology. Of course, there are always unattended floods and leaks that do not get discovered until long after mold has become a problem. For those, call your IICRC-certified mitigation firm to properly mitigate the mold.

While you are waiting for them to arrive. Follow these steps:

- Do not disturb the mold.
- Do not blow air across it, but leave the area as still as possible.
- Turn off or seal all air vents flowing in or out of the affected area.
- Call Your IICRC-certified mitigation company ASAP; they will contain the area to prevent the spread of the mold spores before they begin mitigation.

*Glenna Maras, mold-certified through IICRC, is the owner of SERV-PRO of Kailua. Reach her at 235-5015 or Gmaras@servpro10376.com*





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# Managing Risk While Managing Cash

Quick tips on how to navigate a world of increasing claim costs and aging infrastructure

BY MARLONE MADAMBA

**T**wenty years ago when I started in property restoration, we didn't have the litany of concerns that we do today. With most industries as they grow, the technical service elements become way more detailed. Over the years, the following complexities or concerns have showed up in property restoration as a result of an increase of awareness and/or regulatory pressure:

1. Mold
2. Asbestos
3. Lead
4. Category 3 Water

In addition to these, the building envelopes and interiors have become multi-layered. All of this means that the finishes we used to feel comfortable drying are now removed because of these concerns. This obviously has a direct impact on the total bill for restoration. A \$2,000 to \$5,000 drying project is now a \$20,000-\$50,000 removal and restoration project. That's a tenfold increase for the exact same event!

This is further compounded by the increasing liability and exposure to the association and its board members. Layer on top of that an aging infrastructure, a lack of solid reserves and increasing insurance premium costs, and you start to have a no-win situation. The association is forced to make a choice between doing the right thing from a health and safety perspective or doing the right thing from a fiscal perspective. I could scare you with



story after story about the aftermath and consequences of not properly mitigating, but I'm sure every property manager out there could do the same from a fiscal position. Talk about a hard decision to make!

Unfortunately, I don't have a magic answer or technological solution for this problem. I do, however, have a few helpful tips that can dramatically reduce the cost of mitigating.

**1 Call a contractor immediately.** Roughly 50 percent of the building finishes we recommend removing instead of drying could have been dried if we were able to respond within 48 hours of the incident. The quality of water gets worse every day the materials are left wet. A quick response can keep that \$2K to \$5K mitigation project from turning into something worse.

## **2 Clean, Disinfect and Stabilize.**

For category 3 water issues, we're constantly running into situations where people don't want to remove building finishes right away. If that's the case, still contact your mitigation contractor and request them to clean, disinfect and stabilize the environment. While this does not eliminate the concern of leaving building materials impacted by category 3 water in place, it does reduce foul odors and prevent adjacent unaffected materials from becoming affected.

**3 Review and know the limits of your commercial policy.** There are some things that are specifically excluded. Knowing what they are can assist in making split second decision during a water event. Also knowing

Please see page 46





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# Oh, the Things a Plumber Sees!

How to prevent some common disasters



**Maurice Torigoe**

**I**n my 45 years as a plumber and 35 years in the business, I thought I have seen it all, but new technology amazes me. Plumbing dilemmas we faced in the past are nothing compared to what is happening now.

For example, we see rats gnawing on plastic water piping in the ceiling, leaving a mist of water streaming on the ceiling and saturating the ceiling until it comes down full of water, creating a disaster. A solution would be to have regular pest-control inspections.

Another dilemma would be the washing machine hose bursting when no one is home, creating a disaster. The solution for this is to shut off the washing machine valves when not in use and replacing hoses every five years.

Another dilemma would be the water closet overflowing because of a clogged drain line caused by either too much toilet paper, paper towels, handi-wipes or even kids' toys. A solution for the water closet overflowing is to stay there until it goes down.

Another dilemma is the supply connector's nut cracks and floods the house. The best solution for this is to replace the flex connectors every five years.



It actually gets worse—I've seen things I can't mention and am still looking for the best solutions.

High-rise buildings are a nightmare, as they have the same problems as a residential home, but the trouble multiplies

when water damages the floors below.

A problem just starting to occur in high-rise buildings 40 to 50 years old: Their cast-iron sewer, waste, vent and storm drain piping are starting to crack and will need to be replaced. As a former AOA president, I did not see this in our budget for replacement of piping; putting this in the budget would help as a solution in the long run.

The next dilemma: Fire sprinklers for buildings without fire sprinklers are now mandatory.

*Maurice Torigoe is the owner of M. Torigoe Plumbing, founded in 1985. His plumbing career began in 1969, and today he is an ABC Hawaii plumbing instructor at Honolulu Community College. He is past president of Associated Builders and Contractors, and past and 2019 president of Construction Education Fund.*



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# When to Repipe? How to Decide?

It pays to plan years ahead



Eric Lecky

**A**s a pipe replacement contractor, it would be easy to tell everyone that after their first leak, it's time to replace their entire piping system. Reality paints a different picture however, and knowing when it's time for a pipe replacement is a subjective and difficult decision to make. For many AOAOs, this is their No. 1 plumbing dilemma.

Ideally, when a community starts to have leaks, two things should happen.

First, and most obviously, the leak should be repaired. Any licensed plumber or qualified maintenance technician can handle this, depending on the size and location of the leak.

Second, and typically missed, is a thorough investigation into why the pipe leaked. If the leak was due to the poor initial installation of a particular fitting, then fixing that one joint will probably solve your problem for years to come. If, however, the pipe failed due to age-related issues, it's time for a system-wide assessment to determine the estimated remaining usable life of your plumbing.

For a relatively small fee, fitting extractions and lab tests can determine everything from the pace of corrosion to pipe wall thickness, and should give your community valuable information regarding your current state and options moving forward, including whether or not your pipes need immediate attention or whether more time is available before replacement is required. Also, this engineering report can be a helpful tool when communicating with your owners about the need/urgency to maintain your piping systems and the corresponding investment required to properly maintain your community and property values.

But because of the price and complexity of a full piping system replacement, even if you have 10 or 20 years



**Regular presentations at AOA meetings are a helpful tool to educate the community about pipe replacement, and to prepare them for an eventual repipe project.**

left on your plumbing system, you need to start planning ahead now. Reserve studies frequently exclude pipe replacement, or if it is included, they often vary wildly regarding what it may cost. In the case of a full-system repipe, starting to reserve 10 to 20 years ahead should not be out of the question.

But even with an assessment and careful planning, knowing when to pull the trigger on a repipe can be difficult. Answering key questions about the timing of other maintenance projects and community investments, the impact of increased annual dues or a special assessment on unit owners, your ability to take out a loan to fund the project, and your willingness to put up with continued leaks, repair costs, and plumbing downtime all

weigh into the decision of when you need to replace your pipes.

Unfortunately, it's not a one-size-fits-all solution, and every community is different. The most important thing is to talk about it. Have your maintenance manager come discuss the state of your plumbing at your next board meeting, have your current plumber provide their perspective based on work they have done at your community, or get a repipe company to come take a look and provide some free advice. Simply getting it out in the open, and starting to talk about it, is an important first step.

It's also important to educate yourself on the planning process and your community bylaws. Do you have a community manager who can oversee a project of this magnitude, or do you



need to hire an owners' representative or third-party construction manager to help you? Do you have floor plans, or will you need to commission a new set that contractors can use to bid for the work? Are you required by your bylaws to get three bids? What is resident-owned versus community-owned? Do you have a line of credit, or a relationship with a bank, that you can talk to about funding the project? Answering all these questions takes time, and while there may not be a perfect time to decide to repipe, waiting too long and then finding you have to go through all these steps while water is pouring into your building is most certainly not the right time!

While there is no magic crystal ball that can tell you exactly when to repipe your community, for those that have gone through it, no one ever complained about repiping too early. But those that waited too long can tell many stories about catastrophic floods, losing insurance coverage, not being financially prepared, and extensive community backlash over plumbing "emergencies" that could have been avoided with a more thoughtful and proactive approach.

The best advice, by far, is to plan early and use qualified experienced resources throughout the process. It's better to start communicating, and to start saving, as soon as you start to have problems. That way, you can re-assess your situation each year. Have the plumbing problems gotten worse? Have we saved enough money? Do people know this is eventually coming?

At a minimum, after several years of planning ahead and communicating regularly, no one will be surprised when the time finally comes to make the decision. Ultimately, ensuring community-wide understanding and agreement is often the best indicator for completing a successful pipe replacement project: helping to ensure your top plumbing dilemma becomes your biggest plumbing success!

*Eric Lecky is the chief marketing officer at SageWater, Hawaii's leading pipe replacement contractor. SageWater has replaced more than 32 million feet of pipe in over 85,000 occupied residential units. Reach him at [elecky@sagewater.com](mailto:elecky@sagewater.com).*



One of the biggest dilemmas for AOAOs is when to repair and when to repipe.

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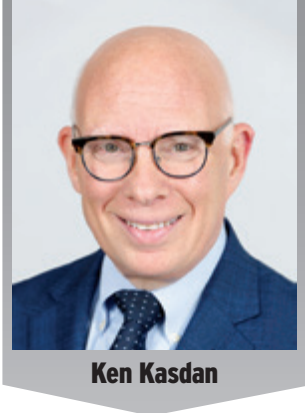
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# The Scourge of Yellow Brass in Plumbing Fittings

Is zinc in the brass fittings too much of a good thing?



Ken Kasdan

**M**odern plumbing systems for potable water are generally comprised of either copper or Pex tubing, with copper pipes still being the top-of-the-line accepted standard and Pex now promoted as more durable and easier to install. Pex is now a building code-approved plumbing line, with each brand having their own International Code Council-approved report. Properly installed, the lines and fittings of different manufacturing systems are not interchangeable. Pex has been promoted by its various manufacturers as being so robust they can't even test it to failure, as one manufacturer claims. It is easy to install as it's both somewhat flexible and does not require a skilled plumber to solder the joints with a torch.

But Pex is also notorious for failures of the system, and it's not the plastic pipe, but rather the multiple fittings holding the system together. The culprit is the use of yellow brass as the alloy from which the fittings are made. The problem with yellow brass is it tends to corrode when exposed to water. Not a good thing for plumbing! Some water more than others. No yellow brass fittings are acceptable, yet some are still on the market.

The key problem is dezincification of the metal alloy. These Pex systems can be found in multiple locations in plumbing systems in single-family homes, detached, multi-family apartments or condominiums, as well as high-rise structures. Yellow brass is also likely a major component of valves and other plumbing assemblies in high-rise buildings.

In addition to Pex, the fittings on the plastic water supply lines connecting to washers, sinks, tubs and toilets have historically been made of yellow brass.



A PEX, yellow brass fitting, attaching the PEX tubing to a copper water line. The fitting is badly dezincified, with a substantial meringue deposit inside the fitting, as well as on the barbs which lie between the fitting and PEX tub.

Even if you see a plastic coupling or nut, under it generally is a yellow brass assembly. Likely it is corroding.

What is dezincification of yellow brass? It's simply the process of dealloying, with the basic metals separating themselves from the designed alloy. The zinc gets dissolved and depleted, leaving behind a weak, copper-rich porous fitting.

Generally, yellow brass is any alloy of copper and zinc where the zinc content is higher than 15 percent. Typically in Pex plumbing fittings, it has been as high as 35 percent zinc and 65 percent copper. With the implementation of federal standards to require no lead in plumbing lines, fittings have been modified. Most manufacturers have reduced the zinc to 18 percent, some much higher. One water line connector manufacturer took out the lead, resulting in an even higher percentage of zinc.

Dezincification occurs when excessive proportions of zinc are used—anything greater than 15 percent is unacceptable. The higher the zinc content, the greater the susceptibility to dezincification. Rather than this article delving into the atomic structure of the metal, and an analysis of alpha and beta brass particles in the duplex brass, what happens is the zinc dissolves out of the metal alloy, leaving behind a porous network of a weak, copper-rich alloy. As it corrodes it often generates a meringue, which is white, often with a greenish tint. The remaining brass then takes on a reddish tint.

The meringue forms outside the fitting as leaks start. It's a sure sign of dezincification. The meringue is not only an indication of a weakening fitting, but also in many circumstances the meringue forms inside the fitting itself, obstructing the waterway and

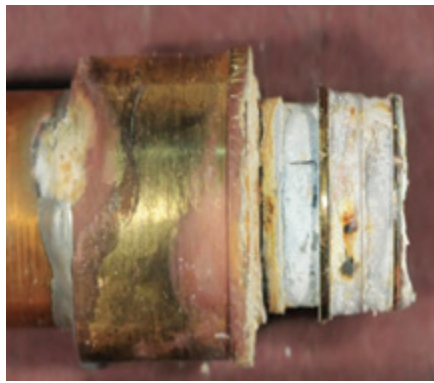


compromising the internal moving parts. Meringue is not always formed but is common.

So, why use more zinc? Because it's cheaper than copper. The spot price for copper on the London Metal Exchange as of December 2018 was \$2.78 per pound, while zinc was at \$1.21. The more copper the plumbing fitting manufacturers replace with zinc, the more money they save. A United States penny is in fact 98 percent zinc with a copper coating.

Dezincification of yellow brass is not new and has been known to be an inappropriate plumbing alloy for more than 75 years. Rarely was it used since the 1960s, but for reasons not fully understood, the awareness of the failures of yellow brass seem to have been lost to the industry. Many imported products integrating yellow brass and U.S. manufacturers have specified it. Pex manufacturers often considered themselves plastic pipe suppliers and not metallurgists, and used yellow brass.

Either the entire fitting may be yellow



A PEX fitting with the copper water line removed showing corrosion on the barbs and significant deterioration of the fitting itself.

low brass and dezincification causing leaks or water flow restrictions, or the internal components can and will dezincify, restricting proper operation of the valves.

The only way to remedy the dezincification problem is to remove and replace the yellow brass components, either the fitting or valve itself, or internal yellow brass components if they can be accessed for service.

The takeaway: Owners should consider having an experienced plumber or mechanical engineer inspect the system and look for telltale signs of yellow brass corrosion. Experienced experts generally know where yellow brass is likely to have been used. Builders, contractors and manufacturers can often be held liable for manufacturing and installing defective products, and an experienced attorney can often assist in obtaining a recovery. Here on the island, tens of millions of dollars have been recovered for owners to replace defective yellow brass.

*Ken Kasdan is considered one of the nation's leading construction defect authorities. He regularly speaks at national conventions of attorneys, insurers and claims professionals. He has practiced law for over 40 years. He is the senior partner with Kasdan LippSmith LLC, a fully staffed firm with its primary office in Oahu. He is director of client relations. Reach him at 369-8393 or at [kllaw@haaii.com](mailto:kllaw@haaii.com).*

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## BOMA Holiday Party

PHOTOS BY LEAH FRIEL

Spirits were high and smiles aplenty (and buffet plates stacked high) as members of the commercial real estate field gathered for BOMA-Hawaii's annual holiday party. Festivities at Oahu Country Club included installation of new officers and a heartfelt aloha from outgoing president Carlie Woodward-Dela Cruz.



Nelson Koki, Marlene Daley, Kevin Cruce



Anthony Debold, Mark Harris, Blair Cole, Brenda Dunham



Anela Carlos, Dave Heard, Brenda Flores, Rachel Lii, Lynette Yi



Jared Okamura, Bobbie Lau, Nicole Nakano, Ahmad Tadjvar





Holly Morikami, Erin Dayanan, Chris Babb, Carlie Woodward-Dela Cruz, David Porteus



Paige Onishi, Janet Kwong, Caroline Campos-Maika



Kalani Maika, David Leandro, Robert Sugiyama



Katrina Akau, Les Tanaka, Chelsi Molina, Summer Kapana



Nicole Alameda, Landon Wong, Lilly Ho



Jodi Okada, Dawn Eyman, Jim Walters, Kyle Ushijima, Jarrett Walters





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Chinen



Marcel  
Chan



June  
Freundsuh



Laurie  
Oh



Jane  
Lee



Tim  
Lee

## Avalon Group Names New Sales Team for Hale Ka Lae and Sky Ala Moana Condo Projects

Avalon Group LLC has created a new project sales team that is in charge of sales at its two upcoming Honolulu condominium projects—Hale Ka Lae at 7000 Hawaii Kai Drive in East Oahu and Sky Ala Moana along Kapiolani Blvd. across from Ala Moana Center. The pre-registration process has begun for Hale Ka Lae, while the sales process for Sky Ala Moana is expected to start soon.

**Mark Berkowitz** has been named project sales manager, leading a newly-formed team of highly-experienced real estate professionals, including **Rosalei Chinen, Marcel Chan, June Freundsuh, Laurie Oh** and **Jane Lee**. **Tim Lee**, managing director of the retail and international investor group at Avalon Commercial, will lead the hotel and commercial sales. Lee has more than

a decade of experience in real estate, having helped many foreign investors successfully navigate the state's real estate environment. Berkowitz comes with decades of real estate sales experience, including heading the sales team at a few successfully sold-out high-rise projects such as The Collection Honolulu, and as part of the sales team at the Waihonua at Kewalo condominium project.



The Building Owners and Managers Association Hawaii held their holiday luncheon and 2019 board installation at Oahu Country Club on Friday December 14th. Pictured is Premier's Hawaii team with outgoing BOMA president Carlie Woodward-Dela Cruz (in lei). A BOMA Hawaii 2018 gold sponsor and 2019 platinum sponsor. For more information about BOMA Hawaii's membership and/or sponsorship opportunities please contact [bae@bomahawaii.com](mailto:bae@bomahawaii.com) or visit [www.bomahawaii.com](http://www.bomahawaii.com).



# A Look at Leaks and Legalities

## Building managers, boards hear from a variety of experts

MD Restoration hosted a luncheon for building managers and boards at The Willows last month. The subject: Water damage and how to handle it. Panelists were **Mano Nguyen**, CEO, NK Management; **Sue Savio**, president, Insurance Associates; **Wally laea**, plumbing service manager, Alaka'i Mechanical; **Ron Komine**, general manager, 1350 Ala Moana; and **Troy Chikazawa**, COO, MD Restoration.

A few highlights from their comments:



Sue Savio

**Savio:** At some older buildings, it can be “a leak a week.” Or more.

In the event of a leak, panelists agreed, the first thing to do is stop the leak by cutting the water

flow. Then call insurance and remediation companies.

In answer to a question about whether a resident manager should get involved with filing claims after water damage, **Komine** said: “Who else would do it? Someone has to take the lead, it should be you. You’re on site and know the people. I don’t know how many times I’ve called Sue after a leak.”



Troy Chikazawa

**Nguyen:**

“Some pipes leak more than once.” Each is a separate claim.

**laea:** “Don’t assume that a



Mano Nguyen

‘common pipe’ serves more than one unit.” The definition of owner pipe versus common pipe “is in the by-laws,” and varies building to building.

**Nguyen:** “You need to have an SOP for leaks. Many buildings don’t have one.”

In answer to a question from a building manager who experienced a multi-floor leak from a wax seal, **laea** said: “Wax seals have no place in a high-rise building. These things can go 20 floors or more down.”

Not all leaks are preventable, but the best defense is an annual check of every unit. Said **Komine:** “Know your building.

That’s why an annual unit inspection is crucial, and not just for leaks. Residents don’t always like it, but we think it’s really important. You will also be educated on what hoarding looks like.”

For condo owners, HO6 insurance (HO4 for renters), is the only way to guarantee coverage for what Savio calls “loss of use,” including paying for another place to stay in the event of catastrophic damage to the unit. “Grow up, buddy,” she said. “You have insurance for your car, get insurance for your home. Stop assuming you’re one of the lucky one that nothing bad ever happens to.”

Two myths got busted: After water damage is suffered, “it doesn’t matter who calls the insurance agency, the caller won’t get the bill.”

And it is absolutely not true, as many people believe, said **Chikazawa**, that “a building will dry out after three days Not true, I’ve seen some buildings not yet dry after three weeks.”



Ron Komine



## Council Fails to Override Veto of Fire Safety Bill

The Honolulu City Council disappointed many owners of older condos across Oahu on Dec. 5 when it voted not to override Mayor Kirk Caldwell’s veto of a Council bill that would have delayed implementation of new fire safety rules.

The legislation Caldwell vetoed, Bill 72, had earlier passed the Council in an 8-0 vote. The vote to overturn the veto was 5-3, one short of an override. The three members voting to overturn were Brandon Elefante, Joey Manahan and Ron Menor.

Condominiums built without a sprinkler system—numbering more than 300—now have three years to become compliant with Menor’s Bill 69, which sets out a series of qualifying steps AOAOs can undertake in place of installing sprinklers.

Also opposing the delay allowed by Bill 72, which had been intro-



Manuel Neves

duced by Carol Fukunaga, was the Honolulu Fire Department. Chief Manuel Neves old reporters: “Sprinklers buy time, and what time buys is life,”

for both residents and firefighters

Neves added that HFD is ready to help associations meet the deadline, that there are enough companies qualified to do all the evaluations and that the cost will run \$30 to \$50 per unit.

## STEP 3

After completing the FSA and receiving the results, your building will need to chart a course that makes the most sense for your particular situation. Your process will likely look something like this:

- If your building obtained a passing score on the FSA, move onto Step 4.
- If your building failed to obtain a passing score on the FSA, you will have to take corrective action. Corrective action may include making fire safety improvements such as modernization of the fire alarm system, installation of fire-rated doors, or other fire safety improvements needed to achieve a passing score.
- After corrective action is taken, your building will need to be re-tested. If your building passes the re-test, you move onto Step 4. If upon re-test a passing score is not achieved, additional corrective action will be required.
- If your building is unable to achieve a passing score, installation of fire sprinklers will likely be mandatory.

## STEP 4

Passing the FSA opens the door to the possibility of not installing fire sprinklers, but it is not a guarantee. Once a passing score is achieved on the FSA, your board of directors will need to have the ownership vote on the topic of installing fire sprinklers. Only upon both a passing score on the FSA and an affirmative vote of a majority of the building owners opting out of installing fire sprinklers, can sprinklers be avoided.

Adding further confusion is language included in the ordinance regarding fire sprinklers in common areas. Some have interpreted that language as meaning sprinklers are only required in common areas of a building, but this is errant. The fire department confirms sprinklers are required throughout a building, unless a building votes to opt out or qualifies for one of the exclusions mentioned above.

The language pertaining to common areas is intended to provide buildings with an extended timeline for com-

pliance. By allowing a building to start with sprinklers in the common areas and add sprinklers in the dwelling units at a later date, buildings will have more time to save money, obtain a loan or otherwise obtain compliance.

The new fire safety rules in Honolulu are complex. There are no easy decisions and considerable uncertainty exists with respect to what corrective action may—or may not—be needed. There is also great variability with respect to what it may cost to achieve a passing score on the FSA, even without adding sprinklers. There is still no guarantee that sprinklers won't still be required by the building owners once put to a vote, even if a passing score is achieved on the FSA. This is due to how sensitive this issue has become as a result of several recent high-rise fires in Honolulu, including one that claimed four lives.

Some boards of directors members may want to just install sprinklers from the outset. Such a course of action virtually assures a building will easily achieve a passing score on the FSA, avoids the uncertain cost of chasing other possible corrective actions, and eliminates uncertainty with respect to how the owners might vote. Other board members may take a totally different route, and that is perfectly acceptable too. The options built into the new ordinance are intended to give each building's governance a choice and provide an expansive timeframe for compliance so as to be sensitive to the potential cost of fire safety improvements.

At the end of the day, these new rules are intended to save lives, protect your property and avoid another fire-related tragedy in the hundreds of aging high-rise residential buildings in Honolulu that do not have fire sprinklers.

*President and CEO of Bergeman Group, Dana Bergeman brings over 25 years of experience in the architecture, engineering, and construction industry (AEC). His vision for the company is reflected in its core values: advocate on your behalf, help protect your investment, defend your interests by helping mitigate risk and educate clients, enabling you to make informed decisions. Reach him at [info@bergemangroup.com](mailto:info@bergemangroup.com) or 844-492-BERG*

what the deductible is key in determining whether or not you should make a claim.

**4 Consider developing an in-house response team.** More frequently were seeing associations and resorts start to handle their own small projects. This is so common, in fact, that many mitigation companies are offering free training for in-house engineering staff. This is a great way to become much smarter about how to service your property. The mitigation companies also appreciate this because they're now only responding to the infrequent big project. The smaller, lower-margin work is being self-performed by the AOA.

**5 Consider alternatives to costly infrastructure projects.** Advancements in pipe lining technologies have made this more reliable and less costly as an alternative to a full re-pipe project.

**6 Install early warning water alarms.** These are little sensors that sit under or adjacent to a potential source. They can either be connected to a central monitoring system or be as simple as a sensor that alarms audibly when water is detected. A more complex version will actually shut off the water main to a unit if its alarmed.

**7 Partner with a mitigation company that offers free inspections.** This way you can contact them for advice on everything, without the risk of having an invoice delivered.

The bottom line is having a solid plan for when the issues occur is the best way to keep claim costs low when your next water event occurs.

*Marlone Madamba is the head of Premier Restoration Hawaii's Mitigation Department on Oahu. With over eight years of direct industry experience, he holds a number of IICRC certifications: WRT (Water Damage Restoration Technician), AMRT (Applied Microbial Remediation Technician), and Fire and Smoke Restoration Technician. He brings years of knowledge and leadership to the Premier Restoration team. Reach him at 219-8858 or [marlonem@premhi.com](mailto:marlonem@premhi.com). Reach him at [info@bergemangroup.com](mailto:info@bergemangroup.com) or 844-492-BERG*



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