



## TOWER TALK @ PARK TOWER CONDOMINIUM

November 2011 -  
January 2012



### NEW PARK TOWER SIGNAGE

The new sign for Park Tower, announcing the name and address of our building, was installed on October 7<sup>th</sup>. Also installed were matching entry and exit signs. They are a great improvement over the duct-taped signage that had been barely hanging on over the past year.

By, Vince DiFruscio



### THE RISER REPLACEMENT PROJECT: 1ST PERSON PERSPECTIVE

Living in unit 4015, I was lucky enough to be on the very first tier of units for the riser replacement project. For those of you who aren't aware of this, all the riser pipes carrying water to the kitchens and baths of our units are being replaced. The 40-year old galvanized iron pipes are corroded and will be replaced with insulated copper pipes. Copper is less prone to corrosion and the insulation will prevent condensation and sweating. Here's what to expect:

Prior to the beginning of each riser's replacement, an inspection of all affected baths and/or kitchens will be conducted. This inspection is merely to look for any special issues that might be affected by the replacement. For instance, you may have tiles, paneling, or wallpaper on the affected wall. Park Tower will not be able to replace such materials.

Once a particular riser replacement begins, expect the replacement process to take 4 to 8 weeks for that riser. During this time, water will be shut off to those affected kitchens/baths during the workday. Our replacement was for the bathroom; we had no water to the shower, toilet, or vanity

from 9am until approximately 4pm Monday - Friday for about 5 weeks. Often, the work would finish early, and we did have water as early as 2pm. But, just in case some issue arises, expect to be without water until around 4pm.

The crews started at the top of the riser (floor 55) and worked to the bottom (floor 30). There are several crews, each performing a different function, so work is going on several floors at a time. During these days, the workday will begin with one of the crew unlocking the front door to your unit and leaving it unlocked during the day. This sounds worse than it is. There are workers coming in and out of your unit each day, so there is a constant flow of traffic throughout the project. There are also tarps shielding the rest of your unit from easy access. At the end of each workday, each unit is double-checked to be locked. We found that our 2<sup>nd</sup> lock wasn't always set each night; if you are away and have asked friends to look after your unit, you might ask that they check this each night as well.



(Continued on page 2)

#### CONTACTS:

##### Office

773-769-3250

##### Fax

773-769-0047

##### Doorman

773-769-3083

##### Garage

773-271-8859

##### Market

773-275-9130

##### Cleaners

##### Recv. Room

773-784-3353

##### Health Club

773-769-1513

##### RCN

##### Service/Billing

312-955-2500

##### New Services

866-308-5556

## THE RISER REPLACEMENT PROJECT: 1ST PERSON PERSPECTIVE (continued)

Work began on our floor about 10 workdays into the project. Prior to this date, we needed to empty out our vanity and medicine cabinet; if you do not do so, Park Tower staff will do it but you will be charged for their labor and an additional penalty for slowing the process and thereby inconveniencing your fellow residents.

The first step is installation of tarps throughout the unit. These tarps are to minimize dust and damage to the rest of your home. In our unit, tarps were set up from the entry hallway into the kitchen, hall closets, and living/dining room, and from the short hallway in front of the bath into the walk-in closet (we removed the door and turned it into a small office, so there was no door to close). The door into the bedroom was simply closed.

These tarps have zippered entry/exit areas. To move from room to room, you must reach the top of the zipper (near the ceiling) and unzip the tarp to the floor. At the floor, the two sections are still seamed together, so you must step carefully through the tarp one foot at a time. If you are mobility-challenged, you will want to look for alternative housing arrangements during this time. We did, cashing in a bunch of hotel points to stay at a hotel.

Once the tarps were up, the next day was spent removing the fixtures against the affected wall. In our case, that was the vanity and toilet; for a kitchen riser replacement, that will mean your cabinets in the affected area. Then the drywall was removed. You will want to ask just how much drywall will be taken away. In our case, the 15 units only had the bottom 42" of drywall removed, from the edge of the bath/shower to the opposite (Continued on page 5)



## FROM THE DESK OF THE PROPERTY MANAGER:

### BED BUG NEWS

As the battle against bed bugs here and across the region continues, we remain vigilant and prepared. Awareness is a key part of both prevention and extermination. We are planning our next Town Hall Meeting in conjunction with the November 21st Board Meeting. Everyone is welcome to join us that evening at 7:30 PM in the Party Room.

Traveling is the number one risk we have observed with families that have come into contact with bed bugs. With the holidays right around the corner, we have some travel tips to help protect you.

#### Prior to your trip:

1. Encase your mattress and box springs. Do some research ahead of time and make sure the encasements you buy work on bed bugs, such as the Protect-A-Bed and Safe Rest brands. You can join our next bulk order by contacting the office.
2. Schedule a K9 inspection for your return. The dog can visit, inspect your luggage and alert to whether there is a possible presence of bed bugs. We already have multiple residents who call and schedule 'Scout' for this purpose, and on at least two occasions we have identified the possible presence of bugs.
3. Pack heavy duty plastic bags in your car or luggage, large enough to place your luggage in. When you return, seal your luggage in the bags to isolate any bugs you may have picked up.
4. Hard shelled luggage is less bug friendly than fabric. But duffle bags

can go right from the plastic bag and into a dryer upon your return to kill any bed bugs.

5. Pack items that can not be laundered, such as electronics and toiletries, in sealed Ziploc bags or other similar products

#### During your stay:

1. Keep luggage closed and away from bed bug prone areas such as beds, upholstered furniture or in a closet. Atop of any stools or chairs with metal legs or tiled bathroom counters are helpful.
2. Keep items that cannot be laundered in Ziploc bags when not in use.
3. Inspect any beds before you sleep in them. Pull back the linens and check the visible edges of the mattress and box springs. Look for live bugs, dark brown or black spots, blood stains, or molted bug shells.
4. If you are at a resort or hotel, notify Management immediately if you have any suspicions. If you see evidence or begin to develop itchy welts, you should be relocated.

#### When you return:

1. Bag and seal luggage before placing it in your vehicle.
2. The fastest and most efficient way, *at Park Tower*, to be certain you do not have bed bugs is to arrange for the K9 inspection team to visit. Upon return to your unit, place the bag in your bath tub and await your visit and inspection results. At present, this visit costs just \$10.
3. Otherwise, or if you get a K9 alert, unpack luggage carefully and methodically, leaving items that can be laundered in the plastic bag, until they are hot laundered or dry cleaned.

(Continued on page 6)

## WELCOME OUR NEIGHBOR, CARE FOR REAL

Among the businesses clustered around The Breakers is a new non-profit, Care for Real (CFR). It replaces Curves and The Bridge Club, spaces that have now been combined to provide food, clothing, and counseling services to clients in the Edgewater neighborhood.

CFR moved here in July from its original location on North Broadway. In these larger facilities, and with a worsening economy, the organization has expanded households served by 25%. Among the items distributed are 200 bags of clothing and 60,000 lbs of food each month, pet food, food baskets on holidays, backpacks and school supplies to students.

Distribution occurs four mornings a week. There is a comfortable waiting room for new arrivals and an inside play area for children. Food and clothing are handled in different parts of the facility, and volunteers assist.

Food is an urgent need for most CFR clients. To maintain a balanced mix of food stuffs, CFR must sometimes purchase (at a discount) from Greater Chicago Food Depository, but that expense can be minimized with generous donations. Local supermarkets and restaurants – among them Dominick’s, Whole Foods, and Trader Joe’s – donate food regularly to Care for Real, and its truck is always available to pick up those hard-to-come-by perishables like dairy products, fruit and vegetables.

Individuals can and do donate. Food staples, pet food, and pieces of warm clothing are always welcome, as well as items one might not at first think about, like a frozen turkey from the office and extra personal care things like shampoo and toothbrushes. PTC residents will probably find it convenient just to walk such items over. Using the south exit of our mall (by the management office), head directly

over to the loading area marked Care for Real. Probably a good idea to call first: 773.769.6182.

Like non-profits everywhere, CFR appreciates cash donations. 900+ Chicagoans made such donations last year, typically around the holiday season. The website, [www.careforreal.org](http://www.careforreal.org), is quite informative and includes an online donation tab.

And you may want to consider volunteering. Half-day slots are available, some in distribution, others to sign in, unload, delivery, and other such tasks depending on interests and experience. Stop by any day but Sunday. Doug Fraser is executive director (formerly chief-of-staff for Alderman Mary Ann Smith). Tom Robb, former executive director, is now working on special projects (one of which is a jobs program). Dzana Huseni is case manager.

By, Bob Shamo

## BOARD MEETINGS TO BE TELEvised

Be sure to watch channel 195 for future postings regarding dates and times that Park Tower Board meetings will be aired on that channel. We now have the hardware and the cable setup to allow Board meetings to be viewed by residents unable to attend the meetings in person.

By, Vince DiFruscio

**TOWER TALK ADS PRICES**

2 X 2 inch = 25.00  
Business Card 3 1/2 X 2 = 40.00  
Quarter page = \$75.00  
Full page = \$300.00

**Contact the Management Office**  
**1-773-769-3250**

## HOLIDAY FUNDS

The annual holiday giving season is approaching. Park Tower contributes to food pantry programs for the needy during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday periods. A large container will be placed in the lobby in November and December. We ask for non-perishable donations.

The Park Tower Employee Holiday Fund is a great way to show your appreciation for the work staff perform year long. They have gone above and beyond the call of duty this year with all of our on-going projects. You will receive holiday fund envelopes in December. You may submit your gift envelop to the Management Office. Collected funds will be distributed to the door staff, maintenance, garage, and office personnel. Your contribution to the holiday funds is appreciated.

By, Betty Terry-Lundy

## BROADWAY AND BALMORAL



Visiting Andersonville will become a little easier soon, with new signs and signals helping traffic cross the busy intersection of Broadway and Balmoral. The Chicago Department of Transportation conducted a traffic study which acknowledged the need for improvements. While design work continues, temporary signage will first be installed. This will consist of wide black and white striped cross walks, and yellow warning signs for traffic on Broadway of a crosswalk ahead. In the Spring, the light will go up; slowing the traffic on Broadway and giving safe passage for pedestrians and autos crossing on Balmoral.

By, Robert Pierce





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## THE RISER REPLACEMENT PROJECT: 1ST PERSON PERSPECTIVE (continued)

wall at the far end of the vanity; in the 03 tier, however, the same width of wall was removed, but all the way to the ceiling. For the next few days, there was NO water access to our bathroom: no sink, no toilet, no bath/shower. For those residents remaining in their unit, you will need to use the Health Club facilities during this time. You will be given access to the Health Club at no charge for this purpose.

The next days were spent replacing the riser on our floor. Once that was completed, the steps to put everything back together were begun. This is likely to be the most frustrating part of the project because time will be needed for drying and settling of materials. Until the drywall can be replaced, lightweight "privacy walls" will be installed to allow some privacy while using your bathroom. You will have about the same amount of privacy you do in a public restroom; sound will carry, but you cannot walk back and forth between units. This will last several days until the drywall can be re-installed. Once re-installed, the drywall is painted and once the paint is dry, the fixtures (in our case, vanity and toilet) will be hooked back up.

Be aware that there will be a LOT of noise during this process. We expected a lot of noise during the workdays. What was surprising, though, was the loud sound of water going through the pipes during nights & weekends. Remember that walls are down, not only in your unit but in surrounding ones as well. These walls act as noise insulation. So for several weeks, we could hear the sound of anyone flushing a toilet or taking a shower as far away as our living room. Once the project was complete however, things were quiet once again.

Management was very helpful during the process. I spoke with our Management team about my special needs and they worked with the crews (both hired and in-house) to minimize my inconvenience. We spent 10 nights away from home, but had frequent reports keeping us involved with the process. (We also gave keys to a friend in the building and asked them to take a peek in the evenings to let us know what was going on.) Management will work with you as much as possible in addressing any concerns or issues you might have.

If you have been considering updating your kitchen or bath, turn lemons into lemonade and take advantage of this opportunity to do so. Have you been thinking about repainting the room? It will be painted anyway (with a white primer unless you supply the paint). Buy enough paint to cover what you want painted in the room and it will be done at no charge to you. If you want the interior of your linen closet painted, you will need to empty that out as well. We wanted to update our vanity since the old one was showing signs of wear. We bought a new sink and cabinet and left instructions for the crew and with management to discard



the old sink and vanity and to install the new ones (which we had waiting for them in the living room). We even noted that we wanted to keep the original faucets. When we returned, all the new materials were installed. There might be some minimal labor charge, depending upon what is involved, but this will be a mere fraction of the cost traditionally charged by contractors for this work.

Below is a chart displaying the current schedule for each riser replacement.

Riser Floors Dates:

03, 15 Baths 30-55 September-October 2011 (completed)

01 Kitchens 3-29 October - November 2011 (in progress)

04, 05 Kitchens 30-55 February-April 2012

11 Baths (Master) & 12 Kitchen 3-29 April-June 2012

11 Kitchens 30-55 June-July 2012

08, 09 Kitchens 30-55 August-September 2012

06 Baths (Guest) & 07 Kitchens 30-55 October-November 2012

14, 15 Kitchens 30-55 February-March 2013

02 Kitchens & 04 Baths 3-29 April-May 2013

12, 14 Baths 30-55 June-July 2013

06 Baths (Guest) & 07 Kitchens 3-29 August-September 2013

01 Baths (Guest) & 03 Kitchens 3-29 October-November 2013

01 Baths (Master) & 02 Baths 3-29 February-March 2014

14, 15 Kitchens 3-29 April-May 2015

06 Baths (Master) & 05 Baths 3-29 June-July 2015

03, 15 Baths 3-29 August-September 2015

01 Baths (Guest) & 03 Kitchens 30-55 October-November 2015

11 Baths (Guest) & 10 Kitchens 30-55 February-March 2016

07, 08 Baths 30-55 April-May 2016

(Continued on page 10)



## COMMON VIOLATIONS: MOVING

It has been suggested that Tower Talk be used to explain to residents what some of the most common violations are that come before the Rules and Regulations Committee. This way, by making residents more aware of what rules are commonly broken, we can reduce the frequency of these occurrences.

To minimize the impact on fellow Park Tower residents, move ins and move outs (including transfers from one unit to another within the building) must be scheduled with the Management Office. Moves are only permitted on non-holiday weekdays (Monday through Friday), between 9am and 5pm. There can only be two moves per day, so schedule your move to be either between 9am and 1pm or 1pm and 5pm. This will hold a freight elevator to be used exclusively for your move.

Moves require a security deposit of \$100 to cover the possibility of damages to the elevators and hallways as well as a \$120 security guard fee to cover access to the building while the doors to the freight elevator area on the first floor are open. Once Management has determined there was no damage caused by the move, the \$100 security deposit will be returned; leave the "Pay to" area blank on this payment so that, once returned to you, you may deposit it back into your own account.

Also required is a sales/lease package further specifying what fees are applicable for a new owner or lessee. A lease must be for a minimum of 1 year and cannot be sub-let. There is a \$220 registration fee for new residents and a \$95 fee for transfers within Park Tower. If a credit report is required and that is run by the Management Office, a \$30 charge will be passed on to the owner. All fees are accepted only via cashier's check or money order.

You may not use any luggage carts during a move. There are, however,

vehicles available to assist. For \$30, you may use a flat-bed truck; for \$40, a dolly; and for \$60, you may rent both. These arrangements may be made with the Management Office when you schedule your move.

When an illegal move is discovered, any unpaid fees plus penalties will be charged against the unit owner. It is strongly suggested that owners leasing their unit hold their security deposit until confirming with the Management Office that the move-out occurred without any penalty.

By, Vince DiFrusco

## FROM THE DESK OF PROPERTY MANAGER: BED BUG NEWS (continued)



4. Items in Ziploc bags can be taken out, and the Ziploc bags discarded in a plastic bag. If there was a chance any of these items became exposed, they can be put in a bag with a Vapona No-Pest Strip, or cleaned with an alcohol spray. When using no-pest strips, you must follow the manufacturers instructions.

5. If your luggage can not be laundered, you need to be vigilant! You can put it in a bag with the No-Pest strip or clean thoroughly with an alcohol spray.

6. All clothing must be hot washed or dry cleaned. The dry cleaner should be told the items may have been exposed to bed bugs, so they can be properly handled.

7. Stay vigilant! Inspect your bed and linens - assuming you installed the encasements, those should be inspected from time to time. If you suspect any bites, or find any possible evidence of bed bugs, contact Management so pest control procedures can be implemented.

## When you have visitors:

Your guests travel with the same risk of exposure as you do and should follow these instructions for their protection and yours. Regardless, we recommend that you consider scheduling the K9 team when you have visitors. At Park Tower, this is the most efficient way to have some measure of certainty.

Finally, although we presently schedule each unit for 2 visits by the K9 team each year, it does not mean the job is done. You can come into contact with bed bugs from a surprising variety of sources, and these days it is just about as common as coming into contact with a mosquito in the park. One healthy female bed bug can lay 5 to 7 eggs per day. So if you pick one up, it is possible it can multiply very quickly. Continue checking your bedding and linens regularly, and report any suspicions to Management. Studies show 70% of any infestation will be around that bed - the mattress, box springs or head boards. You can request a K9 visit anytime (for \$10), whether you suspect something or for your own peace of mind. ALSO, talk to your friends and loved ones. Recent studies show 85% of seniors and elderly folks either do not react or do not notice they are being bitten - so we definitely need to be aware of the more vulnerable among us. And never hesitate to contact us if you have questions or concerns. We are in this fight for the long haul and poised to provide any assistance you need.

By, Timothy Patricio  
Property  
Manager



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## STAY ACTIVE AND HEALTHY THIS WINTER

With a wary eye towards Chicago's frigid winter, perhaps you should consider membership in the Health Club. Here in our lovely building is a fully functional facility for staying fit .. or, if you are so inclined, for actually improving your physical conditioning during the months ahead.

New residents, you'll find those facilities on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. From the entrance adjacent to the Party Room, walk down a short hallway to the indoor pool and aerobic facilities. The newly-installed flooring looks like cork but is actually rubberized for a cushioned, comfortable walk with bare feet or flip-flops. The pool itself is in excellent shape. having recently undergone extensive repairs and rehab. It is heated, of course, and the water is crystal clear. Lap swimmers, note that the pool is 20 yards long, 7 lanes wide, its floor 4' at the shallow end gradually deepening to 9' at the other. Sorry, no diving.

At one corner of the pool area is a whirlpool, also heated and particularly inviting for families. Just outside is a sunbathing area which during warm months provides a wading pool for children. Adjacent to the pool is a "cardio" room - now with 4 treadmills, a variety of other aerobics equipment, and a television - plus a racquetball court and a ping-pong room.

Changing rooms are at the entrance to the Health Club. Men's and Women's are similarly equipped with lockers, a shower and sauna. The conditioning room is nearby, with full sets of free weights and resistance training equipment. The more complex machines are outfitted with instructions on how to use them. (Personal trainers and swim instructors, while not endorsed by the Health Club, are welcome when they accompany the member.)



Membership in the Health Club includes use of all the facilities mentioned above. Rates are for 6 months or for a year, the best bargains being the double (same unit) membership and family membership. Non-residents pay a bit more, and guest coupons are available for the occasional visitor.

The pool attendant will be glad to show you around. Hours vary by day but generally speaking are from early morning through the evening. Details are posted at the Health Club and available at the Management Office. Make the decision now to be active and healthy all winter long. Consider becoming a member of the Health Club!

By, Bob Shamo





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## REDUCTION OF DOOR-TO-DOOR NOTICES

In an effort to reduce costs and to continue "green-ing" Park Tower, fewer notices will be distributed door-to-door.

Any emergency, including water shut-downs, and anything involving a Park Tower employee entering your unit (extermination, filter replacements) will still be cause for a notice to be left at your door, but all other notices will now only be sent via e-mail and posted on the bulletin boards located throughout the building (freight elevator lobbies on 1P and 2P, laundry room, across from the dry-cleaners in the mall, and at the entry to the first floor elevator lobby). Please frequently check one of these locations most convenient for you, as well as channel 195, to keep abreast with what is going on at Park Tower.

Tower Talk will continue to be distributed door-to-door. Advertising pays for our newsletter, and advertisers prefer readers have a paper copy to hold in their hands.

By, Vince DiFruscio

## BUS TRACKER

Park Tower benefits from excellent public transportation options, but waiting for the bus can still be a frustrating experience. That will change soon, especially when returning home from a trip to Michigan Avenue. Light Emitting Diode (LED) Bus Tracker displays will soon be installed at select JC Decaux bus shelters throughout the city. The displays will provide four lines of text via CTA Bus Tracker with bus arrival information, and eventually important customer alerts affecting the respective route and surrounding transfer points. The LED signs will be installed on the sides of bus shelters and face outward to serve as many riders as possible – both those at the stop and within the vicinity of the shelter. Installation of the first 150 signs began September 30, and will be completed by March 2012. For Northbound riders from the central business district, every #147 stop from Randolph to Delaware will receive

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a sign. The only southbound stop in our area in the initial roll-out is Sheridan Rd. at Bryn Mawr. After testing, the remaining 250 signs will be installed by September 2012.

By, Robert Pierce



## DATES TO REMEMBER 2011-2012 BOARD MEETINGS

All owners are invited to all Board meetings.

November 14, 2011	March 12, 2012
December 12, 2011	April 9, 2012
January 9, 2012	May 14, 2012
February 13, 2012	June 11, 2012 (annual meeting)

7:30 p.m. in the Party Room

**OFFICE HOURS:** Monday, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays—8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. / Thursdays—8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

## THE RISER REPLACEMENT PROJECT: 1ST PERSON PERSPECTIVE (continued)

06 Kitchens 30-55 June-July 2016

02 Kitchens & 04 Baths 30-55 July-August 2016

06 Baths (Master) & 05 Baths 30-55 September-October 2016

09, 10 Baths 3-29 February-March 2017

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11 Kitchens 3-29 September-October 2018

07, 08 Baths 3-29 February-March 2019

01 Baths (Master) & 02 Baths 30-55 April-May 2019

By, Vince DiFruscio

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