

LakeRidge Falls

4200 LakeRidge Blvd.
Sarasota, FL 34243

05-21-2021

Here are the more important stories we had this past and upcoming weeks:

Pool – Several times in the past, I wrote how the Association's pool/spa is such a desirable amenity that even Murphy, you know, the fellow from Murphy's Law, likes to come and visit it every so often. So, he just came again. A few weeks ago, and while on vacation, I was notified that the spa was not working. Following an inspection of the incident, Smiley Pool Services, the Association's pool/spa maintenance company, determined the issue was a faulty timer, which is used to control the length of time the spa should run. It took Smiley Pool Services a couple of days to replace the faulty component, during which the spa was closed, but at the end of the day, the timer was replaced, and the spa is up and running again.

Then last week we had a visit by the Dept of Health. If you follow the Weekly Reports, and if not, there is a test next week, you surely remember that the Dept of Health performs each year two routine checks of LakeRidge Falls' pool and spa. In 95% of all cases, we pass the inspection in flying colors. This time around and unfortunately, the inspector notified us that the pH level at the spa was a little bit high. One of the main duties of any pool/spa maintenance company is to maintain a proper chemical balance in these bodies of water. This is mainly to ensure the water is clean and to protect the pool/spa equipment and surface. The most important element in chemical balancing the pool/spa is to ensure a proper pH level. Low pH levels mean eye and skin irritation because the water is too acidic. High pH means the water is too cloudy. There is of course more to it than my simple and general explanation, but the general idea is that high pH during a Dept of Health inspection means the spa had to be closed until the proper balance could be reached.

Minutes after closing the spa, i.e. the pool remained opened, the inspector called both Smiley Pool Services and myself informing us of the finding and action. Smiley Pool Services tech came on-site within a couple of hours. Upon inspection, the tech concluded that the issue was the ORP. The ORP, or Oxidation-Reduction Potential in its full and headache-causing name, is a device that electronically monitors the chemical levels of the spa thus ensuring continuous and flawless water chemistry level. The problem with the ORP was that it had to be calibrated because it was feeding chlorine too fast and/or acid too slow and therefore the pH was higher than warranted. Nevertheless, Smiley Pool Services took care of the issue and the spa was reopened within a few hours.

The more important issue that came out of the Dept of Health visit was that the inspector noticed some noise coming from the pool pump. Therefore, it was recommended it be looked at as it was an indication that the 10-year-old pump is reaching its useful life. Smiley Pool Services wasted no time and attempted to locate a replacement. However, they soon discovered that this specially sized pump, i.e. 7.5 HP, is not something many suppliers keep in stock. More alarming was the fact that many industries are battling shortages at the moment which means a new pump can't be manufactured and/or delivered in less than four or so weeks.

Then, the infamous Murphy struck again. A week passed and the noises got louder and louder. With residents' safety in mind and to avoid further damage to the pipes, the Board of Directors directed today to turn the pool pump off. As result, we had to close the pool per the Dept of Health regulations. However, Murphy can't and will never stop us. For the last couple of days, we reached out to several vendors and suppliers in an attempt to locate a replacement pump. Thinking outside the box, we reached out to Water Equipment Technologies (WET), a local pump maintenance company,

which the Association recently hired to replace the waterfall's pump based on the recommendation of the Roads & Grounds Committee. While WET main line of work does not involve pool pumps, we had a bingo.

Unable to locate the entire pump, WET was able to locate a replacement motor in Atlanta. While uncertain if the issue with the pool pump is solely a motor problem, we asked WET to order the part. Following approval, the part was ordered and should arrive at WET'S warehouse by Monday, hopefully. Following placing the order, a couple of WET technicians came on-site, removed the pump motor, and took it to their shop. Once the part arrives, WET will make sure to replace the defective motor and test the motor pump. Once operational, they will come back on-site to install it. We hope to conclude this work by Monday/Tuesday of next week. This means we hope to reopen the pool thereafter, not before, however, Smiley Pool Services ensuring the pool is chemically balanced and safe to use.

While we have no control over this unfortunate chain of events, we appreciate your understanding of this matter.

Yellowing Turf – Walking around the community, as several residents indicated to us, it is really hard to miss the several areas with the noticeable patches of sod that have brownout. Landscape professionals refer to them as “hotspots”. There are several reasons why they are present and can be the result of poor coverage, soil composition, insects, diseases, type of grass, sun exposure, and several other reasons. What is common to all these reasons, however, is that an extended drought acts as a catalyst on all of them. For example, chinch bugs, which is an insect pest, tend to feed on St. Augustine grass during the hot and dry times of the year. The dryness caused by the drought makes the Association's grass a fruitful ground for their infestations.

Of course, West Bay Landscape, the Association's landscape maintenance company, is making sure to run the irrigation to its fullest capacity. However, any irrigation system is only a supplemental tool to rainfall. After all, West Bay Landscape can't program the system to irrigate all grounds at the ideal time of the day, which is early morning. Moreover, the Association is limited by the amount of water it can use per the water permit it is governed by and issued by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), a governmental agency that regulates Florida's water resources.

Nevertheless, rest assured that the Association is doing everything within its capacity to battle the drought. For example, West Bay Landscape was on site last week applying insecticides to combat chinch bugs. Another example is Mr. Victor Martinez, West Bay's Irrigation Technician, who is working vigorously to attend to as many hotspots as possible to ensure the lawns are getting proper coverage (i.e. broken irrigation heads, adjustments, etc). Once the rainfalls come, we should be in the clear. Until then, we wish to thank you, once again, for your understanding on this matter.

Have a healthy and safe weekend.

Sincerely,

Oded Neeman - CAM

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