

ODED'S WEEKLY REPORT

09-04-2026

LABOR DAY – Due to Labor Day and a personal day off, the LakeRidge Falls office will be closed on Monday and Tuesday, September 7th and 8th. We will reopen on Wednesday, September 9th. Please note that if you experience a situation that falls under the scope of responsibility of the Association and requires our assistance during the time the offices are closed, please call the emergency line at 941-444-7090.

TRASH COLLECTION – Also, due to Labor Day, NO Residential Garbage will be collected on Tuesday, September 7th. All collections (garbage, recycling, and yard waste) will be picked up on Wednesday, September 9th.

HYDROSTATIC PRESSURE – During a routine inspection of the community today, a small bunch of oversprayed/painted mulch caught my attention. Why? Hydrostatic pressure. Often referred to by some... actually by no one besides me... as the Mysterious Cause of Leaks, hydrostatic pressure is a significant cause of water intrusion in Florida. As the name given to it by me may indicate, many residents are unaware of this physical property that triggers a physical process that causes water to get inside your house. But because physics and I are not really friends, please allow me to explain by starting where most stories should start... the beginning.



Not once we receive calls seeking our assistance with addressing potential water leaks. Believing the source may be a rusty roof nail, an unsealed window, a broken water line, or simply a crack in the stucco, members, i.e., homeowners, may call asking for phone numbers of reliable professionals such as roofers, plumbers, painters, general contractors, etc, to investigate the matter. When such professionals rule out the source of the leak under their scope of specialty, the immediate suspect becomes the irrigation system. When the irrigation system is also ruled out as the source, frustration starts. It is then, as we came to learn, that hydrostatic pressure is more likely than not to be the cause of the leak, this is especially true during periods of heavy rains.

ODED'S WEEKLY REPORT

09-04-2026

The boring, yet simple (not professional), explanation of hydrostatic pressure is the pressure of a liquid/fluid that is pushed sideways and upward when sitting still, caused by its own weight. Here is the explanation in simpler terms. Florida has a high water table, i.e., very close to the surface. When heavy rains occur, rainwater can drain so much before it meets the water table. At this point, the weight of the rainwater pushes on the water already in the ground (water table), causing water to go upward. Think about it as a stack of five books. The book at the bottom would “feel” the weight of four books when they are laid on top of it. Same here but with liquid. The water table “feels” the pressure of the rainwater, which causes the water to go sideways and upward. Now for the interesting part.

During heavy rain, hydrostatic pressure pushes water toward the foundations of homes in Florida. If the stucco is porous because it was not properly painted, or if normal settling has created micro-cracks or gaps, water can find its way into the house. More often than not, this process occurs underground, about a foot or two below ground level, which leads me to what I started with...

Remember, I advised that a small bunch of oversprayed/painted mulch caught my attention? Well, LakeRidge Falls Exterior Painting Specifications, under the Architectural Guidelines, Page 27, directs to **“[e]xpose all stucco covered by soil and/or mulch”** when the house. Besides the fact that this is an indication that the house was spray-painted as opposed to roller-painted, the oversprayed mulch may be a reasonable indication that the stucco was not exposed and therefore was not painted. Therefore, there is a good chance that the house in the picture has about a foot or so of stucco that is not painted, i.e., waterproofed. More importantly, it means that this house is likely to experience a leak due to hydrostatic pressure at some point.

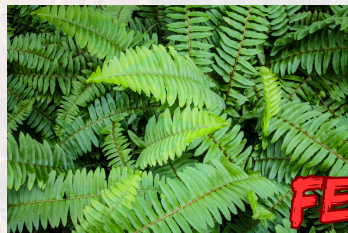
Think about it for a second. Homeowners spend a significant amount of money to “waterproof” their homes. They may choose to replace the roofs, install hurricane impact windows, and use expensive paint. However, all of those will not mean much in preventing water from coming in if the person painting the house fails to expose the stucco along the perimeter of the house and paint it. A simple task to overlook, but yet a costly one.

Please, the Architectural Review Board (ARB) worked very hard not just to introduce you to new, fresh, and modern painting standards. It also consulted with experts to ensure the painting job achieves its actual goal, which is to waterproof the house. Please take advantage of the hard work of your ARB members. Follow the specifications they provided you. It will not only preserve the architectural integrity, harmonious design, and aesthetic principles of the community, but also protect your house from the Mysterious Cause of Leaks.

FERNS AND POTHOS - Speaking of Architectural Guidelines, it is hard to miss the impressive selection of fern or pothos plants that large home improvement stores and local nurseries have to offer. Therefore, it is not a surprise to get them as a gift for housewarmings, holidays, dinner invitations, or any other special occasion. That said, it is often the case that those plants get so big that residents decide they are taking too much space in the house and therefore place them in a nice pot outside the house in their lanai, yard, or entryway.



POTHOS



FERNS



ODED'S WEEKLY REPORT

09-04-2026

And indeed, LakeRidge Falls' Architectural Guidelines, Article 8, Exterior Decorative Objects, allow it, as it states:

“Homeowners in Stirling and Victoria Falls Neighborhoods are allowed to place up to three exterior decorative objects. Sandstone Neighborhood homeowners may place up to two exterior decorative objects. These objects may include garden statues, garden flags, plant pots and water features without prior approval by the ARB provided that those objects are within the permitted size, [see #3 below] are placed only in the front landscaping bed and are not vulgar, offensive and or obscene in nature as judged by the ARB.”

So what is the problem? Well, they are invasive. Highly invasive.

You see, while there is no problem with placing them outside their house as long as it is done based on the guidelines, the problem starts when residents fail to maintain such pots. In two recent incidents, BrightView Landscape, the Association's landscape maintenance company, had to attend yards that were overtaken by these two plants.

Once pothos or ferns escape their pots, they can rapidly colonize landscape beds, climb walls, choke out desirable plants, and even spread into neighboring properties. Therefore, please remember to:

- Keep these plants strictly confined to their pots.
- Trim them regularly.
- Monitor that they are contained inside the pot.
- Remove if they become too large or difficult to contain.

Once they begin invading the landscape, they cease to be “decorative” and become a maintenance and compliance issue. More importantly, it causes unwarranted expenses.

So please, a little proactive care protects the community landscaping standards. If you currently have pothos or ferns outside, please take a moment this week to inspect and care for them. Thank you in advance for your attention and assistance with this important matter.

And with this, have a quiet and safe Labor Day weekend!

Oded Neeman, LakeRidge Falls Community Manager