

MAROON CREEK CLUB MASTER ASSOCIATION

**IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL HOMEOWNERS
AND GENERAL CONTRACTORS
PLEASE READ IMMEDIATELY**

DATE: *16 May 2003*

TO: *Owners of Maroon Creek Club single family lots
General Contractors with active projects [Lots 4, 31, and 44]*

FROM: *William Lukes AIA
SARC Architectural Advisor*

RE: *Fire Protection systems in single family homes at Maroon Creek Club*

Dear Maroon Creek Club Property Owner:

We are writing to advise you of new information that has just come to our attention regarding proper plumbing of water supply lines to single family homes in the subdivision, particularly with regard to the portion of the domestic water supply that provides water to installed fire sprinkler or suppression systems.

It has come to our attention that portions or all of the Maroon Creek Subdivision have fairly high water pressure as the water is distributed by the City of Aspen water system throughout the subdivision, apparently by design. The reasons why are quite involved but, according to the Water Department, the system pressure in the MCC area and some other areas of town will generally have higher water pressure than the system in some other portions of town, either on a regular basis or as the result of surges from presently unknown sources.

According to information that we have received recently, high water pressure and/or sudden spikes in water pressure [water hammer] have caused damage and/or leaks (usually in the fire sprinkler portion of interior plumbing) at a few homes in the MCC subdivision. It appears that the reason why the fire protection portion of the domestic water supply could experience leaks is because that portion of the water supply might not have a water pressure reducing valve ["PRV"] in line to control pressure surges. Not having a PRV on the fire protection portion is the normal method of ensuring that your fire sprinkler systems will have adequate water flow at all times to provide the quantity of water and level of protection that the system was designed to provide.

In circumstances where higher water pressures are the norm, the Fire Marshal allows another pressure reducing valve ["PRV"], of a type that is appropriate to use in fire protection plumbing systems, to be installed in the fire protection portion of the water service to protect this system from too-high pressures or pressure spikes. We have reviewed this matter with Ed Van Walraven, the Aspen Fire Marshal, and he has advised us that he will allow approved PRV's to be installed, either as retrofits to existing homes, or when shown on building permit applications for new homes.

No new or additional permit is required, but the proper type of PRV must be submitted to the Fire Department, either as part of a building permit application or as a submittal from your contractor or fire protection installer, and approved by the Fire Marshal.

The PRV must be of a type that will perform properly with the engineered design for that particular system as regards minimum water flow and allowable pressure ranges, so it should be supported by the

engineering calculations for the system that was, or is going to be, installed. Mr. Van Walraven said that there are a number of products of this type available on the market. If you are retrofitting an approved PRV to control pressure in the fire protection lines, you should contact the designer / installer of your fire protection system, not a normal plumber.

Also, and this is very, very important - our local experts all tell me that plumbing systems, water supply lines under the street, and fire hydrants can be and are damaged by unauthorized use of fire hydrants. It is apparently against the law for any person to hook up to a fire hydrant for any purpose whatsoever and all licensed contractors are supposed to be aware of the prohibition and the consequences.

There has been anecdotal information given to me that one or more firms working in the Maroon Creek Subdivision over the past few years have hooked up to hydrants and, for all we know, they may have directly caused damage to some of your homes by suddenly opening and closing a hydrant and creating a significant water hammer condition.

Contractors, please be advised that the Association regards the community water supply as important to the protection of life and property, and all Association representatives will cooperate with the Water Department and Fire Department by calling in the license plate numbers of anyone seen hooking up to a hydrant in the subdivision. Please advise each of your subcontractors, and make sure that landscapers, hydroseeders, and others on your jobsite know this as well.

Also, please remember that any approved PRV's which are installed in the fire protection system would have to be inspected annually by a qualified firm, as does your regular PRV and backflow preventer.

Thank you. We encourage you to pass this along to your general contractor, architect, or anyone else who might need to have this information on your behalf.

As always, please feel free to contact me at (970) 920-6929 or wclukes@sopris.net if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

MAROON CREEK CLUB MASTER ASSOCIATION

By:

William Lukes AIA
Architectural Advisor to the Site and Architecture Review Committee