

Frequently Asked Questions about Apartment Maintenance

What do I do if there is a problem?

If you have an emergency (e.g., there seems to be a large leak somewhere) contact the security desk (**212-781-6337**) and they will call the Super or his back-up. For non-emergency work, if it is the Co-op's responsibility, fill out a work order request describing the problem. Work order request forms are available at the guard's desk.

It is not a good idea to ask the Super or the Handyman to do something as you pass either in the hallway – they may forget exactly which apartment or be involved in something else. Also, using work order request forms lets management know all the good things the Super and Handyman have been doing. The Super works from 8 to 5 weekdays, with an hour off for lunch, the exact time of which depends on the day's schedule. The Handyman works from 8 to 5, Tuesday through Saturday, with an hour off for lunch, the exact time of which depends on the day's schedule. ['Super' will be taken to mean 'Super and/or Handyman' in the text below, unless otherwise specified.]

What is my responsibility, and what is the Co-op's responsibility?

Generally, things inside the walls and floors are the Co-op's responsibility, and everything else is yours. For example, window maintenance is the Co-op's responsibility (but you are expected to wash them – they swing in for easy access). The board has decided that original heating units (convectors, vent valves, shut-off valves, pipes) are the Co-op's responsibility, but the covers are the shareholder's responsibility. The Super can help with a clogged sink or bathtub drain or toilet, but residents are encouraged to clear their own sink drains.

My radiator hisses all the time. Is this right?

No. There might be a bit of noise when the steam first comes up, but the system should run quietly. Fill out a work order request and the Super will check your unit for leaks.

How about plumbing?

Maintaining original fixtures is the Co-op's responsibility – things like replacing washers in faucets or the parts in toilet flushometers. If you want to replace bathroom or kitchen fixtures with your own, that is your responsibility. If a modernized faucet is leaking, the Super will work on it to fix the leak but the shareholder must provide parts. Check with the Super.

Is there a charge for turning off the water so I can make repairs?

Repairs that a shareholder makes usually require only turning off the local shut-off valve in the kitchen or bath. You can turn these valves off without affecting anyone else. For larger repairs that require shutting off water to a line of apartments, check with the Super.

The lock on my mailbox in the lobby is loose/doesn't work right.

Fill out a work order request – the Super will take care of it. But he will need to work with you.

A smoke detector is beeping.

If it is in a common area, fill out a work order so the Super can take care of it. If it is in your apartment, open the battery compartment and replace the 9 volt alkaline battery with a similar battery. Try to keep your smoke detectors, some of which also detect carbon monoxide, in working condition.

Can the Super help me with maintenance that is my responsibility?

The Super may assist shareholders with *small* jobs on his own time. If the Super expects to be paid for such assistance, he and the shareholder must agree on a fee up front before any work is started. Fees depend on the difficulty of the individual job; some rough estimates for certain common jobs are given below; they do not include parts, which must be supplied by the shareholder.

If you would like the Super to assist you in this capacity, you must fill out a work order as well, with all the details, including agreed-upon fees.

The Super may not undertake *major* work for any shareholder, e.g., remodeling bathrooms or kitchens, electrical alterations, installing cabinets. The porters and security personnel may not perform work or errands for shareholders.

How do I know if the Super should be paid for a job?

The Super must make clear if a repair is the Co-op's responsibility or yours; you can double-check with the building manager. If you ask the Super to do something that is your responsibility, he may agree to do it and should at that time tell you how much it will cost.

How do I pay the Super?

By cash or check when the job is done. If the Super buys parts for you, you should give him money in advance for the parts.

Do I have to use the Super or can I use another handyman?

You may hire others to do maintenance work in your apartment. Work should be done during normal working hours, and should not cause a nuisance (sounds, smells) to others. Debris from large jobs, e.g., old wall-to-wall carpet, should be removed by your workmen and not dumped in our building. Your handyman must have a certificate of insurance to perform work in the building.

Who is responsible for water damage from a leak?

Responsibility depends on details. For example, the Co-op would be responsible for damage from a broken pipe in a wall, but the shareholder would be responsible for damage from an overflowing bathtub. Shareholders are required to leave copies of keys to their apartment at the security desk and are responsible for any resultant damage if responders are unable to enter their apartment quickly in an emergency. Co-op owners' insurance is strongly recommended.

Does the Super have to make repairs in my apartment?

It is strongly recommended that leaking faucets or toilets, or anything which presents a hazard, be repaired. If you know what you are doing, you may make repairs yourself, even if it is officially the responsibility of the Co-op.

I just realized that I fixed something that was actually the Co-op's responsibility. Can I get repaid for this?

Sorry, no.

I want to install an air conditioner – what do I need to know?

Air conditioners are the shareholder's responsibility. Many rooms have a sleeve for a through-the-wall a/c unit. Through-the-wall units are constructed differently from window a/c units; window a/c units should never be installed in a sleeve. It is important that the a/c unit fit closely in the sleeve and be sealed so air and rain cannot penetrate around the unit. Measure the sleeve carefully before buying your unit. Window units may be installed in windows. It is a good idea in the winter to cover the a/c unit (inside or out) to reduce drafts. If you cover it outside, leave yourself a note to remove the cover before using it next summer.

I want to remodel my kitchen / bathroom – what do I need to know?

Before you start any remodeling or large project, check with the building manager. Send an email describing briefly what you have in mind, and he will let you know what is required. For major remodeling, for example, you will have to complete an "alteration agreement" describing the project.

Does the Co-op have a list of vendors or handymen I can trust?

Argo can supply of list of general contractors, electrical, plumbing, and other service providers it has used in the past; talk to the building manager. The Super might be able to help as well.

I saw a mouse in the kitchen.

The Co-op has regular visits from a pest control company; shareholders must sign up at the security desk for this service. It will be faster to set a mouse trap – a spring snap trap kills a mouse instantly and can be reused. There are also very effective 'no-kill' mouse traps available. (Put a dead mouse in a plastic bag and dispose of it in the garbage chute.) Poisons work but should not be used with children or pets around, and poisoned mice can behave strangely or die in inaccessible places, creating a smell. Food staples should be stored in hard plastic or metal containers.

Can people enter my apartment when I am not home?

You may grant permission for work to be done while you are away. Generally, the Super or building manager will ask your permission before entering your apartment. However, in case of emergency, e.g., a suspected leak of water or gas, your apartment may be entered when attempts to reach you have failed. You are required by the proprietary lease to leave a set of keys with the Super. If your apartment is entered while you are away, a note will be left with particulars (who, when, why).

How much use do I have of the common areas?

The common areas are for everyone, so you can't appropriate them for your particular benefit. For example, you cannot store things in the hallways, even temporarily, and you should never put things on a fire escape, which is illegal. Wet boots, umbrellas or strollers should be in your apartment. If you cannot get your recycling materials into the compactor closet, please take them to the downstairs locations.

Are there any restrictions on appliances?

Clothes washers and dryers are not permitted in apartments. Garbage disposals are not recommended.

I noticed a loose doorknob/burned out light in the hallway/stairwell. What should I do?

Fill out a work order describing carefully what the problem is and where. And thanks for helping.

What is the building's policy on Holiday tipping?

While entirely voluntary, many residents choose to tip the building staff at year-end. A list of staff members is posted in the lobby and on the Co-op's website in December.

Table of fee estimates* for repairs not covered by the Co-op (parts not included)

Plumbing	
Replace sink waste line parts	\$20 each
Tighten connections	\$10
Install/replace dishwasher connector	\$20-\$40
Replace hot or cold water flex connector	\$20
Replace faucet	\$100
Replace or clean faucet diffuser	\$10
Replace kitchen spray	\$20
Other	
Replace upper front door lock	\$50
Get parts	\$5 - \$40
Remove old and install new a/c unit	\$75
Remove old a/c unit and seal sleeve	\$75
Replace light bulb	\$5
Replace diffuser (ceiling fixture)	\$5

*Every job is different. Shareholders and the Super must agree on a fee, or at least a maximum possible fee, before the job is started. Fees are paid to the Super. The Super works on his own time.

The Super's work hours for the Co-op are 8am to 5pm Monday – Friday. The Handyman's work hours for the Co-op are 8am to 5pm Tuesday – Saturday. Please note that both take an hour off for lunch, the exact time of which depends on the day's workload.

Contact the Super by filling out a work order request form at the guard's desk.

The building manager is Ken Nilsen: 212-896-8622, or kenn@argo.com.

Building Systems and Their Maintenance – For Reference

The following table clarifies what is the building's responsibility and what is the shareholder's responsibility. Items under "Super's Responsibility" are maintained by the Super himself or by contractors under the supervision of the Super. Maintenance also includes regular cleaning by the porters. The Super's job is to maintain systems without unnecessary expense, which often means that the Super performs maintenance himself, e.g., replacing heating convectors, snaking drain lines, replacing valve washers or leaking plumbing connections. However, if the Super attempts to perform maintenance beyond his capabilities and messes up, this can also lead to unnecessary expense. Management and the Super will work together to determine when contractors should be used and when the Super should get additional training.

Some items under "Shareholder's Responsibility" may be beyond the capabilities of a shareholder to maintain without assistance. The Super may assist shareholders with *small* jobs on his own time. (See above, under "Can the Super Help Me with Maintenance...." and "Do I Have to Use the Super....")

The Super may not accept gifts, tips, or payments of any sort from vendors or contractors. He may receive tips or payment for small jobs from building residents.

System, Subsystem	Super's Responsibility	Shareholder's Responsibility
Heat		
Boiler	◆	
Water treatment	(maintenance contract)	
Steam/return pipes, valves, traps	◆	
First floor hot water loop	◆	
Convector units	◆	
Vent valves on convector units	◆	
Convector covers in apartments		◆
Fuel Oil		
Timely deliveries	◆	
Storage tank	◆	
Heater	◆	
Pumps and pipes	◆	
Hot and Cold Water		
Boiler, divider valve, etc	◆	
Lines in the walls	◆	

System, subsystem	Super's responsibility	Shareholder Responsibility
Shut-off valves	◆	
Toilet flush valve (flushometer)	◆	if not original equipment
Leaking faucets	◆	buy parts if not orig equip
Spray (kitchen sink)		◆
Waste lines		
Toilet, shower	◆	if not original equipment
Major runs in and under building	◆	
Sinks	◆	if not original equipment
Garbage/trash		
Compactors	◆	
Chutes, vents	◆	
Intake doors	◆	deposit garbage neatly
Closets and containers	◆	deposit recycling neatly
Ventilation		
Fans and motors	◆	
Timers	◆	
Ducts	◆	
Grills and flow adjusters	clean hallway grills	clean apartment grills
Elevators		
Cars and mechanism	elevator contract	
Swing doors	el. contract; Super paints	
Machine room conditions (a/c, light)	◆	
Cleaning cab (walls, floors)	◆	use elevators carefully
Intercom		
Lobby board	◆	
Risers and wires	◆	
Apartment handsets	◆	clean handset
Entryways		
Exterior and interior lobby doors	◆	
Garage door	(maintenance contract)	
Other exterior doors	◆	
Bulkheads and roof access doors	◆	

System, subsystem	Super's responsibility	Shareholder Responsibility
Security system		
Cameras	(maintenance contract)	
Guard's desk monitor	(maintenance contract)	
Cables	(maintenance contract)	
Server and monitor	(maintenance contract)	
Lights and fixtures		
Hallways, lobbies, exterior	◆	
Apartment circuit breaker box	◆	if not original equipment
Apartment wall switches	◆	if not original equipment
Apartment wall outlets	◆	if not original equipment
Apartment ceiling lamps, fans		◆
Apartment doors		
Threshold stone	◆	
Integrity and exterior surface	◆	
Lower lock and knob	◆(keep copy of key)	
Peep-hole and doorbell	◆	
Upper lock		◆ (provide key to Super)
Interior surface		◆
Windows		
Lobby	◆	
Replace broken balance	◆	
Replace broken latches	◆	
Rinstall/remove childguard	◆	
Replace broken windows (seals)	◆(contractor)	
Replace screening		◆
Cleaning		◆
Apartment Air Conditioners		
Sleeve seal	a/c unit never installed	after a/c unit removed
A/c unit		installation, maintenance
Meter rooms		
	◆ (no personal storage)	
Monitor gas bkgd in N meter room	◆	
Storage areas		
General cleaning	◆	
Repair of units, locks	◆	
Cleaning inside storage units		◆

System, subsystem	Super's responsibility	Shareholder Responsibility
Bike Room		
General cleaning	◆	
Maintain fixtures	◆	
Clean/dust bikes		◆
Garage		
Cleaning	◆	
Individual parking spaces		only car or motorcycle
Facade	◆	
Gardens	water	volunteers
Common areas		
Terrazzo	◆	
Hallways, carpeted	◆	no personal items
Hallways, stone	◆	
Stairwells	◆	
Sidewalks	◆	
Firedoors	◆	
Mail room locks	◆	
Plants		volunteers
Uncommon areas		
Roof	◆	
"Pool area"	◆	
Under the building	◆	
Walkways	◆	keep your area neat
Fire escapes	◆	nothing on fire escape
Fire systems		
Extinguishers	(contractor)	
Standpipes	◆	
Sprinklers	◆	
Cable	Time-Warner Contract	Time Warner contract
Dishwasher and its connections		◆
Clothes washer/dryer		not permitted
Garbage disposal		not recommended