



To: All Causeway Owners

HOT TUBS – January 2024

Background: The issues with our in room Hot Tubs started a little over two years ago when a non-owner renter contacted the Minnesota Department of Health because they thought there was mold in our tubs which set off an inspection of all hot tubs at the resort. That report came back negative with no mold found; it was a hair line fracture. At this same inspection, the inspector came in and found issues with most of our tubs being out compliance and shut them down.

All our tubs are from the original build, thirty plus years ago. The tubs installed were intended for home use and not for commercial use; they should never have been installed then which Cass County inspected and passed at that time. In 2008 the State took over from Cass County and our tubs were eventually converted over to commercial units and passed new inspections. Then Minnesota introduced The Abigail Taylor Act was signed into law in Minnesota in May 2008 (death was suction entrapment due to a faulty drain cover). Since then and for the next 15 years we have been asked to update our hot tubs by the State of Minnesota bringing them up to ever changing codes. Handrails, hard cover tops, drains, pumps, inlets, jets, among others to be compliant with current code. Again a second round of updating drains to meet current standards. We have been on the edge of non-compliance with the State of Minnesota due to our tubs being classified as Public Pools and the need to be managed in accordance.

This year the State of Minnesota deemed they will no longer go into our crawl spaces where the tubs are located to inspect them due to OHSA'S confined space rules, safety concerns like CO2 and chemicals making it dangerous. The State inspector said quote "if the remaining tubs are not inspected daily with records kept or if its maintenance no longer enters themselves for repairs due to OSHA, it's an automatic State Mandated shut down of in room tubs."

This hot tub issue is taking up labor and resources leaving other issues at the resort unattended. We have less than a handful of maintenance people on staff to manage all that needs to be done at the resort. Whether it is to shovel walkways, snowplow, blow leaves off decks, cut grass, clean up after storms, repair appliances, tile, cabinets, fireplaces, doors. Replace bedding, coffee pots, washer dryers, doors, windows. General maintenance, the list goes on and on.

Today, there is not enough money to save the tubs as Public Pools and stay within our current budget. We have one third of spa tubs currently operational and we are dealing with leaks in those tubs now. There is no ability currently to change that situation either.

We have heard from many owners about the inequities of units with working hot tubs and paying the same fees. We have done as much as we can to accommodate owners, including switching units if a hot tub unit is available. We, in the past, have discussed how to make the private use of owners only. Locked doors or closed rooms. That pathway proved to be too difficult to administer as well.

Per the State Inspector quote "if anyone thinks these spa tubs should last beyond 30 years, they are incorrect, frankly I am surprised they have lasted this long". It was asked between the initial installation of noncommercial spa's, the previous passed inspections from Cass County and not having enough of our own resources to be in compliance who is to blame for this current situation. He said, "I am not going to place that on anyone person or thing,"

It is a cumulation of all the above and taking everything into consideration under The Public Pools codes the conclusion with the mountain of issues and owner inequities is to close all in room spa tubs until a permanent solution or alternative use of room can be found.

At the Board Meeting on January 6th there was a majority vote to close the hot tubs beginning February 2, 2024. This was an extremely difficult decision that had to be made. We have been wrestling with issues for the past two years trying to decide what to do with the hot tubs.

You will hear about practical solutions in the coming months. Each owner will have input to decide what to do with the hot tub room along with associated estimated costs for each project that will take place over a (hopefully) period of three years to complete if not sooner.

We have heard from members loud and clear, you may not agree, but this is the only choice we have with the budget we have today.

The Board of Directors.