

## Remember

After you have obtained the Mutual Consent and all necessary permits, received any needed variance requests, and completed all of the work on your alteration, you must call the Alterations Division for a final inspection and to request reimbursement of unused Conformance Deposit.



It is your responsibility to follow the established guidelines, get the required permits, and select a contractor. Compliance with the Mutual's Governing Documents will prevent any unnecessary delays in your alteration, eliminate possible fines, and add to your enjoyment of living in your upgraded Unit.

No use of common area is allowed for any reason (See Land Use Policy); contractors may not stockpile or store materials or debris in common area. Hallways, walkways and pavement must be kept clean at all times.

Both the Mutual Consent and City permit must always be posted and visible in a window at your Unit during the course of construction of your alteration.

You must get a final inspection from the City. Following your final City inspection, you must call the Alterations Division to request a final inspection.



## FAQs

### When do I need a licensed contractor?

A licensed contractor is required for all alterations costing over \$500.

### How much does a Mutual Consent cost?

A copy of the Mutual's adopted fee sheet is available from the Division or on line at [www.lagunawoodsvillage.com](http://www.lagunawoodsvillage.com). Check with the City of Laguna Woods regarding their requirements and costs for permits.

### If I have a City permit, do I need a Mutual Consent?

The City will not issue a permit until you have a Mutual Consent. You must have a Mutual Consent for all work in your Unit, regardless of a City Permit.

### What changes can be made without a Mutual Consent or Variance Request?

Examples include replacement of interior carpet or flooring, painting the interior walls, and installation of bookshelves.

### Why can't I have an alteration, room addition, etc., if others have it?

Past boards have granted variances that may not conform to today's building codes or Mutual standards. The Board encourages upgrades to your Unit. However, if the proposed alteration interferes with an affected Unit or does not meet current codes or standards, it will not be approved.

### Who is responsible for my alteration after it is completed?

You are responsible for all alterations to your Unit, including maintenance and repair. When you sell your Unit, the responsibility is transferred to the new member.

### When can I start the work?

Do not start any work (including demo work), until you first get the proper City permits and Mutual Consent for the alteration.

### How do I remove asbestos-containing materials?

When Units were constructed, asbestos was used in common building materials. Should these materials be present, the Board will issue a Mutual Consent for demo when scraping acoustic ceilings, removing floor tile, or replacing drywall. You must also obtain a permit for the City and use a contractor that is certified for asbestos removal. You must follow proper protocol on the removal of asbestos-containing materials and once complete, provide test results proving that it is safe to occupy the Unit.



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# MEMBER GUIDELINES FOR ALTERATIONS

## Alterations Made Easy; Members Start Here

Visit the Alterations Counter at the Laguna Woods Community Center where you will be given the required forms and information to start the Mutual Consent Alteration process on a Unit. Our helpful staff will inform you of all the necessary documentation, and inform you of any outstanding fines, fees or assessments that may need to be resolved before submitting an application.

Staff will do a preliminary review of the Member's application. They may require additional information, including a field investigation of your Unit, and/or give you Conditions of Approval. Once the application is deemed complete, and the proposal is compliant with the Governing Documents, including United Architectural Alteration Standards, fees and Conformance Deposit are collected and a Mutual Consent is issued.

Once the Mutual Consent is issued, Staff will mail and email to the last known mailing address and available neighbor's emails on file, a Neighbor Courtesy Notice of Alterations to inform them of the upcoming work. This Notice gives neighbors information on the improvements and policies regarding noise, parking, and the prohibition of dumping construction materials in the Community dumpsters.

Once the Alteration is complete, Staff will inspect the premises for consistency with the approval, standards, conditions and policy. They will also coordinate with the City to ensure the building permit has been signed off, if applicable. Staff will then issue the final certificate for the alteration.

Note: In the event the proposal doesn't meet Standards, a Variance is required. All of the above apply in the event of an Appeal or Variance Application in addition to the following, after the application is deemed complete, and fees and Conformance Deposit is collected; a Neighborhood Awareness Notice is sent to Affected Units inviting them to the Architecture Control and Standards Committee (ACSC) Open Session meeting or to provide written comment. After the ACSC review, the Committee's recommendation is forwarded to the Board for final action.

## 8 Tips for Working with a Contractor

1. Verify the contractor's license, insurance, and required state bond, at <http://www.cslb.ca.gov/> and click on "Consumer," or call the State Contractor's License Board at 1.800.321.2752
2. Before work begins, verify that your contractor has obtained the necessary permits, and that they are posted in the window of your Unit.
3. Make sure your contractor has a license, and always enter into a written contract for the improvements.
4. Deposits are often standard for construction projects, however never pay the full amount until the job is complete to your liking.
5. Smoking is prohibited by contractors and their workers outside of an enclosed unit. Make sure they know.
6. Unless loading or unloading equipment, contractors may only park on roads; not within parking lots, or cul-de-sacs.
7. Contractors doing any type of remodeling are prohibited from using the Community dumpsters for disposal of materials. They must either haul away their trash or use their own dumpster, if approved by the Board. Violations to this requirement may subject the Unit owner to fines.
8. Remember that the choice of a contractor is yours. The Mutual will not get involved in any disputes with your contractor. The agreement is a personal contract between you and your contractor.

### Important Contacts

**Laguna Woods City Hall** 24264 El Toro Road | 949.639.0500.

**Alterations Department** 24351 El Toro Road | 949.597.4616 | [alterations@vmsinc.org](mailto:alterations@vmsinc.org)  
[www.lagunawoodsvillage.com](http://www.lagunawoodsvillage.com)

**South Coast Air Quality Management District** Asbestos Hot Line 909.396.2336

**State Contractor's Board** 1845 Business Center Dr. Ste. 206, San Bernardino, CA 92408  
<http://www.cslb.ca.gov/> | 1.800.321.2752

**Orange County Clerk/Recorder** 24031 El Toro Road, Laguna Hills, CA 92653 | 714.834.2500  
<http://www.ocrecorder.com/about/locations>

### Fines

Members in violation of the Mutual's Governing Documents and/or Rules and Regulations for alterations may be requested to appear before the Board of Directors for a disciplinary hearing. The Board may impose penalties against those members, including but not limited to monetary, revocation of privileges, and revocation of membership certificate. Most common violations include, but are not limited to: contractors reported smoking, illegal dumping in Village trash dumpsters, noise violations, illegal parking, speeding by contractors.

## Definitions

**Affected Unit** - Any neighboring Unit that is within 150 feet of the proposed Alteration, and from any part of which the proposed Alteration could be seen once the Alteration is made or constructed as proposed, or any neighboring Unit that is close enough to the Unit where the proposed Alteration would be made or constructed such that the residents of the neighboring Unit could be affected by any noise, dust, odors, etc., caused by the construction of the proposed Alteration.

**Alteration** - Any structural, functional or aesthetic change to the interior of a Unit, its mechanical systems or the structural integrity of the building; or any physical, structural or aesthetic change to the exterior of a Unit.

**Alterations Division** - The section of Village Management Services that issues Alterations Consents and Variances prior to commencement of construction, subject to Governing Documents. The Division is located in the Laguna Woods Community Center at 24351 El Toro Road.

**Appeal** - If you choose to appeal the Board's decision, you must submit a written request for the appeal within 30 days of the date of the Board's initial decision on the request. If the 30-day deadline is missed, you must wait 12-months to submit your appeal. Appeals regarding a Board decision on a variance request can be brought to the Board only once in a 12-month period following the Board's initial decision on the request.

**Application** - A written request submitted by a Member or their agent to Staff or the Committee, in a form required by the Mutual's Governing Documents, to make an Alteration to the Unit. Applications must include pictures and detailed plans that properly illustrate the proposed alteration.

**Board** - United Laguna Woods Mutual Board of Directors.

**City of Laguna Woods (City)** - The entity that enforces local building codes and issues Building Permits subject to the City Municipal Code and State Building Code.

**Committee** - The United Laguna Woods Mutual Architectural Control and Standards Committee (ACSC).

**Common Area** - All property outside the boundaries of the interiors of the units, except exclusive use common areas, which includes those areas and surfaces designed

and used for the exclusive use of a member, such as patios and balconies.

**Common Area Agreement** - In the event that certain utility appliances are approved within Common Area, the Applicant shall be required to execute a recordable Common Area Agreement at the Orange County Clerk/Recorder.

**Conformance Deposit** - Is an amount collected upon approval of an alteration, that is held by the Mutual and applied, at the Mutual's sole discretion, to any fine levied against the Member Owner or the Property, to cover and/or recoup any costs whatsoever including damage to Mutual property.

**Governing Documents** - The Mutual's Articles of Incorporation; Corporate Bylaws; Amended and Restated Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions; and Operating Rules.

**Land Use Alteration Policy** - Resolution No. 1-17-94 specifies that the Board of Directors shall not approve any alterations expanding the original footprint of units, but that all such alterations currently in place, which have already been approved under the Land Use Policy, are grandfathered.

**Membership** - The legal relationship and status of being a Member of the Corporation, and an entitlement to the rights and privileges. Membership rights and privileges may be limited, suspended or terminated as provided in the Governing Documents and by applicable law.

**Mutual** - The United Laguna Woods Mutual.

**Mutual Consent** - The document received after completion of the application process, permitting the proposed alteration to proceed with construction.

**Neighbor Awareness Notice** - A notice sent, Via Regular Mail and e-mail (when available), by Staff to the member of any Affected Unit, within 150 feet or "line of sight," notifying them that an Application to make an Alteration to a neighboring Unit has been filed and that any comments or objections they may have to the proposed Alteration can be made in person or in writing to the Committee.

**Standards** - A series of written architectural standards that have been previously considered and pre-approved by the Committee and the Board as applicable generally to Alterations made to any Unit within the Mutual, or sometimes specifically applicable only to certain Unit floor plans. Examples of standard alterations include skylight installations, window replacements, exterior door replacements, block walls, gates, patio slabs, and water heater relocation. Copies of the Board-approved standards or standard plans are available in the Permits and Inspections Office.

