

# **SUNDANCE ESTATES HOA STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR FIRE BERMS AND THE WATER STORAGE FACILITIES**

**Effective November 1, 2025**

## **1. Purpose**

The HOA is responsible for maintaining three water storage facilities that provide water for the fire department to use in fighting fires within the subdivision

## **2. Policy Statement & Background**

When the subdivision was initially approved by Santa Fe County one of the requirements was to provide water in storage facilities for use by the County fire department. This is codified in the approved Plan which specifically states that three storage units must be maintained, across the subdivision, with each unit containing 20,000 gallons, for a total of 60,000 gallons. Location of the units in relation to the lots is dictated. There are specific guidelines as to verification of the water amounts as well as how the area containing and around the tanks must be maintained.

## **3. Scope of Services**

- The water level of each tank plus the fire berm area conditions must be checked and reported quarterly. One new tank has a gauge on the top that specifies the water level of the two tanks, which can be observed by climbing the steps on the rear of the fire berm. The two older systems require a float pole to be used in each tank to verify the water level, which is located on the top of the fire berms. Observing the water level can also be done through unlocking the lock (code 8183), removing the bolts and manually observing the water level and its condition.
- If water level is indicated to be less than full, replacement water must be added from the adjacent homeowner's well that is connected to each of the water storage units. A valve is located near each fire berm which must be opened to allow water from the well to fill the tanks until all tanks are full. If the water level has noticeably dropped it should be reported to the Board as a leak is likely to occur. Significant water replacement may need to be trucked in to ensure it is quickly replaced and to avoid potentially overloading and possibly damaging the well.
- The area surrounding the fire berm, the tanks and the supporting structure shall be inspected quarterly to ensure that the following conditions are met:

- It is free of combustible storage, ash, debris, brush, or material that could present a fire exposure hazard
- The area is free of the accumulation of material on or near parts that could result in accelerated corrosion or rot.
- The tank, support, and external piping are free of ice buildup.
- Weed clearance must be done at least quarterly and access to the storage tanks ensured.
- Every year a test must be undertaken to verify the water pressure at the fire hydrant attached to each of the water tanks.
- The interior of steel tanks without corrosion protection shall be inspected every three years. The interior of all other tanks shall be inspected every five (5) years.
- Every five (5) years the underground and exposed pipes shall be flow tested to determine the internal condition of the piping
- Any additional maintenance should be done by an approved contractor.

#### 4. Responsibilities

- The HOA Fire Berm committee is responsible for checking and maintaining the availability of the water in each of the three water tank facilities.
- The HOA Board is required to appoint the committee and ensure that all reporting is done when required.
- The homeowners who provide the backup water to the holding tanks must ensure that the wells pumps are working and have sufficient pressure to fill the tanks when additional water to fill the tank(s) is required.
- Every year the water pressure at each fire hydrant must be verified and submitted to HOA Board and the HOA Webmaster for posting on the HOA website [under Owners/Inspections]. The SEHOA committee chair should contact a licensed contractor who is certified to perform this service. A cost estimate should be provided and upon completion of the service an invoice should be submitted for service payment. Someone from the committee should be present for the test.
- The five-year flow testing of the piping shall be done in conjunction with the annual fire hydrant test using the same contractor.

#### 5. Contractor Selection and Management

- The following contractors have provided services to the SEHOA

##### Consultants

Aranda Consulting LLC (505) 453-5988 [Nicholas R Aranda, PE, FPE (*Col Retired*)]  
 8 Camerada Road Santa Fe NM 87508 (505) 453-5988 GB-98 LIC: 389981  
 Accent Fire (505) 474-3923 [accentfire@aol.com](mailto:accentfire@aol.com) [Jerry Watts]

## **Flow Testing**

Waterway of New Mexico LLC PO Box 1182 Moriarity NM 8703

[www.waterwayinc.com](http://www.waterwayinc.com) (505) 8900-5298 [Amanda Henry]

AAC Construction (505) 930-0481 [Andrew Sisneros]

## **Repairs, Maintenance, Replacement**

Cactus Rain LLC (505) 585-0850 [Lauren Forbes- Founder & Designer]

66 Juniper Hill Road Cedar Crest, NM

[www.CactusRain NM.com](http://www.CactusRain NM.com)

## **6. Scheduling and Priority Areas**

- The inspection of the fire berm area, the condition of the tanks and the water level must be checked and recorded each calendar quarter. It should be done at a consistent time, preferably at the end of the quarter.
- A member of the committee must be assigned to provide the recording information using the standardized fire berm reporting document
- The HOA has a mandatory requirement to monitor and maintain the water storage tanks and report this to the fire department if they ask.

## **7. Communication with Residents**

- Notification to the HOA Board should be made at the Board meeting following each reporting period. The report should also be submitted to the HOA webmaster for posting to the SEHOA website.
- If there is a drop in water level on any tank or there is a deterioration condition at any fire berm it should be immediately reported to the Board President and Vice President.
- There is no requirement to provide information on condition of the water storage units to the lot owners.

## **8. Protocols and Contacts**

- The designated committee assigned person is responsible for the routine testing and observation of the entire fire berm area. No special tools are required except the wrench that is used to open the top covers.
- In an emergency the committee chair should contact an approved contractor to check on a water tank that is suspected of problems and receive a report outlining the problem and the proposed solution for repairing the tank and returning it to service.
- List of Emergency Contacts (HOA, Authorities, Service Providers)

## 9. Budgeting

- There is no cost involved with the quarterly testing and reporting.
- Every year the HOA is required to hire an inspection of the system and verification of the water pressure. For budget purposes the committee should submit prior bill amounts to the treasurer, including anticipated service time. Anticipated costs of \$100 or less.
- In an emergency costs are unknown and are to be borne by the HOA with approval by the President based upon estimated costs and any approved extra expenditures that occur, which should all be identified on the invoice.

## 10. Documentation

- Quarterly reporting is to be done on the approved fire berm reporting document, which is attached.
- If repairs or maintenance are required, a written or electronic estimate of anticipated costs and the affected downtime must be submitted to the Board for approval prior to proceeding.
- The committee will work with approved contractors but may submit a recommendation to the Board if a new contractor is being considered.
- Expenditures will be paid against approved purchase orders and receipt of an invoice for the services.
- The committee is responsible for all communication regarding the maintenance of the fire berms and the water-holding tanks and shall maintain a written record of any communication along with any electronic documentation.
- If there is an incident that requires review or approval of unscheduled maintenance, an incident report must be made including the impact expected and the estimated charges to be incurred.

## HOA BOARD APPROVAL

We approve the SOP for the fire-berm areas and water holding tanks as described herein.

Name	Title	Date