

# THE HEARTBEAT

WINTER 2025



## MOLAC Update & CAI Day at the Capitol

See pages 12–13.



# Winter 2025

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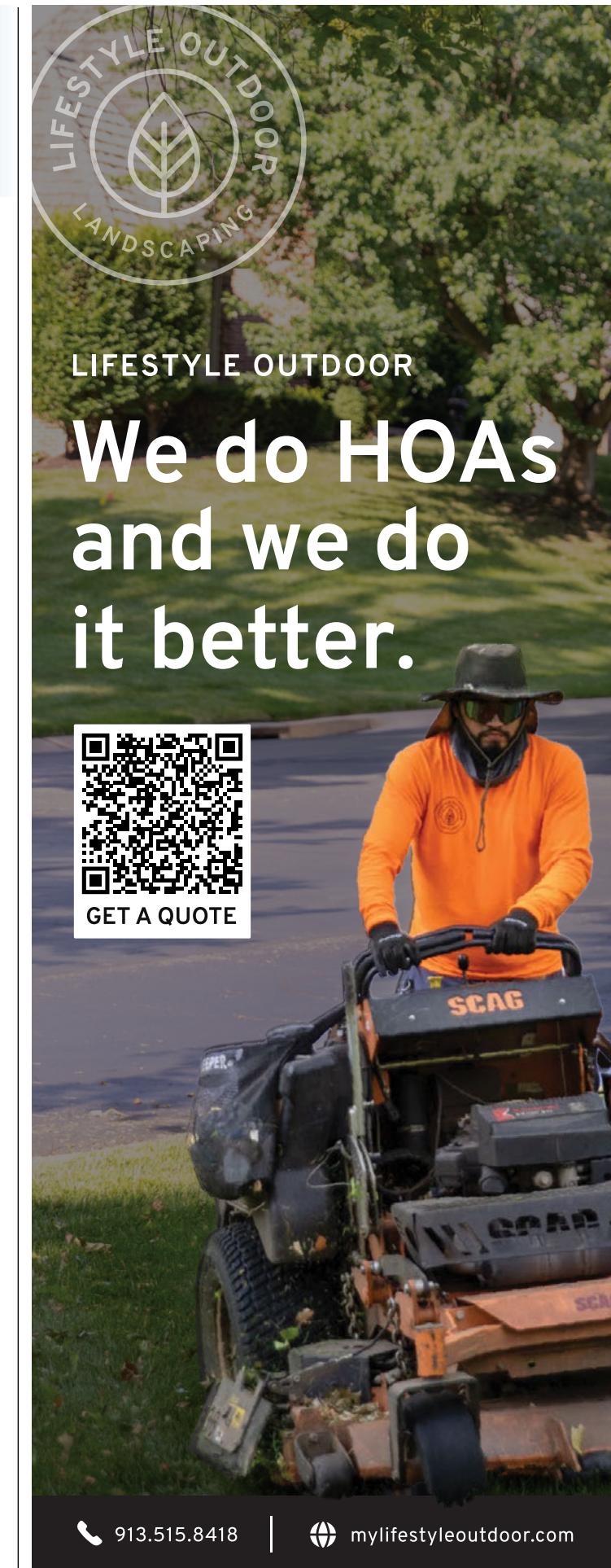
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## President's Letter

By: Jan Mullaney, EBP

Dear Heartland Chapter Members,

As the new president of the Board of Directors to CAI Heartland, Welcome to 2025! I am excited to contribute my skills, experience, and knowledge to our Chapter.

2025 is going to be a year of changes to CAI Heartland. In 2024 we reached a major milestone with achieving Large Chapter status. We have over 500 members and are still growing! This accomplishment is a direct result of the hard work and dedication of our community managers, management companies, business partners, and leadership. Our growing pains from moving to Large Chapter will be intimidating but will be an interesting challenge!

As in 2024, a major focus will be on our Legislative Action Committee (MOLAC). We are striving to keep our

communities up to date with the actions in Jefferson City and Washington DC. These actions will directly impact and affect the communities we serve and live in.

Always keep in mind that we are looking for more volunteers in all kinds of ways here in the Heartland Chapter. Please consider joining a committee or volunteering at one of our events. We have such a wide range of ways you can get involved.

Over the upcoming year I look forward to getting to know all our members in CAI Heartland. Let's make 2025 a year full of "Fierce Friends" and "Fierce Memories."

Jan Mullaney  
Team Chestnas  
President of CAI Heartland 



### Roofing

- Residential Sloped
- Residential Flat
- Commercial Flat
- Repairs
- Inspections
- Insurance Claims

### Guttering:

- Residential Guttering
- Leaf Protection
- Gutter Cleaning
- Commercial Box Guttering
- Custom Copper Guttering
- Drain Hydro-Jetting

### Repairs:

- Roofing Repairs
- Stucco
- Vinyl Siding
- Drywall
- Wood Rot
- Leak Investigation
- Leak Resolution
- Flashing

### General Contracting:

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# Membership Update

## NEW MEMBERS

816 Condominium Association  
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Brentwood Forest Condominium Association  
Cedar Green Condominium Owners Association, Inc.  
Chesterfield Ridge Homeowners Association  
Chesterfield Ridge Homeowners Association  
Chesterfield Ridge Homeowners Association  
Choice Property Resources, Inc.  
Coeur de Royale Condominium Association  
Coeur de Royale Condominium Association  
Coeur de Royale Condominium Association  
Community Association Management, LLC  
Community Managers Associates, Inc.  
Community Property Management  
Constructors 911  
Creekside Homeowners Association HOA  
FirstService Residential Missouri  
FirstService Residential Missouri  
Harbor Lakes  
Harbor Lakes  
HOALiving  
HOALiving  
Hotwire Communications  
Huntsdale HOA  
Huntsdale HOA  
Kansas City Kansas Community College  
Kenrick Parke Condominium Association  
Kenrick Parke Condominium Association  
Kickapoo Properties Condominium Association  
Lake Saint Louis Community Association  
Lake Sherwood Estates Association  
Mediacom Premier Communities

Rick Dames  
Mr. Tyler Arnold  
Ms. Donna Abrams  
Ms. Laurie Calzada  
Britt Danzer  
Mr. Jeff Forller  
Ms. Theresa Galakatos  
Mr. Joe Harding  
Mr. Steve Hunkins  
Wendy Rogers  
Mr. Tony Eftimoff  
Mr. Harold Korb  
Mr. Ray Mahboobeh  
Ms. Jennifer Coco  
Mr. Zack Boever  
Ms. Robin Cosgrove  
Mr. Tom Lillie  
Ms. Kimberly Broswell  
Leann Hefner  
Ms. Sherri Ann Estes  
Daivd Carroll  
Patrick M Cook  
Ms. Felicia Benedetto  
Mr. Robert D. Board, Sr., CMCA, AMS  
Ms. Michelle Blackton  
Ms. Robin Christensen  
Darby Schmidt  
Charlotte Tingey  
Mrs. Marcy Lynn Kravit, CMCA, AMS, PCAM  
Mr. Stephen Baldwin  
Ms. Heather Lankford  
Ms. Carmen D Liimatta  
Mr. John Guhman, III  
Mr. Rob Shepherd  
Joseph William Payne  
Michelle Shelhamer  
Ms. Leatrice Dixon  
Ms. Jennifer Redman

Repairs Unlimited LLC  
RT Construction  
Sentry Management, Inc.  
The Georgian Condominiums HOA  
The Georgian Condominiums HOA  
The Georgian Condominiums HOA  
Townhomes at St. Andrews  
Townhomes at St. Andrews  
Villas at Kenrick Condominium Association  
Winter-Dent & Company

Mr. Cameron Mendez  
Jon Bish  
Mrs. Melanie Shedd  
Mr. Nick DeMarco  
Miroslav Petrelz  
Mr. Mike Wiliams  
Mr. Bill Bathe  
Mr. Jon Roeder  
Ms. Karen Vogelsang  
Mr. Matt Kujath

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**★CONGRATULATIONS★** **TO THE NEW CAL DESIGNEES**

### CMCA

Amelia Schmidt, CMCA  
HOALiving

Ms. Kristen Renee Hildreth, CMCA  
FirstService Residential Missouri

Ms. Leah Motley, CMCA  
FirstService Residential Missouri

Ms. Angie Roxann Webster, CMCA  
Holiday Shores

Patrick Michael Hampton-Hutt, CMCA  
Maryland Walk Condominium Association

### AMS

Mrs. Deborah Diane Birdsong, CMCA, AMS  
Treetop Village POA



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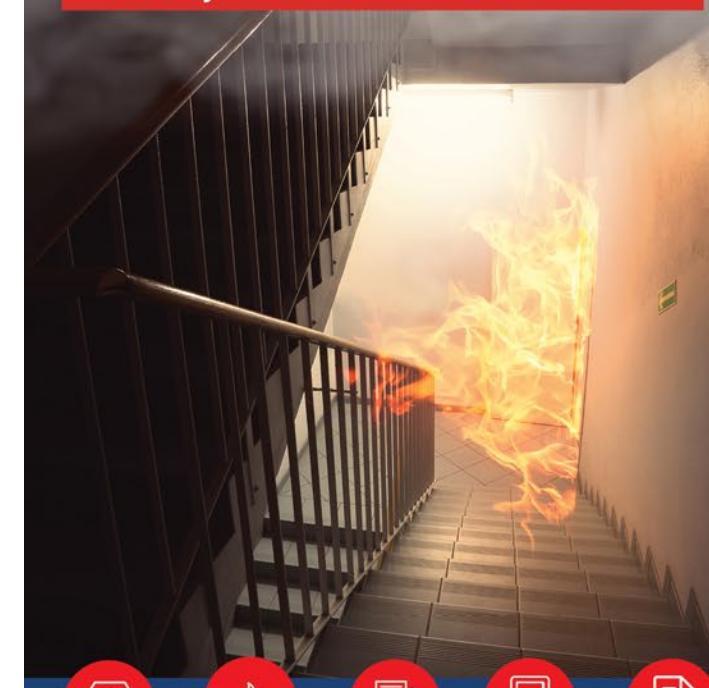
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# 2025 Legislative Session—MOLAC Update

By: Kerri Mitchell, Carmody MacDonald



The 2025 legislative session is well underway, and CAI-MOLAC is actively monitoring new legislation. CAI-MOLAC has reintroduced the **Missouri Uniform Homeowners' Association Act** in both the house (**HB1177**) and senate (**SB481**). HB1177 is sponsored by Rep. Mike Costlow and SB481 is sponsored by Senator Mike Bernskoetter. These bills would create a Homeowners Association Bill of Rights to standardize the rights and responsibilities of homeowners in planned communities. The CAI-MOLAC believes that this legislation will play a crucial role in ensuring fair treatment for homeowners and empowering them to have a voice in the management of their communities.

## Backyard Chickens in Missouri - Litigation Continues

On August 26, 2024, Four Seasons Lakesites Property Owners Association, Inc. filed a lawsuit against the State of Missouri, which was later amended on October 28th to add, among other things, Andrew Bailey and Mike Parson as defendants. This lawsuit seeks to nullify the provisions of HB2062 that prohibit homeowners' associations in Missouri from restricting the ownership or pasturing of up to six chickens on any lot that is two-tenths of an acre or larger. The parties recently appeared in court for hearings on the Attorney General's Office filed a Motion to Dismiss and Four Seasons' Motion for Trial Setting. Judge Stumpe took the Attorney General's Motion to Dismiss under advisement and granted the Four Seasons' Motion for Trial Setting and set the case for a one-hour bench trial on March 28, 2025.

Both the Amended Petition and Motion to Dismiss can be found on <https://www.courts.mo.gov/cnet/welcome.do>.

## Support the Lawsuit

The CAI Missouri Legislative Action Committee (MOLAC) is providing support for this lawsuit. CAI firmly believes that land-use restrictions should be

determined by HOA homeowners, not mandated by state legislatures.

Please consider donating to help fund this legal challenge. Visit <https://advocacy.caionline.org/lac-donation-form/> and select "Missouri" to donate today! Your donation will help protect communities from unconstitutional state overreach and support the challenge of HB2062.

## Corporate Transparency Act (CTA)

As of December 2024, the CTA's enforcement has been subject to legal challenges. On December 3, 2024, in *Texas Top Cop Shop, Inc. v. Garland*, No. 4:24-CV-478, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas issued a nationwide preliminary injunction halting the enforcement of the CTA's reporting requirements. After, on January 23, 2025, the United States Supreme Court granted the government's motion to stay the nationwide injunction halting enforcement of the CTA.

A separate nationwide order issued by a different federal judge in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas, *Smith v. The United States Department of Treasury*, No. 6:24-CV-336 remains in place. Oral arguments are scheduled for March 25, 2025.

As a result of these disparate decisions, reporting companies are not currently required to file beneficial ownership information with the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) despite the Supreme Court's ruling in *Texas Top Cop Shop*.

On January 24, 2025, FinCEN issued the following guidance: "in light of the recent federal order, reporting companies are not currently required to file beneficial ownership information with FinCEN and are not subject to liability if they fail to do so while the order remains in force. However, reporting companies may continue to voluntarily submit beneficial ownership information reports." In sum, at this time and while the Smith order remains in effect, reporting is voluntary.

For information on how to file under the Corporate Transparency Act, please visit [CTAReview.com](https://CTAReview.com).

CAI's federal lawsuit against the U.S. Department of the Treasury, Secretary Janet Yellen, and the director of the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, challenging the application of the Corporate Transparency Act (CTA) on community associations, remains ongoing. For more details, visit CAI's website at <https://www.caionline.org/advocacy/advocacy-priorities-overview/corporate-transparency-act/>.

## Dollar-a-Door Campaign

Each legislative session in Missouri brings new proposals that can significantly impact our state's community associations. With the 2025 session underway, we need your continued support to educate legislators and strengthen relationships on behalf of your community.

Our success in advocating for or against important legislation depends on your contributions. By donating, you enable us to carry out essential legislative outreach and advocacy efforts.

We encourage you to consider donating just \$1 per door (or more) to help us represent your community at the State Capital. It's easy to give – donate online today at [advocacy.caionline.org](https://advocacy.caionline.org) or return the enclosed pledge form.

For more details, visit the CAI MOLAC's website at [caihartland.com](https://caihartland.com). 



## CAI Day at the Capitol Tuesday, 3/04, 8 a.m.- 4 p.m.

All CAI members are encouraged to attend. It's free for all members, but we ask that you register at [www.caiheartland.com/events](https://www.caiheartland.com/events) or scan this QR code

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## COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS LIVE 2025 WEBINAR SERIES BY CAI AND CAI CHAPTERS



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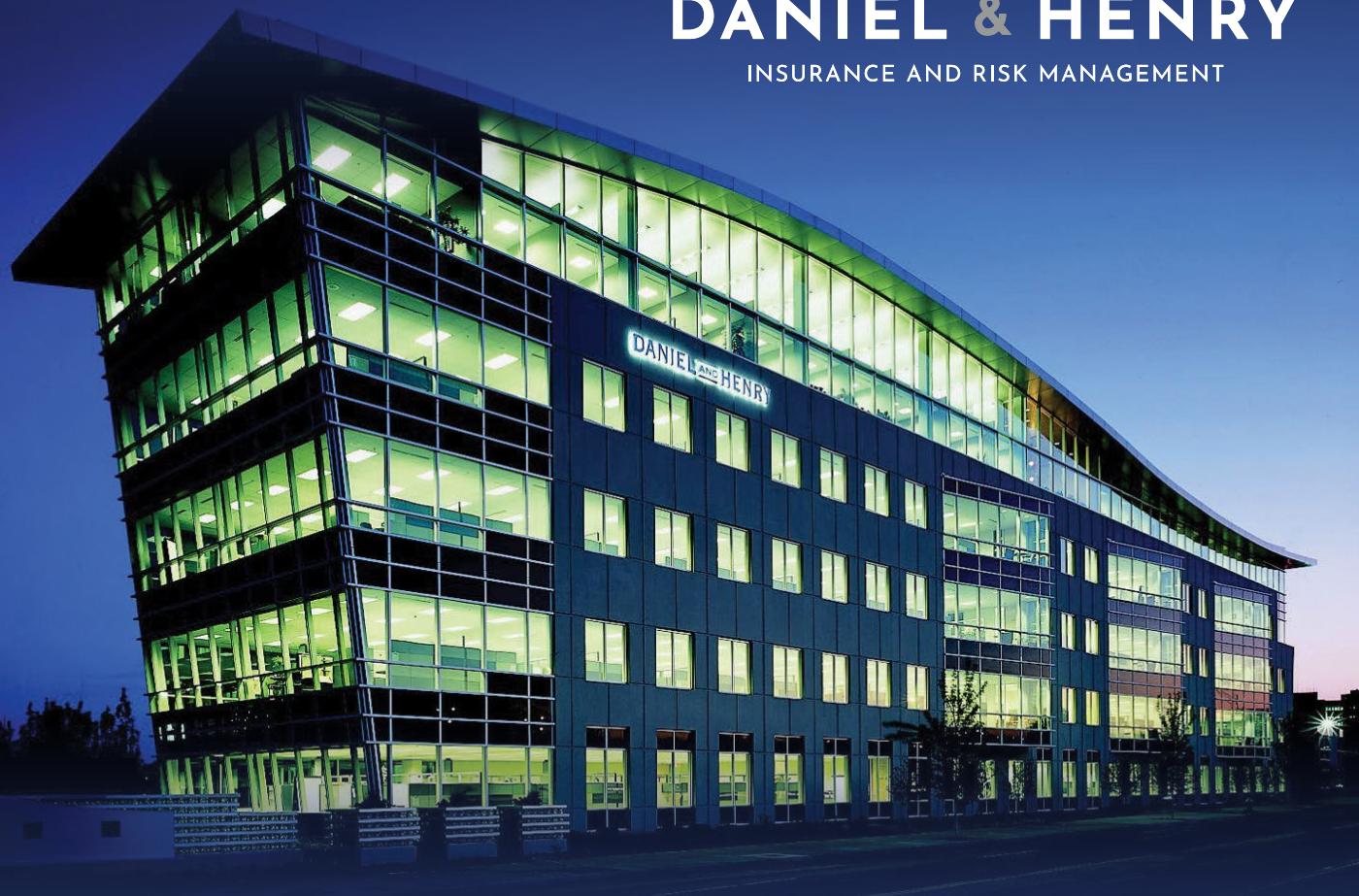
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- Balance due at maturity
- Ability to complete work, pay contractors, and preserve property values

#### TERM LOAN

- Budgeted line item; adjust annual budget to incorporate debt
- Increase assessments to cover loan expense
- Special assessment for per owner charge; owner can either pay in full or finance their share over term of loan

#### COMBINATION LINE OF CREDIT CONVERTING TO TERM LOAN

- Project amount uncertain
- LOC to provide availability of funds
- Pay for only what is used
- Term loan will allow for time to repay amount borrowed
- Commonly repaid through regular assessments, special assessments, or combination

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## 2025 EVENTS

# ST. LOUIS

<b>JAN 25</b>	<b>Board Leader Certificate Class</b> Wichita, KS Saturday, 9 a.m.- 2 p.m.
<b>FEB 05</b>	<b>Reserve Studies... So You Have One... Now What?</b> WEBINAR Wednesday, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
<b>FEB 11</b>	<b>PJ Theme Trivia Night</b> Woodard Cleaning & Restoration Tuesday, 4-7 p.m.
<b>MAR 05</b>	<b>Manager Peer to Peer</b> The Lodge in Des Peres Wednesday, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
<b>APR 02</b>	<b>Insurance Hot Topics: Risk Mgmt, Secondary Market; Fannie Mae-backed loans</b> WEBINAR Wednesday, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
<b>APR 09</b>	<b>Meet the Manager Event</b> The Lodge in Des Peres Wednesday, 5-7 p.m.
<b>MAY 14</b>	<b>Maintenance Round Table</b> The Lodge in Des Peres Wednesday, 11 a.m.- 1 p.m.
<b>JUN 03</b>	<b>Annual Manager Reception</b> Westport 360 Tuesday, 4-6 p.m.
<b>JUN 04</b>	<b>Ignite your Passion, Find your Purpose</b> WEBINAR Wednesday, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
<b>AUG 12</b>	<b>Annual Trade Show/ Expo</b> Sheraton Chalet in Westport Tuesday, 4-7 p.m.
<b>SEP 03</b>	<b>Board Member Peer to Peer</b> The Lodge in Des Peres Wednesday, 6-8 p.m.
<b>OCT 01</b>	<b>2025 Legal Update</b> WEBINAR Wednesday, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
<b>OCT 13</b>	<b>Annual Golf Tournament</b> Lake Forest Country Club Monday, Shotgun starts at 10 a.m.
<b>NOV 05</b>	<b>Succeed with Ease: When Overworked, Overwhelmed &amp; Overstressed Isn't Working</b> The Lodge in Des Peres Wednesday, 11 a.m.- 1 p.m.
<b>DEC 04</b>	<b>Holiday Party</b> Location: TBD

## 2025 EVENTS

# KANSAS CITY

<b>FEB 05</b>	<b>Reserve Studies... So You Have One... Now What?</b> WEBINAR Wednesday, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
<b>MAR 11</b>	<b>Manager Peer to Peer</b> Tomahawk Ridge Community Center Tuesday, 11 a.m.- 1 p.m.
<b>APR 02</b>	<b>Insurance Hot Topics: Risk Mgmt, Secondary Market, Fannie Mae- backed loans</b> WEBINAR Wednesday, 11 a.m.- 1 p.m.
<b>JUN 04</b>	<b>Ignite your Passion, Find your Purpose</b> WEBINAR Wednesday, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
<b>JUN 10</b>	<b>Annual Manager Appreciation Reception</b> Grand Street Cafe Tuesday, 5-7 p.m.
<b>OCT 01</b>	<b>2025 Legal Update</b> WEBINAR Wednesday, 11 a.m.- 1 p.m.
<b>OCT 07</b>	<b>RFP Best Practices</b> Tomahawk Ridge Community Center Tuesday, 11 a.m.- 1 p.m.
<b>DEC 09</b>	<b>Holiday Party</b> Harvey's Union Station

# Cyber crime: Protecting your community's sensitive data

By: Joni Lucas

Community association boards can use simple and inexpensive methods to protect sensitive data against cyber crime and breaches, according to an insurance expert.

During "[Cyber Threats: Claims, Risks and Protections for Community Associations](#)," a recent CAI webinar, Kevin Davis, CIRMS, president of Kevin Davis Insurance Services in Los Angeles, suggested community association board members and managers increase their awareness and knowledge of potential cyber crime by asking questions and having conversations with business partners.

Davis says board members sometimes have access to money and personal data such as social security numbers, account numbers, and drivers' license numbers. They may believe sensitive information is secure but can easily be [deceived into divulging information](#) for fraudulent purposes if they aren't paying attention, he says.

For example, if volunteers get unusual requests for bank and routing numbers, check it out before honoring the request. Once the information is released the information, they can't get the money back.

To protect themselves in case of an attack or breach, Davis advises community associations to research and invest in cyber crime insurance policies. The policies include cyber liability coverage, ransomware coverage, cyber first-party coverage, wire transfer fraud protection, and crime insurance coverage.

Installing multifactor identification, keeping computer systems updated, changing passwords regularly, shredding important paper documents, and tightening up systems and policies to prevent insider threats are other ways boards can protect themselves in the digital age.

Davis says it's also important to review management contracts and develop a plan in case management companies and third-party contractors don't have appropriate insurance coverage against cyber threats and breaches.

[Breaches can be expensive from a financial](#) and human perspective. Forensic exams, legal defenses, fines and penalties, and ransom demands can strain community budgets. "Think before you click," says Davis.

[>> Learn more about how to protect your community association from cyber crime.](#)

CAI



## Meet the Manager Event in STL

Wednesday, 4/09, 5 p.m. - 7 p.m.

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## Health and wellness: Leading a positive conversation in 2025

**By: Melissa Ramsey CMCA, AMS, LSM, PCAM**

In 2021, as chair of CAI's Community Association Managers Council, we focused on the health and wellness of managers. Over the course of that year, I became the "CAI wellness guru." Since then, the conversation has evolved to include much-needed dialogue around mental health and mindset in the industry.

People often talk about our industry in a negative light. Whether complaining about a recent violation or the potential for new legislation, there is always something wrong with community associations. Everyone is burned out from the negativity, and we continue to hold conflict resolution classes to support members.

As I embark on my term as CAI president this year, I would like to engage in a much broader health and wellness conversation. What if we focused efforts around the good? Imagine spending time and energy promoting the positive aspects of managing a community. We take time to highlight the wins and promote the accomplishments of volunteers, managers, and business partners.

Taking a positive approach can do wonders for physical and mental well-being. If we engaged in more positive self-talk, we would decrease stress levels, increase work performance, and improve relationships.

I encourage all CAI members to take the time to think about:

- What does wellness look like for our industry?
- What are the traits and characteristics that make us healthy?

- What accomplishments have been made to advance our roles?
- How can you implement positive affirmations into your daily routine?

We are a diverse community of professionals willing and able to support and boost colleagues and the industry. We are connected through our experiences. We understand the struggles and can offer each other encouragement for brighter days ahead.

With your support, we can show the world how healthy and happy community associations can be.

**CAI**

>>Read more about Melissa in "[A Positive Mindset](#)" from [Common Ground January February 2025](#).



# CTA NATIONAL UPDATE: FinCEN Announces Beneficial Ownership Reporting Requirements Remain Paused

Updated January 24, 2025, 12 PM EST

On Jan. 23, the U.S. Supreme Court [granted the government's motion to stay a nationwide injunction](#) halting enforcement of the Corporate Transparency Act in Texas Top Cop Shop, Inc. v. McHenry—formerly, Texas Top Cop Shop v. Garland.

A separate nationwide order issued by a different federal judge in Texas ([Smith v. U.S. Department of the Treasury](#)) still remains in place.

**As a result of these disparate decisions, reporting companies are not currently required to file beneficial ownership information** with the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network despite the high court's action in Texas Top Cop Shop. Reporting companies also are not subject to liability if they fail to file this information while the Smith order remains in force. However, reporting companies may continue to voluntarily submit beneficial ownership information reports.

On Jan. 24, [FinCEN issued the following guidance](#), "in light of the recent federal court order, reporting companies are not currently required to file beneficial ownership information with FinCEN and are not subject to liability if they fail to do so while the order remains in force. However, reporting companies may continue to voluntarily submit beneficial ownership information reports."

**According to FinCEN, and as of 12 PM EST on January 24th, this means that reporting requirements under the Corporate Transparency Act continue to be paused for corporations and nonprofits including applicable community associations.**

CAI continues to track movements in the federal courts over challenges regarding the Corporate Transparency Act and has contacted the United States Department of Treasury, urging an administrative delay be issued due to the chaos and confusion created by these

recent court rulings and Congress' deciding not to take legislative action to extend the filing deadline.

On Dec. 3, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas published a decision in the matter of Texas Top Cop Shop, Inc., et al. v. Garland, et al. issuing a preliminary nationwide injunction against the CTA. The court granted Plaintiff's request for a preliminary injunction, blocking the U.S. Department of Treasury from enforcing the act's beneficial ownership information (BOI) reporting requirements.

The court granted Plaintiff's request for a preliminary injunction, blocking the U.S. Department of Treasury from enforcing the act's beneficial ownership information reporting requirements. This injunction has since been stayed.

In his opinion, Judge Amos L. Mazzant III grants the plaintiff's request to preliminarily enjoin the government from enforcing the Corporate Transparency Act and its implementing regulations, ruling that "Neither may be enforced, and reporting companies need not comply with the CTA's January 1, 2025, BOI reporting deadline pending further order of the Court."

On Dec. 5, the government appealed this ruling to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. FinCEN [issued guidance](#) that "*in light of a recent federal court order, reporting companies are not currently required to file beneficial ownership information with FinCEN and are not subject to liability if they fail to do so while the order remains in force. However, reporting companies may continue to voluntarily submit beneficial ownership information reports.*"

On Dec. 18, CAI filed an [amicus brief](#) in support of the plaintiffs in Texas Top Cop Shop, Inc. v. Garland, et al., in their case challenging the CTA's implementation and the importance of maintaining the current nationwide temporary preliminary injunction. On Dec. 26th, a panel



of judges with the 5th Circuit upheld the preliminary injunction. This injunction was not a final ruling on the CTA's constitutionality.

On Dec. 31st, the Government filed a motion to stay this injunction with the U.S. Supreme Court, which was granted by the Supreme Court of the United States on Jan. 31st. On Jan. 10th, CAI filed an [amicus brief](#) with the U.S. Supreme Court requesting the nationwide injunction remain in place.

A separate nationwide order issued by a different federal judge in Texas ([Smith v. U.S. Department of the Treasury](#)) still remains in place. Oral Arguments are scheduled for **March 25, 2025**.

## CAI's Federal Lawsuit Status

On October 24, 2024, CAI's preliminary injunction request was DENIED by the federal judge in this case. While this decision was not the outcome CAI had hoped for, it does not mark the end of CAI's efforts. CAI appealed the court's denial of the preliminary injunction request on November 4, 2024, and on November 12, 2024, filed its opening brief of the appeal in the Fourth Circuit urging a pause on reporting requirements for community associations while this lawsuit is adjudicated. Legal briefing will continue in January 2025.

CAI's other lobbying and advocacy efforts continue on Capitol Hill seeking both a one-year delay of implementation of the CTA's reporting requirements and an exemption for community associations. The lawsuit itself is continuing to go through the legal process even as the preliminary injunction decision is being appealed. [CAI](#)

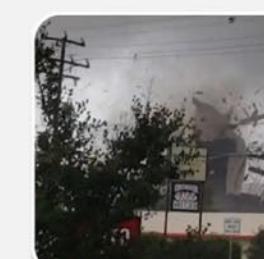
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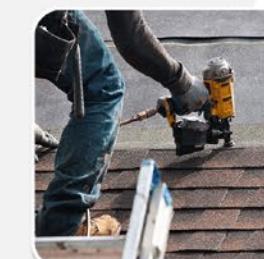
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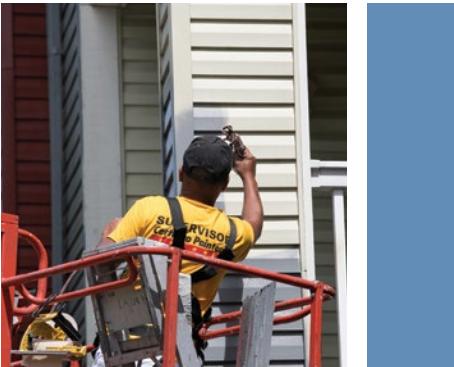
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# Workplace stress: Community association professionals emphasize wellness

By: Mike Ramsey

Portfolio manager Roberta Maxfield enjoys her job working for several communities, but there are challenges. An assistant helps her field inquiries from clients, but [burnout from workplace stress remains a risk](#), says Maxfield, CMCA, AMS, of Advanced Management Inc., in Bradenton, Fla.

To offset work-related pressures, she exercises, takes frequent walks, and goes out each afternoon for lunch. Maxfield also uses a meditative phone app with soothing sounds at the start of every day.

She's not alone. Leaders within the community association field are emphasizing the importance of physical and mental wellness for professionals and board members. To this end, Maxfield attended a mindful maintenance workshop last summer organized by the West Florida, Suncoast, and South Gulf Coast chapters of CAI.

West Florida Chapter Executive Director Scott Gilbert says the event covered time-management strategies and tips for curbing conflicts. It is part of an ongoing dialogue in the post-COVID-19 pandemic landscape.

Fallout from work-related stress pervades the U.S. workplace and economy, according to the American Institute of Stress, which estimates billions of dollars are lost through employee absenteeism, decreased productivity, and increased healthcare costs.

CAI President Melissa Ramsey, owner of Mosaic Community Consulting in Lancaster, S.C., has placed the issue of [wellness at the top of her agenda](#). "When you're doing more to help yourself and feel good, it does impact what you're doing at work," says Ramsey, CMCA, AMS, LSM, PCAM, a cancer survivor who has focused on her own physical fitness. "Self-care isn't selfish. We all need it to show up and be the best version we can be."

Community manager Bill Overton, PCAM, says frank discussions about the [dangers of workplace stress](#) were nonexistent when he began his career in community management in 1989. Traditional U.S. work culture has expected employees to muscle through adversity — a premise he once embraced to his own detriment.

More recently, after widely sharing his story, Overton has emerged as an industry advocate for wellness. Today, he is executive director of the Toscana Country Club Homeowners Association in Palm Desert, Calif., where Overton says he and his bosses are on the same page about work.

Finding a way to cope is essential. "If you're going to have a good, long career in this space, you have to be able to interact with workplace stress in a healthy, life-sustaining way," says Alexis Firehawk, a shareholder at CHDB Law in Phoenix and a fellow in CAI's College of Community Association Lawyers.

In the context of community associations, Firehawk says, managers, attorneys, and board members can find themselves on the receiving end of outbursts when owners become emotional about their homes and quality of life. Meetings can become particularly volatile, she notes, and the challenge for professionals is to acknowledge complaints without being consumed by them.

There are no universal fixes. Everyone experiences workplace stress differently and may need to identify their own tools to offset work-related pressures. Leaders also caution that individuals who are suffering from chronic anxiety and related health problems may need medical help or counseling.

Personal circumstances also may play a role in [how people are able to handle stress](#). Maxfield says her status as an empty nester means she has fewer family



obligations to fit into her life. She also appreciates having a remote office, which creates a sort of buffer zone when she is not making on-site visits to her communities.

Career tweaks are another option. Ramsey stepped away from the stresses associated with front-line management to become a consultant. She exercises most days and logs her workouts in a calendar.

Professionals agree the growing discussion about wellness is a net positive regardless of where it may lead individuals. Gilbert, of the CAI West Florida Chapter, envisions additional seminars to explore the topic further.

"Right now," he says, "just making that small tick in the right direction is the best outcome you can ask for."

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>>Read more about how community association professionals are prioritizing their well-being in "[Even Keel](#)" from the January February 2025 issue of CAI's *Common Ground* magazine.

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# Outrunning burnout: Getting happy takes introspection

By: David J. Graf, Esq.

Governing, managing, and serving community associations has become increasingly demanding and stressful. Volunteers, managers, and business partners are attempting to outrun burnout, but it's no easy task.

Burnout means different things to different people. Trying to solve the vaguely defined problem of burnout is far more difficult than addressing specific aspects of your career and understanding how those aspects make you think and feel. If you don't do this specific work, you allow your career and mental state to be ruled by others. There is so much more that can be gained by addressing burnout through conscious thought and action.

Community association managers and volunteer leaders get burned out for many different reasons. I've outlined the six most common reasons and offered a few solutions below.

## Being Busy

One antidote to being mentally busy is to [calm the mind](#) through things like meditation, mindfulness practices, breath work, exercise, and practiced awareness. Recognizing that busyness is a state of mind is the takeaway. That doesn't immediately eliminate the feeling of burnout, but it might make you take some ownership of the feeling created by your thoughts and reinforced by your actions.

## Being Exhausted

There are a few types of exhaustion that can be mistaken for each other, so it is important to break them down. People are either physically exhausted, mentally exhausted, or emotionally exhausted. Each has different causes and solutions, and they are common across many industries.



## Lacking Passion or Being in the Wrong Career

I've coached and trained community managers around the country for 19 years. No career manager could adequately explain what it means to be a manager to someone outside the industry. It is unique. As much as we complain about the conflicts and dealing with crazy situations, most of us would miss it if the adventure was not there.

## Being in the Wrong Employment Situation

People who feel burned out can solve their problem by making changes within their current company or by going to another company. They have a vague "grass is greener" belief that things will get better with a change of employer. Never change employers voluntarily unless you can articulate exactly why you feel the need to do this and what specifically would be achieved beyond short-term excitement.

Most community managers who change employers occasionally do so because they believe their situation will be improved by a change. However, these reasons rarely seem to make the manager better off. When looking for a job, we focus on the benefits and when working the job, we fixate on the drawbacks.

Some managers burn out, need a break, and come back to a different employer after time off. Really good community managers make it look easy, and they are usually taken for granted. [Managers need time to decompress](#) from the hostility they absorb, and it can't be done in fragmented bits of time away from the desk.

## Feeling Unable to Deal with Aspects of the Job

Something in a manager's daily work life is intolerable, and it continues to drag them away from a satisfying job in community management.

The obvious issue is dealing with difficult people. Following that is attending night meetings. Coming in third is a surplus of emails. Then add a lack of appreciation by bosses, colleagues, or clients. To adequately address burnout, it is important to get absolute clarity on why the job is so difficult. It is crucial to identify the stressor so we can pick apart why it bothers us so deeply.

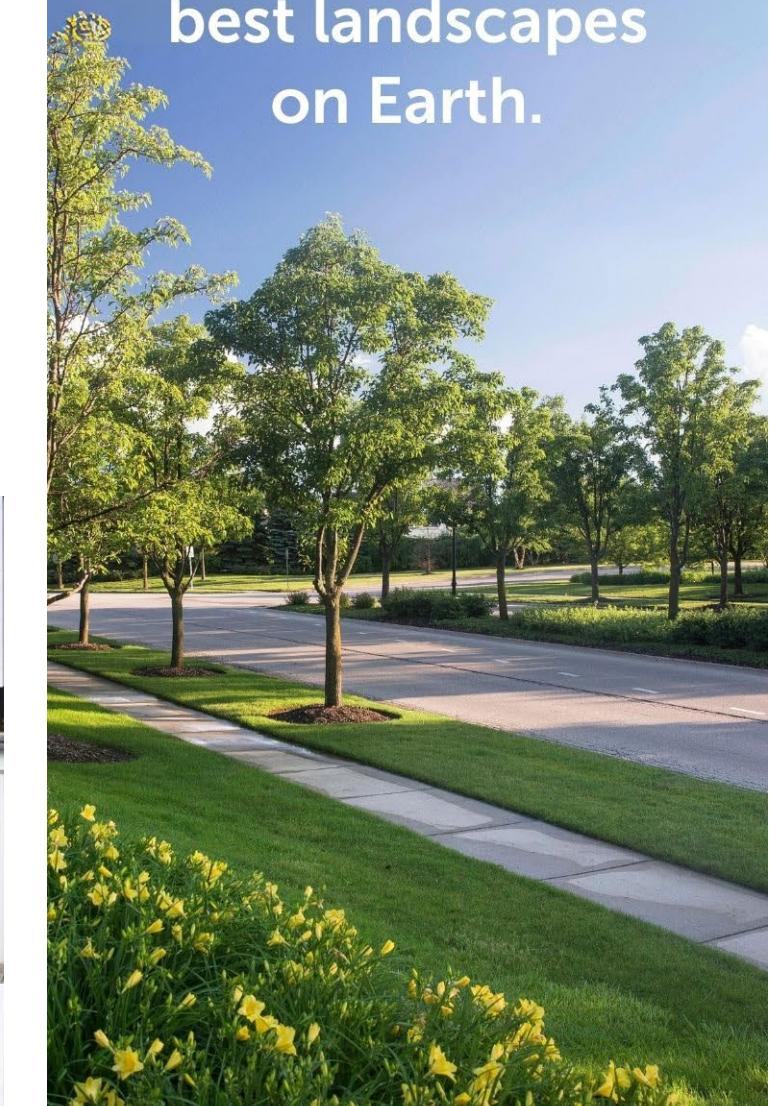
## Being a Workaholic or Numbing Undesirable Feelings Through Work

A lack of mental peace and the feeling you must work constantly can morph into a feeling of burnout. It can fuel career success to the exclusion of everything else in a person's life. Our society rewards and honors hard work. But the [toll it takes on health, relationships, and general quality of life](#) is staggering. Get a grip on this before it kills you. A good therapist could help you manage acute thoughts and feelings that keep you from functioning optimally in life. If you routinely avoid uncomfortable feelings by being a workaholic and don't want to continue doing that, a coach may be able to help you develop awareness and clarity on the thoughts causing issues. [CAI](#)



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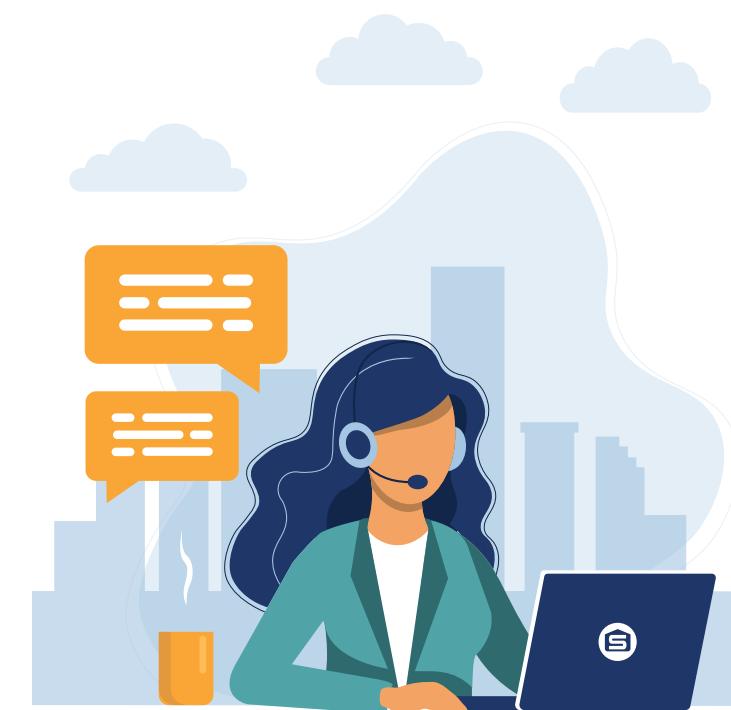
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