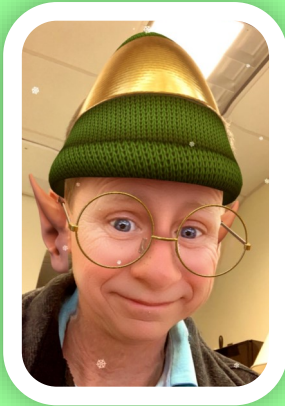




RESIDENTIAL READER

January 2021



I sincerely hope everyone enjoyed the holiday season. For us at the Local Housing Office, we received the gift of 47 Laurel Street! Yes, it's true. Forty-seven is nearly ready for occupancy!

That means that within the next few months, we'll get a new tenant and you'll get a new neighbor!

How exciting is that?

I hope you all have a wonder 2021. I look forward to seeing you all soon!

John



Blizzard of 1978, Boston, MA.
Photo from Massmoments.com

Base Boston and the Enigmatic Snow Day

One of the most commonly wondered about, but rarely asked, questions about Base Boston is how we handle those mysterious "snow days". You know the ones—where a strange mechanical voice calls you from out of the blue and says, "Hello... [member's name] this is an important message from United States Coast Guard alert warning system..." It then goes on to say something about Base Boston's status.

Or, maybe, you DON'T get that. Instead, you get notified by a person.

The fact is, snow days are more complicated than you think. In order to get from a few flakes to that alert warning system (AWS) message (or lack thereof), a slew of things need to happen. In this article, I'll try to explain.

First, to be clear, Base Boston is *always* open. While true we may operate at a reduced capacity, we are a mission support unit and engage with our operators daily. They have needs and we fill them. In other words, we would NEVER put the lives of mariners at risk because of foul weather. If our boat and ship operators need to go out, regardless of the conditions, we will be there to support them. Closing the base is never an option.

So where do "snow days" come from?

When situations suggest that the weather, for example, would create more harm than good for the vast majority of our population (including Base employees and those of our tenant units), the Base Commanding Officer (CO) will engage a host of

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ICYMI

There was **no** December issue of the Residential Reader.

The "elf" was too busy eating cookies.

Snow Days *(continued)*

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resources to decide best course of action. These resources include, but are not limited to, the National Weather Service, the Boston Federal Executive Board, the First Coast Guard District, Sector Boston, the Director of Operational Logistics, the Base Officer of the Day, and the Base Snow Team (the Snow Team clears the parking lots and sidewalks). Once all information is gathered, the CO will discuss with the Executive Officer (XO) for a decision.

Decisions can range from a delayed opening, where employees may be granted “extra” time in the morning to make their way to work, to an excused absence. Excused absences are, in essence, dependent upon who you are and what you are capable of doing. To make a very complex story short, excused absences are “snow days” to some, telework days for others,



and regular work days for even others.

I said it was complex, right? It is.

Making it more complex, *the Base CO's decision is for Base employees only*. The Base XO will “advise” other commands located on the property. What *they* decide to do is entirely up to them. Since Base Boston is made up of a number of commands (Station Boston, ANT Boston, cutters, Department of Defense, Coast Guard Exchange System, Coast Guard Investigative Service, and more), each has the authority to either agree or disagree with the Base CO.

For you folks at housing, this means that your neighbor may (or may not) be working or may (or may not) have a delayed opening. They may or may not get an AWS message, too. It will all depend on who works for who and who uses what system to notify their workforce.

While most follow suit with the Base's decision, it's not a guarantee. **It is incumbent upon the service member to check with his or her command.**

For Base Boston personnel, there are two ways for “hearing” about delayed openings or excused absences. The first is via the Alert Warning System or AWS. AWS is a text/email/phone notification system based on the Coast Guard Personnel Accountability and Assessment System (CGPAAS). For spouses and dependents, it's essential that your military counterpart ensure that CGPAAS dependency is up-to-date. If it's not, you will not be notified.

The second way is to call the Base Boston Status Line (or Snow Line). Base Boston will determine next day's status by 1800 the night prior to. Calling after 1800 will let you know whether it's normal operations, delayed opening, or excused absence. For members attached to other (tenant) commands, we recommend calling the Snow Line and ALSO reaching out to your supervisors to confirm status.

The Snow Line number is **(617) 223-3270**.

Finally, we do have a subset of employees that, regardless of weather, will be working. Remember, Base Boston never closes. These essential folks are our Teleworkers, Duty Section, Snow Removal Team, and, depending on the tenant command, watch standers. If your military counterpart happens to be a teleworker, or is authorized telework, *he or she will be expected to work during any excused absence* (sorry, teleworkers, it's part of the agreement). For the others, port operations, snow removal, and search and rescue and law enforcement don't stop because of inclement weather. Someone has to do it and it's our Duty Section, Snow Removal Team, and, watch standers.

As complex as this process is, it works. Still, we occasionally get outliers—usually due to poor communications or missing data in CGPAAS. Should someone arrive early on a delayed arrival or excused absence during or after heavy snow, for instance, do **not** be surprised if you are turned away. The Base has very limited real estate and a rather large manifest of government vehicles. Oftentimes the parking lot is choked with snow and our Snow Removal Team needs all that empty space to navigate and pile snow (environmental law prohibit us from pushing snow into the Charles River). Extra cars make the situation worse (and may lead to accidental damage to your vehicle).

New England weather can be unpredictable and often varies

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Frequently Asked Questions



Question: If I'm experiencing marital discord, are the barracks available to me for a few days?

Answer: While we hope this never happens, yes, we can accommodate the *military member*. Should marital discord create an untenable home situation, the Housing Manual does allow the military member up to 15-days at "no charge" in the barracks. Extensions beyond that would incur service fees.

Question: Can I bring my pet on Base?

Answer: No. Command policy is very clear: no animals of any kind are allowed on Base Boston unless there is a clear medical reason with proper documentation. This includes quick visits to the Exchange or simply to "drop something off". Vehicles with animals will be told to park outside the gate. Sorry, Fido.

Question: I'm living in Beverly Housing and notice I'm still receiving Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) on my Leave and Earnings Statement (LES). Should I say something?

Answer: Absolutely—and do it quickly! BAH is designed to augment housing costs when government-owned housing is **NOT** available. Since you were assigned government-owned housing, you are **NOT** entitled to it. If you receive BAH while assigned to Beverly housing, *you will owe that money back*. Monitor your LES statements and something quickly should you be receiving BAH. The last thing you want is to be in an overpayment status.

Question: What is the Go!Card Program and how can my military spouse use it?

Answer: The Go!Card is a credit card issued to *government employees* who would like to use Mass transit or Van pooling to commute to and from work and do **NOT** have an assigned parking spot at Base Boston. Unfortunately, this means spouses *cannot* take advantage of the program. The maximum amount authorized for transportation expenses monthly is \$270.00. You purchase your monthly fare card or pass using the Go!Card and do not see a bill as the Coast Guard pays it. For those in Beverly, it **CAN** be used on the commuter rail! Speak to one of our Housing Management Specialists for more information.

If you have a question you'd like us to answer, please e-mail the Local Housing Officer at John.R.Cole@uscg.mil.

We'd love to hear from you! ❄️

Breaking News: We have a Buffer!



Hot off the press!

Your Local Housing Office now has a *buffing machine* that you can use to complete your Termination Inspection requirements! Yes, it's true! Instead of paying out-of-pocket costs to **rent** a buffing machine, you can make a request direct to us and borrow our equipment. Free of charge!

But (and there's always a "but")...

You'll have to pay for a buffing pad and associated floor wax (if your floor requires it). The good news is that the pads and wax are relatively inexpensive and available at both The Home Depot and Lowe's.

What? You've never used a buffing machine?

No worries. Speak to one of our Housing Management Specialists during your Pre-Termination Inspection. They will provide you with all the information you need to be successful.

The big question? What do we name it?

Any suggestions? ❄️



Snow Days *(continued)*

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from place to place (10 inches in Lowell and 2 inches in Boston). If, at any time, you feel that the conditions are too unsafe for travel, work with your supervisor. For, Base Boston personnel (civilian and military), the liberal leave policy is always an option. This policy basically says that if the Base is open but your local conditions prohibit safe travel, you may be authorized leave without advanced planning. While there are no guarantees it will be approved (everything is based on criticality of your job and your mission), supervisors tend to lead towards approval.

We hope you all have a safe and enjoyable winter. As for me, I hope it ends quickly. I'm a summer person. ❄️

Housing Staff Spotlight



Congratulations to MK3 Bradlee Chofay who received a well-deserved Commander's Intent Award! MK3 Chofay worked for our Barracks and has now departed for Station Point Allerton.

Furry Family Members

If you'd like to feature your furry family member to the rest of Beverly Housing, and to our team, simply drop us a line

Send a picture and a short paragraph about your pet and we'll feature him or her in a future issue of the Residential Reader.

Remember, pets are family, too!



Milkbone lives with John Cole, the Local Housing Officer.



Winston lives with Christine Reilly, our Housing Management Specialist.



Base Boston Local Housing Office

Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday, 0700 to 1530
USCG Base Boston :: 427 Commercial St., Boston, MA
02109 :: Building 1, 3rd Deck

Local Housing Officer	Mr. John R. Cole	(617) 223-3348
Housing Management Specialist	Ms. Christine Reilly	(617) 223-2024
Housing Management Specialist	Mr. Colum Kearns	(617) 223-3366
UPH/Barracks Manager	CS1 Charmaine Laford	(617) 223-3171
UPH/Barracks Assistant Manager	CS1 Daniel Knight	(617) 223-3171
Housing Maintenance (Business Hours)	Facilities Engineering	(617) 223-3279
Housing Maintenance (After Hours)	Engineer of the Watch	(781) 953-5545