

## THINGS EVERYONE NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT CO-OP MEMBERSHIP PARKS

As you explore “Co-op/leaseholder RV Parks”, it’s important to know and understand how such parks operate and work together for the good of all involved as well as the expectations and responsibilities of each member.

Most co-ops were built and financed by a group of like-minded RVers. They were hard-working and unwavering in their commitment to create and maintain their concept of the ideal RV Park. They shared responsibilities and expectations requiring many hours of arduous labor. In the process, they created a genuine community spirit while toiling and brain-storming, in the give-and-take manner expected of all members of any cooperative project.

Here’s a look at what sustains a successful Co-op Park:

- 1) Most co-ops “survive and thrive” with **volunteer labor** of leaseholders. Often there are a few paid employees for day-to-day management of a Park, but most of the work is done by members. This means that as a leaseholder of a co-op, you are expected to participate in the upkeep and ongoing work of the Park; not necessarily a full-time commitment, but not a “vacation” home either. These Parks generally offer lower-than-market annual maintenance fees.
  - Some co-ops utilize a larger paid workforce in lieu of leaseholder volunteer labor. Employees are hired to perform needed upkeep and labor (if the membership elects to do so) to fulfill the tasks required to maintain the Park in the proper manner and to provide activities. Annual maintenance fees are higher in such Parks to cover the costs of direct labor and payroll expenses.
- 2) **Volunteer jobs** and committees at co-op Parks are varied and many. Examples are:
  - Landscape: upkeep, planting, trimming, spraying, weed-eating, irrigation system etc.
  - Maintenance: Plumbing, small electrical, light road upkeep, building repairs, monitoring septic/sewer systems, seasonal upkeep on buildings & grounds, painting projects, etc.
  - Clubhouse/Kitchen/Activities: Routine cleaning; planning/hosting dinners, ice cream socials, potlucks, crafts and activities; set-up & clean-up for events, seasonal decorating
  - Technology: Audio/video, Wi-Fi and other systems assistance and maintenance
  - Laundry facility: Sweeping, cleaning; coin counts, general upkeep of laundry operation
  - Administration: Budget, mail, Board of Directors, welcome, elections, library, office, etc.

Co-op volunteer committees utilize numerous and varied skill sets granting members both gratification and fulfillment while sharing their talents with the Park.

- 3) Member **presence and participation** in activities is vital for a Park to flourish. Members both play and work together to enjoy the comfortable lifestyle, amenities, joy and satisfaction that being part of a co-op can offer leaseholders. It’s important to remain active and to continue contributing to the upkeep and events of the Park, thru all ages.

This method of operation distinguishes co-op Parks from public or private “for profit” Parks. If you are considering membership in a leaseholder Park, it’s important to understand that you will be expected to actively work for the betterment of the Park as a whole. If you are physically or otherwise unable to do so, co-op membership may not be a good fit and you may not find them suitable to your inclinations. Be sure that you understand the expectations and responsibilities of membership, as well as the rewards, before committing to a co-op Park membership.