

VOPS Board:

We have been out of the country for the past several weeks and I just now have had a moment to respond to this mandate from the Board. In short, we feel this mandate is an overreach.

Some of our position is outlined below in blue text which corresponds to the mandate memo recently sent out by the board which is in black text.

From the conclusion of the Socotec Engineering report:

*"In addition, we also recommend replacing all the soffit vents, so that the attic space is properly ventilated. Improper ventilation can lead to elevated moisture and interior decay to wood framing, as well as elevated energy costs for cooling the interior spaces of the residences." This was a "recommendation" by the ~\$20,000 consultant. Engineering firms have to take the worst-case possible scenario to protect their professional liability and credibility. The "recommendation" from the professional engineering firm has been turned into a mandate by the VOPS board who are not engineering experts. The board overreach in this situation is making something a mandate that was a recommendation. What the board should have done as it relates to soffit vents is simply passed on the consultant recommendation to the owners and let the owners evaluate their own soffit vents and make their own decision on how they want to protect their own home. As everyone knows, VOPS is a different ownership / responsibility arrangement than most HOA communities. The board has the responsibility to maintain visible rotten wood, other external decay, architectural and visual consistency but not functional consistency within someone's home (i.e. air flow in the attic).*

**1. Helps control attic moisture in winter and hot air in summer.** *Contrary to popular belief, vents are not only necessary in warm places. In fact, every home, new or old, requires ample ventilation to provide "breathing room" for your overall structure. Ideally, venting should be a mix of 50% on your roof and 50% under the eaves or soffits. Proper distribution allows air flow in the attic space which can greatly minimize ventilation-related problems. In cooler climates, vents are used to combat moisture retention. In summer, on the other hand, proper ventilation allows good air circulation – which occurs naturally through the elementary principle of convection: Hot air rises and cold air sinks. Air flow in an attic is good, however this is the choice of the homeowner and not the HOA. If an owner has blocked or partially blocked vents and the attic gets hot, that is a functional issue and the owner's choice to address or leave alone. In addition, heat and moisture can escape from roof vent to roof vent. There is no proof my air flow is poor. In my case, my roof and attic space does not impact any other owner. My attic and roof is 99% independent of my neighbors attic and that connecting space is separated with a fire wall and insulation on my side and my neighbors side. The board has no objective evidence (data) that quantitatively shows that heat and humidity built up in one villa which has an adjoining fire wall and insulation, has any migration or impact on the neighbor's villa.*

*When considering owners who have the two-bedroom villa with matching attic space, these too have a fire wall and insulation on each side, and here again, there is no objective evidence (data) that heat and humidity buildup impacts the neighbor.*

*In both cases, this is speculation on the part of the board and speculation should not be used as the basis for this expensive mandate on owners.*

*Secondly, if the insulation (bat or blown) goes all the way up to the plywood decking of the roof, that placement of the insulation will block or restrict the air flow from the soffit vent to the roof vent. It does not matter if you have unblocked soffit vents, the air flow will be restricted. Has the board considered this before making this mandate? Based on your justification, are owners to anticipate next, that the board will mandate that we have our insulation placement inspected by another expensive consultant, and then mandate that insulation placement be adjusted under threat of fine? Where does the intrusion on owners end?*

**2. Helps prevent condensation inside and out.** *Poor ventilation can cause moisture to be trapped in your attic, which can lead to various other issues. The goal of ventilation is to balance the air inside and out. Another direct impact of condensation is seen on warped roof decks, rust that forms on nails, duct straps, and other uncoated metal objects. The HOA or the engineering consultant has no objective proof (moisture readings) that moisture content in our (or other owners) roof is higher than what is in the outside ambient air. The engineering report says “can” not does result in higher moisture content. There is no sign of condensation in my roof no objective proof of it. In my case, my roof and attic space does not impact any other owner. My attic and roof is independent.*

**3. Helps stop mold formation.** *Once condensation issues progress in your attic, mold, mildew, and fungi can form. The current soffit vent blockage on my home (and some other owners' homes) is about 10% blocked. That paint blockage (10%) on my vents has been there since the last time the villas were painted which was about eight years ago by the paint contractor selected by the Board. This theory of increased mold is factually debunked because if there was a case of mold or mildew it would have occurred over the past eight years and it has not in my home (and maybe the homes of others). The fact it has not happened over the past eight years is actual evidence that this theory in my home is not applicable. In our case, my roof and attic space does not impact any other owner. My attic and roof is 99% independent of my neighbors attic and that 1% connecting space is separated with a fire wall and insulation on our side and my neighbors side. If I had mold formation (and I don't) it would not migrate through these three barriers to my neighbor.*

**4. Helps provide adequate airing.** *If you're wondering why your indoor air smells kind of stale, it's possible that your home lacks air circulation. Good ventilation keeps your home fresh, dry and comfortable. This is a redundant point and our responses above cover the objection. In addition, our home has not ever smelled stale or uncomfortable. If it did, that is a homeowner's functional issue to decide if they wanted to address it and not the HOA. In my case, my roof and attic space does not impact any other owner. My attic and roof is independent.*

### **8 Common Problems Caused by Poor Ventilation**

*Attic ventilation is an important aspect of maintaining the overall health and longevity of a home. Without proper ventilation, a number of roofing problems can arise, from heat buildup and moisture accumulation and reduced energy efficiency. These issues can lead to structural damage, mold, and mildew growth, as well as costly repairs. In addition, poor ventilation can also attract pests and shorten the lifespan of roofing materials. Consider the following problems. This is a redundant point and our responses above covers the objection. In addition, there are no structural issues in my attic.*

#### **1. Heat Buildup in the Attic**

*When an attic isn't properly ventilated, hot air gets trapped inside. This causes temperatures to get progressively warmer. When attic temperatures reach a certain level, they can begin to damage the roofing system and other structural components. Heat buildup may occur due to blocked vents or when there aren't enough vents to accommodate the size of the attic and roof. This is a redundant point and our responses above covers the objection.*

## **2. Moisture Buildup**

Poor ventilation can also lead to moisture buildup in the attic. The prolonged presence of moisture will eventually cause mold and mildew growth, which is both unsightly and dangerous to both your health and the health of your home. If left untreated, mold and mildew can advance to rot and decay, causing building materials to lose strength and deteriorate. This can be catastrophic, as it may go unnoticed until the structural integrity is compromised. Keep an eye out for signs of water damage in your home and undergo roofing inspections regularly to address issues before they advance. *This is a redundant point and our responses above covers the objection.*

## **3. Sagging Decking**

The roof decking includes the wooden planks or sheets that form the entire surface area of the roof. When it's compromised, it can begin to bend or droop, causing a sagging appearance. This is often caused by a combination of factors such as improper installation, insufficient ventilation, water damage, age, and improper load distribution. However, sagging decking can be a serious problem as it can weaken the structural integrity of the roof. It's important to address any signs of sagging as soon as it's noticed and have it repaired or replaced by a professional roofing contractor. *This is a redundant point and our responses above covers the objection. My roof has recently been replaced, and I have no sagging decking. Again, my soffit vents have been approximately 10% blocked since the painting was last done. If this theory was reality, I would have seen it by now.*

## **4. Reduced Energy Efficiency**

As mentioned, without proper attic ventilation, hot air gets trapped inside and causes temperatures to rise. This heat can then transfer into the living spaces within your home, making it more difficult to regulate the temperature. During summer months, this can put excess strain on your HVAC system, which results in higher energy bills. This can also lead to more expensive HVAC repairs and replacements over time. *Energy efficiency is the functional choice of the homeowner and not the HOA. The HOA has no right to impose energy efficiency requirements on owners. In my case, my roof and attic space does not impact any other owner. My attic and roof is independent.*

## **5. Reduced Lifespan of Roofing Materials**

In addition to all the above, poor attic ventilation can also drastically reduce the lifespan of your roofing materials. Heat buildup can cause shingles to become brittle and crack, thus requiring more frequent replacements. Moisture buildup caused by a lack of airflow can also weaken roofing materials and decrease the overall lifespan of your entire system. Algae, mold, mildew, and moss growth can cause unsightly discoloration, staining, and shorten the lifespan of your roof. Plus, the added heat and moisture can increase the weight of the roof, which can lead to sagging or even a full collapse if not addressed in a timely manner. By maintaining proper attic ventilation, homeowners can extend the lifespan of their roof and avoid unnecessary repairs or premature roof replacements. *This is a redundant point and our responses above covers the objection. Again, my soffit vents have been approximately 10% block since the painting was last done by the HOA. If this theory was reality, I would have seen it by now. In addition, the functionality of my roof is my responsibility and not the HOA'S. The HOA can mandate what color my roof tiles need to be but cannot mandate I take expensive measures to improve my roof's lifespan.*

## **6. Pest Infestation**

Finally, poor attic ventilation can attract a variety of pests. Some of the most common types of pests that infest a roof include termites, rats and mice, squirrels, racoons, birds, wasps, bees, and even cockroaches. Each type of pest can cause unique damage and require professional removal, but without correcting the ventilation they will likely continue to happen. *This is probably the most outrageous statement of all. I have personally called Rob at Harps (our termite expert) and he with utmost clarity said changing out soffit vents to increase ventilation would have absolutely no impact on dry wood termites. Rob shared that he had told a VOPS board member this exact position over and over again and*

was quite surprised and put out that the Board would use this misinformation to influence owners to replace their roof vents. If homes have drywood termites it is because they flew in the top vents, through soffit light fixtures or someplace else but replacing soffit vents will have no impact on dry wood termites in the attic. An owner could have perfect soffit vents and still get drywood termites. Rats, squirrels and mice are addressed by properly filling in access gaps which owners have been told over and over to do. Bugs are addressed by spraying for bugs.

In summary, I think the board has overstepped with this mandate. Every house is different. Just because a few board members want to replace their soffit vents is no justification for making everyone do so. I think it is also disingenuous to send out all these theoretical justifications as the basis for this mandate and scare owners that trust you with thin justification, into making this expensive change. The engineering firm made a recommendation about the soffit vents and the board (who are not experts in this area) have made this recommendation a mandate.

Secondly, what this board left out of its mandate letter to owners, is that if the owner chooses not to replace their soffit vents the board can fine the owner up to \$5,000 and then forcefully replace your soffit vents, and then back charge the owner, and remove the owner privileges to the RFA per Sections 5.4, 12.8. I have had several owners tell me they are not going to replace their soffit vents mainly because they are not significantly blocked. The gravity of this mandate (fines and forced replacement) should be shared with all owners.

Thirdly, this important soffit vent mandate was never specifically listed on a VOPS meeting agenda, and the board (which is short one board member) did not discuss this openly in front of the owners, so the owners could hear the motion, discussion, and vote. Something this important and financially impactful to owners should not be decided and voted on in private emails, and/or phone calls between the four board members, which is a violation of the Florida Homeowner Association Statues.

We think it would be wise of this board to step back and rethink this mandate.

Dale and Mary Pendleton  
4046 Crayton Road