



Safeguard Properties

REO YARD MAINTENANCE FIELD REFERENCE GUIDE

2017

Customer Service = Resolution®

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Important Phone Numbers:

IT Help Desk: (800) 852-8306 Ext. 3999

Vendor Contact Center (VCC):

vccreo@safeguardproperties.com

Vendor Account Managers:

(800) 852-8306 or (216) 739-2900 Ext. 3200

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**Do not call for invoice disputes.
All invoice disputes must be handled through Vendor Web per Memo 1461.**

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Purpose of the Reference Guide

This Reference Guide will function as an informational guide regarding the Policies and Procedures (“Policy”) Safeguard Properties expects you to follow as a condition of doing business with us. These Policies and Procedures apply to each Work Order you receive from Safeguard. You should refer to this Reference Guide if you have a policy question. However, Safeguard reserves the right to add, change, amend and/or delete any policy at any time, with or without notice. If you have any questions regarding a specific policy or how the company interprets said policy, please contact your Vendor Account Manager. Generally, new positions are set forth in Memos.

This Reference Guide sets forth the Policies and Procedures you are expected to follow while performing any work order for Safeguard Properties.

For overview information that applies to all work orders for Safeguard service lines please refer to the General Safeguard Procedures.

Independent Contractor Status

This Reference Guide shall not be construed as creating an employee/employer agency, partnership, or joint venture relationship between you or any of your agents and employees, and Safeguard Properties, its employees, agents, officers and/or affiliates. It is the clear intent of the parties that every contractor performing work for Safeguard Properties shall be and remain an independent contractor and shall not be deemed employees or agents of Safeguard Properties. No contractor has the right to receive work from Safeguard Properties. Work is awarded based on performance only and is determined on an individual basis.

Vendor Score Cards

Vendors are expected to complete at least 95% of their grass cuts and other orders “on-time”. Completed grass cuts are considered “on-time” when completed and submitted by the due date. To help vendors track their performance, vendor score cards are provided weekly. Vendor score cards record quality, on-time completion and on-time submission of orders.

Vendors scoring less than 95% on-time and/or with poor quality are at risk and may have work reassigned without notice.

Use of Safeguard’s *Photo Direct* mobile application (APP) will be a key factor in determining work order allocation. Non-compliant vendors may have work reassigned.

Due Dates & Late Orders

- All orders have due dates.
- **Initial** grass cuts are “on-time” when completed beginning the first day of the month due up to the due date.
- **Recut** grass orders are considered “on-time” when completed beginning two days before and up to the due date.
- ***Orders not updated and invoiced on Vendor Web by the due date are considered “late”.***
- ***Late orders are eligible for the Open Marketplace and reassignment by a Vendor Account Manager (VAM) without warning. Reassigned work will not be given back.***
- ***If for any reason, you know a work order will be late, contact your VAM before the order is late.***
- Reassigned late orders will result in a chargeback, when another vendor is paid a rush fee to complete.

Weather Delays

- Vendors are expected to understand local weather conditions. If a cut cannot be completed by the due date because the lawn is snow covered or is too wet (when cutting will cause damage) the vendor must provide a commitment date when they believe the cut can and will be completed, and update the status on Vendor Web.

No trip charges will be paid for snow covered properties. Vendors are expected to understand local weather conditions.

- For all grass cut orders, grass should be cut even if there is rain. Grass cuts should only be delayed for weather during lightning storms or when completing the grass cut would cause damage to the property.



Work Orders

Work Order Expectations

- Very Important: READ the entire work order. All orders are different. The guidelines in this document are superseded by any work order text.
- Each lawn is to remain in compliance with local ordinances/association standards.
- **When leaving the property the yard must be in “Ready for Sale” condition, this means:**
 - No debris, no leaves, clean edge lines, trimmed shrubs, weeds removed and sprayed, foundation and fence lines weeds trimmed, grass cut to 2” , no grass on driveway, walkways, or sidewalks, the exterior completely clear of any and all debris (bottles, newspapers, plastic, or other garbage), and all clippings removed.
 - All clippings removed from sidewalks, driveways, walkways, patios, and lawns (provide clear before, during and after photos).
 - All hard surfaces blown off.
 - The front, back and sides of house need to be maintained (before, during and after photos).
 - Weeds trimmed from fence lines, foundation of the home, driveways, and flower beds without damaging the existing plants or flowers. In addition, weeds found in driveway/sidewalk/walkway cracks must be sprayed with weed killer.
 - Shrubs trimmed and in marketable condition, all clippings removed.
 - Edging completed on all lawns maintained on each grass cut. This includes fence lines, foundations, driveways, walkways and sidewalks.
 - **Curb appeal is essential!**

Work Order Timeframes

- **Initial Grass Cuts** are “on-time” when completed beginning the first day of the month due up to the due date.
 - Ex. An order with a due date of 4/7 is considered “on-time” when completed and updated 4/1 through 4/7.
- **Recuts - Monthly/Bimonthly Grass Cuts** are considered “on-time” when completed beginning two days before and up to the due date.
 - Ex. An order with a due date of 4/7 is considered “on-time” when completed and updated 4/5 through 4/7.
- Invoices for recuts completed 3 or more days prior to the due date will be denied.
- Check Vendor Web multiple times daily for new orders, cancellations and order status changes. While an email notification may be sent, Vendor Web is the gold standard for orders.

Overgrowth

- If the grass is over 1 foot high, you may invoice for each additional foot of overgrowth over 1 foot (12 inches) per the *Seasonal Pricing Guide*. Clear “before” photos must be uploaded to Vendor Web to document the overgrowth. Photos should include ruler photos and photos showing overgrowth over the majority of the property.

Initial Cut Only

- Additional grass height should be invoiced per the *Seasonal Pricing Guide*.
- The use of special equipment may not be invoiced for heights of 36 inches or less.
- For grass taller than 36 inches vendors must review the *Seasonal Pricing Guide* for equipment and additional labor rates. Costs will be verified by a cost estimator.
- If you are more than four days late on a grass cut, you cannot invoice for additional height.

Cancelled Orders

- If you receive a cancellation on an order that you have already completed, only if the order was cancelled by the client do you have 24 hours to update the work order, submit your photos and invoice. (The orders will be found in your cancellation tab)
- If the order was cancelled or voided by Safeguard the 24 hour rule does not apply, the order is cancelled and removed immediately and will not be returned.

Occupied REO Properties

Complete services on the property unless direct contact is made with the homeowner. If this occurs, please leave the property and take photos to support.

City Lots, Standard Lots, and Lots over 1 Acre

- Follow work order instructions.
- City Lots:
 - Lots with cuttable grass area less than 100 SQFT (10 ft x 10 ft) are considered “City Lots” and invoiced per the *Seasonal Pricing Guide*, regardless of vendor’s flat rate. Vendors should report City Lots when updating orders on Vendor Web.
- Standard Lots:
 - Lots with grass area greater than 100 SQFT and up to 1 acre in size are considered “Standard Lots” and are invoiced at your agreed upon flat rate.
- Lots over 1 acre:
 - **You must call from site, and obtain approval to complete.**
 - **You must get Broker E-mail.**
 - If the property is over 1 acre and the broker or client requests the entire lot be cut, vendors should cut the entire lot and invoice their flat rate for each acre cut.
 - Example: You cut 1 acre and your flat rate is \$25. You would invoice \$50 for 2 acres, \$75 for 3 acres, etc.

Shrubs, Weeds, Trees and Vines

Shrubs

All shrubs on the property, regardless of location, should be maintained as part of the lawn care on every visit. This **ensures the property remains in a marketable state**.

Vendors may only invoice for shrub trimming on the initial cut or if there is overgrowth present at the property. Shrub trimming should be invoiced per the *Seasonal Pricing Guide*.

Overgrowth is defined as:

- Shrubs are causing damage.
- Shrubs have grown above window sills or are touching siding.
- Shrubs have three inches or more of new growth or the shrub has grown enough that it needs reshaped; reshaping a shrub should only be necessary a few times throughout the year.

Although a vendor may only invoice for shrub trimming on an initial cut or if there is overgrowth, routine shrub maintenance **must** occur on every cut to keep the property in marketable condition. Therefore overgrowth should rarely occur once the initial cut is completed.

When invoicing for overgrowth, clear before, during and after photos must be provided with the order update on Vendor Web, supporting that one of the above conditions existed or the vendor will not receive payment.

Foliage less than 13 ft tall is considered a shrub per the U.S. Forestry Service and should be included in linear foot measurements for shrub trimming when invoicing.

Shrub trimming should be completed and invoiced per the *Seasonal Pricing Guide*.

Trees

Vendors may invoice for tree trimming only when overgrowth exists. Trees on the property should only be trimmed when they meet one of the following overgrowth conditions. Tree trimming should be invoiced per the *Seasonal Pricing Guide*.

Overgrowth is defined as:

- Trees are causing damage
- Trees are noted on a current posted citation/violation at the property

Trees should be cut and invoiced per the *Seasonal Pricing Guide*. If the above conditions are met and the tree cannot be cut from the ground, a bid should be submitted. Clear photos must be uploaded to Vendor Web to support all work noted in the bid.

Foliage (shrubs) over 13 feet tall is considered a tree. When one of the two conditions above is met and trimming can be completed from the ground, complete trimming for the per-tree allowable if it is present in the work order. Remove all clippings.

Saplings must be removed. Saplings have branches and are considered weeds.

Vines

- Non-Decorative vines are to be removed from the structure and invoiced per the *Seasonal Pricing Guide*.
- The revised REO Grass Vendor Reference Guide is available on Vendor Web under online training materials for your reference. Vendors are responsible for reading and understanding the manual.

Weeds

- Weeds should be cut back with a line trimmer and sprayed with weed killer. Please ensure the weed killer you are using is compliant with governing laws and regulations.

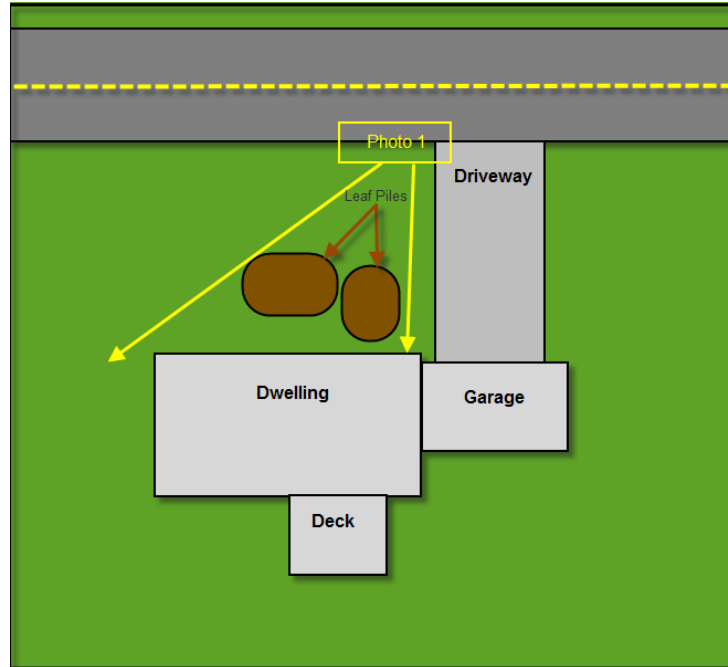
Leaves and Debris

Leaves

- Leaves are considered debris and must be removed when present at a property. Invoice removed leaves by CYD (cubic yard).
- Remove leaves from flower beds, walkways, back yard, side yards, front yard and along all fence lines. Vendors should provide clear “before”, “during” (collecting leaves), and “after” photos, photos of leaves loaded in a vehicle for removal, and photos of the yard once grass cut and leaf pickup is completed.
- Remove leaves from front yard, flower beds, sidewalks, walkways, back yard and along fence lines. All leaves should be removed within a 1 acre perimeter with focus on the front yard, then side yards, then back yard.
- Collect leaves into a single area prior to removal (not to exceed three (25’x25’x6’) piles).
- Height of pile(s) should not exceed 6 ft.
- Leaf pile should contain no peaks or valleys.
- Removed leaves should be invoiced by the CYD (cubic yard) per the Seasonal Pricing Guide. Invoicing by 30 gallon bag is no longer an option.
 - 1 CYD = 3 ft x 3 ft x 3 ft = 27 ft³
- Some cities have leaf pickup. Vendors are not allowed to leave bags or piles of leaves at the curb for the city to pick up. Leaving leaves for the city to pick up takes away curb appeal.
- Leaves may not be burned at the property.
- Photos of leaf pile(s) should include the house or similar structure for context. The same structure should be used for all photos. (ex. front of house)

Photos

- Before Photos
 - Photos of yard before leaves have been collected.
- During Photos
 - One photo of all collected leaves (not to exceed three (25'x25'x6') piles). Include house in background for context.



- Ruler photos showing full length, width and height of pile with placards noting measurements
 - Length Photo (with person for context)
 - Width Photo (with person for context)
 - Height photo (with person in front of pile for context)
- After Photos
 - Photos of yard showing leaves have been removed from all areas
 - Photo of all leaves loaded and ready for transport (measurements not necessary)
 - When using a closed loop system (eg. box truck with leaf vacuum) provide photos of leaves being vacuumed up. Include truck and property in photo for context.

Debris

- Yard waste, including twigs, branches, palm fronds and pine cones is debris and is to be removed on every grass cut as part of each lawn service.
- If debris is present and it is less than ½ cubic yard, you are expected to remove it as a part of your order.
- If debris is present and it is greater than ½ a cubic yard, it must be removed. Invoice for debris removal.
- If you are not able to remove it, mow around the debris and note that debris is present when updating the work order.
- If there is tall grass, please check for debris, before mowing. This will prevent damage to mowers and neighboring properties.

Redemption Grass Debris Removal

- Remove all incidental or landscape related debris. If the debris is not landscape related, call the VCC from site to report the debris.

Violations & Postings

- Advise Safeguard of any violations/citations posted at the property. The information below is needed when a violation/citation is found.
 - A photo of the citation/violation (Use document setting in Photo Direct)
 - Contact name and phone number
 - City department and type/purpose of violation,
 - Date of violation and compliance date (if noted)
 - In addition, please post the sticker referenced in Memo 1211: Code Enforcement / City Violation Stickers.
- Call ext 2292 if there is a violation that you cannot cure within the allowable.
- If you find a property posted for demolition, call ext. 2173 from site immediately.
- You must ensure that the properties, on your grass cut order list, do not get city citations or violations for poorly maintained yards. Any violation incurred while under a vendor's management may be assessed to the vendor.

Unsecure Issues

If any of the following conditions are found upon arrival at the property, call the VCC (ext 2292) from site. Report the issue on your update with photos to support.

- Property is found unsecure, do not enter the property.
 - Examples: front door kicked in, broken window, etc.
- Unsecure pool - meaning pool is uncovered or not behind a locked fence.
- Visible damage to the property that could result in immediate harm.

No Access

- You must carry a padlock key to gain access to the backyard. If you cannot gain access to the rear of a property because the gate is locked, refer to your work order for padlock and broker contact information. If information is not present on your work order, call the Vendor Contact Center (ext 2292) from site.
- Do **NOT cut or otherwise remove the padlock off the gate to the rear**. This will leave the property or pool unsecure. This may result in immediate termination of work.

Maintained by HOA /Someone Else

- If the property is maintained by an HOA, condo, gated community, or someone else (including occupied), it is the vendor's responsibility to report this to Safeguard. Invoicing for properties maintained by an HOA is not permitted.
- To update an order when a property is maintained by someone else, photos and contact information (name and phone number) of the party maintaining the property are needed.
- Invoice a trip charge if property is maintained by someone else.
- If the front of the property has been maintained but the back and/or patio has not, you are expected to cut the back yard and/or around the patio area. Invoice your standard rate.

Updating and Invoicing

- All completed orders must be updated and invoiced via Safeguard's Vendor Web website: (<https://vnet.safeguardproperties.com>)
- All completed grass cuts must be invoiced at the rate agreed upon during the recruiting phase with the Safeguard Recruiter or at the city lot rate. This amount is located on your Pricing Agreement Form.
- All grass cuts under 1 acre must be cut for your agreed upon rate with the exception of city lots which are paid at a fixed rate.

Photo Expectations

- Safeguard's *Photo Direct* mobile application (APP) must be used to take and submit photos as well as answer questions in the field.
- Provide before, during, and after photos of any shrub trimming that is completed. If shrub trimming is not necessary, photos of shrubs must still be provided.
- Whenever possible, "during" pictures should show workers in the yard performing the cut, trim, weed removal, etc.

Photo Standards

- All grass cut order photos must be date stamped
- Safeguard's *Photo Direct* app should be used to take and submit photos
- Before, during and after photos of the front, rear, and side yards on every order. Front , rear and side photos should be from the property lines, facing the house and from the house facing the property lines
- After photos must contain a photo of all 4 sides of the house and photos of the wheel tracks on all 4 sides of the house
- All before, during and after photos should include some portion of the house as a reference point
- During photos must contain weed whacking and a mower in the yard (front and back)
- Full front and rear yard, before and after are needed; close up or insufficient angles are not acceptable
- If property consists of desert landscape, photos of trimming and then spraying weeds with weed abatement are necessary. You must report the property as desert landscaping on your update
- Photos of the yard once grass cut and leaf pickup is completed
- Any additional work must follow the same principles of documentation
- Remember that this work is ordered and paid for by reviewers who can't visit the property to confirm that work was completed. The photos we submit are all the evidence we have to assure them that the work was done.

Failure to adhere to the photo standards listed may cause your invoice to be adjusted.

Photos

General Property Condition

- Photo of the address numbers or neighbor's house # as a reference point if not available
- Photo from the street facing the home/building with view of full front lawn
- Photos up and down the street to compare our property to the neighbors
- Photo of door knock.

Before the work

- Photos of front, rear and both sides from the property lines facing the house and from house facing outward towards property lines
- Fence lines, front yard, back yard, side yards including beds
- Photos of all gates allowing access to the yard
- Behind garage and outbuildings
- Ruler photo with retail grade ruler showing uniform overgrowth when invoicing or bidding overgrowth
- Leaves and debris before removal

During the work

- Weed whacking and weed killer application
- Edging
- **Mower in the yard (front and back) ****
- Collecting leaves and debris
- One photo of all collected leaves (not to exceed three (25'x25'x6') piles). Include house in background for context
- Ruler photos showing full length, width and height of leaf pile with placards noting measurements

After the work

- Photos of front, rear and both sides from the property lines facing the house and from house facing outward towards property lines
- **Photos showing wheel tracks on all 4 sides of the house ****
- Fence lines, front yard, back yard, side yards and foundation showing areas are free of tall weeds and grass.
- Photos of all gates allowing access to the yard
- Behind garage and outbuildings
- Top-down view of flower beds
- Under the deck/stairwell
- Edging completed along all paved surfaces
- All paved surfaces showing clippings removed
- All paved surfaces showing weeds removed
- Address from street facing the home/outbuilding
- **Ruler photo with a retail grade ruler showing grass under 2 inches ****
- Leaves in vehicle/trailer and ready for removal

**** Denotes mandatory photos for payment**

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What App should I use?

Safeguard's Photo Direct mobile application (APP) should be used for 2017 and will be a key factor in determining work order allocation. Non-compliant vendors may have work reassigned.

Q: What are the expectations for documenting work completed for grass cuts?

Questions must be answered and photos taken using a smart mobile device running *Photo Direct*, Safeguard's mobile application (APP). Property related questions should be answered while on site. Photos must be labeled correctly as "before," "during" and "after". Photos must support any bids submitted, as well as any conditions reported including damages. All grass cut photos must show the date the picture was taken on the photo. Photos must include clear before and after pictures of the entire property to document the work that has been completed. Any area not photographed properly may result in an invoice adjustment. Close-ups of grass trimmings are not acceptable because they do not identify the property. Both "before" and "after" photos should be taken from the same angle and location.

Remember that this work is ordered and paid for by reviewers who cannot visit the property to confirm work was completed. The photos you provide are all the evidence we have to assure our clients that work was completed.

Q. How do I download Photo Direct?

Photo Direct is installed directly to a user's smart device from Safeguard's mobile app download site. Type m.safeguardproperties.com in the address bar of your smart device's web browser.

Android

On Android devices, you may first need to change an option in your phone's settings menu to allow non-Market apps. This is typically found in the Security menu, although this may vary depending on the device and version of Android being used. Enable the "Unknown sources" setting.

Q: What if I have late work?

Late orders are eligible for the Open Marketplace and reassignment. Repeated late orders may result in reassignment of current orders and loss of future work. Orders reassigned due to poor performance may be reassigned without warning. Once work has been reassigned, it will not be given back. If you know you're going to be late contact your Vendor Account Manager (VAM) before the work is late.

If orders are late due to severe weather, ensure current work is completed first and remains "on-time", then complete late work. Do not complete late work at the expense of current work.

Q. How do we handle cancelled orders that have already been completed?

If you receive a cancellation on an order that you have already completed, only if the order was cancelled by the client do you have 24 hours to update the work order, submit your photos and invoice. (Cancelled orders will be found in the cancellation tab on Vendor Web).

If the order was cancelled or voided by Safeguard the 24 hour rule does not apply, the order is cancelled and removed immediately and will not be returned.

Vendors not meeting performance standards are at risk not only for the orders that are late, but all orders.

Q. How do we report the lot size?

Submit the lot size as length x width, in feet. Do not submit square footage. If the property is an acre, or 2 acres, etc., you can report it in this form.

Ensure measurements are correct the first time. We cannot change lot size once that information has been entered into our system.

Lots with cuttable grass cut area of less than 100 square feet (10 feet x 10 feet) are considered City lots. Lawn care services are to be completed and invoiced per the *Seasonal Pricing Guide* for City lots.

Q. What am I expected to report on an REO grass cut order?

You are expected to advise on the following:

1. Is a For Sale sign present?
2. Was the property secure on arrival?
3. Was the lock box present?
4. Is any exterior debris present?
5. Is the property in marketable condition?

Your grass cut orders will be held open if this information is not provided. If any issues are being reported, such as debris or damages, you must send photos to support.

Q. What type of comments should be reported in the comments section? What should not?

Limit comments to information essential to provide a full report of property condition. Do not repeat information that has been reported elsewhere in the update.

It is acceptable to note when a POC (Per Our Conversation note) pertaining to pricing or other exceptions has been noted on an order.

Q. What do I do if I have questions?

Read the work order. Work order texts have been updated to enable crews to complete work while on site.

Q. How many grass cuts are allowed per month?

The frequency and number of grass cuts allowed per month varies by client and loan type. Each work order specifies a due date. Follow the work order.

Q: What are the guidelines for trimming shrubs at REO properties?

Shrubs should be trimmed and invoiced on the initial grass cut order (per the work order instructions). On recuts, shrubs should be maintained as part of basic lawn services (do not invoice shrub trimming).

Trim shrubs and trees 12" away from structures unless it will kill the plant. Remove clippings.

Trees less than 13 feet tall with trunks less than 3 inches in diameter are considered shrubs and should be included in linear foot measurements for shrub trimming.

Q: Will Safeguard accept photos/screenshots of my computer/phone?

No, your invoice will be cut since we cannot submit to our clients. You will be subject to return to the property and retake photos.

Q: What if an REO property lot size is over one acre?

If an REO property is over 1 acre:

- **You must call from site, and obtain approval to complete.**
- **You must get and provide Broker E-mail.**
- If the property is over 1 acre and the broker or client requests the entire lot be cut, vendors should cut the entire lot and invoice their flat rate for each acre cut.
 - Example: You cut 1 acre and your flat rate is \$25. You would invoice \$50 for 2 acres, \$75 for 3 acres, etc.

Q: What if the grass is over 12 inches tall?

Contractors may invoice for each additional 12 inches of growth over 12 inches. An allowable is provided on every order to cut grass up to 36" tall. Clear "before" photos including ruler photos and photos showing the full lot must be provided to support overgrowth.

Refer to the Seasonal Pricing Guide for additional information.

Invoices for orders completed more than 4 days late will be reduced to your flat rate.

Q. How are saplings to be addressed?

Saplings should be removed.

Q. What if there is a locked padlock preventing access to the rear yard?

You are expected to carry a padlock key. If you cannot gain access to the rear of a property because the gate is locked, refer to the work order for padlock and broker contact information. If information is not present on the work order, call the Vendor Contact Center (ext 2292) from site.

DO NOT cut the padlock off the gate to the rear. This will leave the property or pool unsecure. This can result in immediate termination of work.

Q. What if the yard is maintained by an HOA?

To update an order when the property is maintained by an HOA, condo, gated community, or someone else (including occupied), provide photos and contact information for who is maintaining the property in the order update on Vendor Web.

Invoice a trip charge if property is maintained by someone else.

If the front of the property has been maintained but the back yard has not, you must cut the back yard and invoice your flat rate.

Q. What if a property is unsecure upon arrival?

If a property is unsecure, call ext. 2197 and report from site. Do not enter the property. Take photos and note this on your update.

Q. What if there is new visible damage to a property?

Call ext. 2197 from site only in emergency situations. For all other damages take proper photo documentation and note in your update.

Q: When is it appropriate to report work not completed?

It is only appropriate to report work not completed in the following scenarios:

- Occupied property - direct contact must be made and contact information provided in you update.
- HOA maintained – proper documentation is needed: photos and information on who is maintaining the property is needed.

Q. Where can I find the *Seasonal Pricing Guide*?

The *Seasonal Pricing Guide* is available on Vendor Web in the Pricing section on the left hand side.