For all foreign residents and business owners of Nozawaonsen

Nozawa-Gumi

**Introduction**

Everyone to live comfortably with the local people at Nozawaonsen, and also to create a more attractive resort area while making the most of the exciting cultural traditions.

First of all the residents should understand the Nozawa-Gumi.

We would like to you proceed with the village development together with.

Nozawaonsen has long been a Onsen(hot spring)resort, and since the early days of skiing in Japan. The villagers have worked together to create one of Japanese leading ski resorts.

It is a unique and attractive resort area where you can feel the life of people in the fusion of a hot spring town. Besides, you can feel the traditional culture and history of Japan and a modern ski resort.

Nozawa-Gumi is a self-governing organization that is deeply involved in the lives of the residents who have nurtured this kind of cultures.

**What Is Nozawa-Gumi?**

Nozawa-Gumi is a self-governing organization that has continued for about 350years since Edo period. Hot springs are a common property of villagers. Nozawa-Gumi is founded spontaneously for common benefit. We protect and manage natural resources such as forests and natural water. Also, thirteen Onsen bathes, and executing traditional events and festivals, we maintain history and protect resources and culture.

We ask all the residents living here to share this spirit and join the Nozawa-Gumi so that we can cooperate in village development together.

Group works and obligations as a Nozawa-Gumi Members

・Payment of membership fee

・Cleaning the Onsen bath houses and Ogama, maintenance and management of them

・Maintenance and cleaning of waterways, weirs, and public road

・Cooperation of festivals

・Snow shoveling of public buildings

We ask seasonal business operators and landowners to cooperate as supporting members.

Those who do not live in Nozawaonsen throughout the year cannot do groupwork. Therefore, we ask payment the supporting membership fee, which is the cooperation fee.

Please ask the Mayor of the district where you live or come to our Sodai office.

We hope that your activities at Nozawaonsen will be enriched.

**Now, more detail…**

There are 11communities in the Toyosato district of Nozawaonsen village.

We are responsible for the safety of the lives of the residents and the maintenance of property. We coordinate with the village administration and manage property such as land and Onsens in order to promote the sound development of the area.

We also organize the shrine festival and Dosojin festivals.

The main events and businesses are as follows.

**★Maintenance of waterways, roads**

The water right flows through the waterways in the area belongs to the Nozawa-Gumi. We manage the irrigation water. There are those rules so please ask us when you are not sure about them.

・Cleaning and maintenance by all members

June…cleaning weirs

September…maintenance of road

・Checking about waterway

・The roads repair assistance

★**Onsen**

We manage source of onsens, supporting public onsen bath houses.

・Cleaning Ogama on duty of all members

 Regular cleaning throughout the year

 Spring special cleaning (May 7～June 20)

 Fall special cleaning(October 22～November17)

・Maintenance and repair work of Onsens sources

 Measurement of the amount of spring water discharged three times a year, temperature survey, maintenance and repair work of the source and hot water distribution equipment.

・Aid business for public Onsen bathes

 13Onsen bath houses are managed by “Yu-Nakama”. They manage expenses such as cleaning, water bills,electricity bills.

We assist in the provision and maintenance of hot springs.

★**Manage of common property**

Forests are essential for the protection of hot spring sources and water souces.Both are indispensable for our lives. We are working on its conservation.

・June…Check the boundaries of the common lands

・September…Mowing the fields and mountain

★**Ski resort development**

We invest in Nozawaonsen Co., Ltd. We are participating in management.

★**Public building snow shoveling**

Firefighting facilities, public onsen bath houses, our temples and shrines and public buildings.

★**Festivals and events**

・April 16 …Kamagamisama Festival and Yuzawa shrine spring festival

We pray for a good harvest and economic improvement

・May 8…Yakushi-Do spring festival

It is a festival to thank the public virtues of Yakushi Nyorai

・August 16…Juoudo of Buddhist memorial service and Mandara painting Gokaicyo event

The Juoudo expressive of hell, The kings who judge the dead are enshrined. The Mandara painting depticts state of trial, hell and heaven.

・August 19 and March 13…Mitsumine Shrine Festival

In 1897, cholere spread throughout this area, killing 12 people in our village. A countermeasure office was built at the entrance of the village to distinct passengers.

Therefore, Mitsumine Shrine was erected to prevent disasters such as bandits and evil spirits from entering the village from the outside.

It is located toward the Kangara-saka, which is the entrance to the village, watcging over us in a place overlooking Nozawaonsen.

・September 8 and 9…Yuzawa Jinjya Festival

Yuzawa Shrine enshrines a god who protects the area and protects children.

In Autumn, we hold a festival to celebrate the abundance and good harvest of five grains.

A procession of lanterns lines up and perform traditional dances.

・Early October…

Mountains give us various harvests. Water, which is indispensable for rice cultivation,flows from the mountains. The mountains are root that supports our lives.

We thought that the origin of all production was in the mountains. Therefore, there was an important god in the mountain, so we worshiped the” mountain god” in small shrines and stones. We always pray before we do important work in the mountains.

・November23…Ninamesai (harvest festival)

Offering Sake and rice harvested that year to God.

・January 1…Yuzawa-Jinjya Hatsu-Moude

The first visit to Yuzawa Shrine of the year.

・January 15… Dousojin Fire festival(Nationally-designated Important intangible cultural property) We are thinking children are treasure in this area. Dosojin is enshrined in prayer for the growth of children. Dosojin festival celebrates the first child of the house.

The battle over fire is spectacular.

・January 16…Azuki-yaki Uranai (Fortune-telling by beans)

We use Azuki beans for fortune- telling the day after the Dosojin festival.

Roast azuki beans and judge whether this year is good or not.

**★Organization and membership**

We call the communities “Ku”. There are 11Ku in Nozawa area.（Nakao, Shinden,Juoudo,Akiha,Matsuba,Ooyu,Kawaharayu,Asagama,Shinyu,Terayu,Yokochi）

There is a Go-Nai in the Ku. Each has a representative.

**In the end…**

If you have any questions or want to know about our activities as organization, please come to visit our office. Let’s talk.

**Nozawa-Gumi Soudai office**

TEL: 0269-85-3505

https://www.nozawakai.or.jp