

The Meadow Lark

A Monthly Publication by and for the Residents of The Meadows, a Family Condominium Community



URGENT TRASH UPDATE

We have a **TRASH CRISIS** in the neighborhood! And it's costing YOU money!! Residents are not following the new trash procedures and this non-compliance is expected to cost the Association an additional \$37-\$45,000 for the year! This increase in bulk trash removal may result in the 2021 monthly condo fees rising by **\$10 or more**, plus the usual annual increase. To minimize the financial impact to your wallet and the aesthetic impact on the community, please abide by the following trash protocols (if you are an off-site owner, make sure your tenants do as well):

- **Household Trash Pick-Up: MONDAYS AND THURSDAYS.** Place bagged trash on the curb after 5pm the day before pick up. Trash pick-up will typically begin before 2pm.
- **Recycling Pick-Up: THURSDAYS ONLY!** Put recycling out in CLEAR OR WHITE TRASH BAGS only. We will no longer be using recycling bins. The contractor will sort the trash bags from the recycling bags.
- **Bulk/Special Pick-Up: THURSDAYS ONLY!** Any item you can't put in your kitchen trash can is considered a bulk/special pick-up item. These items will ONLY be picked up on Thursday mornings and can only be put out after 5pm on Wednesdays. If you have a bulk item that needs to be picked up before/after Thursday morning, call HaulShare at 877-680-1763 Option 4, or any other junk hauling company, to schedule a pick-up for you at your expense.
- **If you see a neighbor putting items out early or on the wrong day**, please stop them and tell them the correct trash procedures. If you don't feel comfortable confronting the violator, send the office an email or drop a note in the office mailbox with the address of the violator, date/approximate time of the violation, and any photos you may have taken.
- **If you are a contractor, work for a contractor, or are having work done in your unit**, be reminded that it is against the LAW and/or the Rules and Regulations to dump construction debris from your work vehicle or home onto the Common Elements. Violators will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. If you witness a contractor illegally dumping on The Meadows property, please report to the police then to the Management Office. Get license plate numbers and addresses whenever possible. If a contractor is doing work in your unit, the contractor must immediately take all debris off property.



Board of Directors Meeting: Thursday, February 20, 2020, 7:30 PM in the Clubhouse. Residents and Co-Owners are encouraged to attend. Agendas are posted online and at the Clubhouse on the Tuesday before the meeting. Minutes available upon request at The Meadows office and online at mymeadows.net.

Residents and Co-Owners are welcomed and encouraged to attend any committee meeting. Meetings are held in the Clubhouse.

Kindergarten Registration

Do you have a child who is scheduled to begin school this coming fall? Centre Ridge Elementary School in Centreville will be conducting their Kindergarten Registration for school year 2020–2021 in the school office.

Forms and other information are available on line at: <https://www.fcps.edu/registration/kindergarten-registration>. They are also available in the front office for your convenience. Students are not required to be present at the time of registration. If you have any questions please call the school at 703-227-2600.

Meadows Website www.mymeadows.net



President's Corner

The 2020 Board of Directors recently held its first meeting of the new year. I am thrilled that we now have a full nine-member BOD, as this will provide opportunity for greater input into the planning and decisions that affect our community. As you are all well aware, we have had a rocky transition to our new trash and recycling company, which was somewhat expected. I'm hopeful that with time folks will become accustomed to the new pick up arrangements and we'll get back on track. Rest assured, the Board is working diligently to do what we can to help overcome the obstacles and we would appreciate your help in reporting those who are violating the rules. This community cannot be successfully managed without the support of the residents, so please remember to keep your eyes and ears open and let the office know of any maintenance issues or violations you observe.

~ Linda Lachapelle

Contest Winners

Here are the winners of the Holiday Decorating Contest that was held in December:

14511 Rustling Leaves

14418 Golden Oak

6168 Strasburg

14473 Cool Oak

14477 Cool Oak

Thanks so much to all residents who decorated for the holidays.

Keep the Lights On!

In order to promote safety in our neighborhood, everyone is reminded to leave your porch lights on, both front and rear. Generally, criminals like to operate in the dark, so the more light that is present, the less likely they will be to strike in that area.

Although we are blessed to have street lights, they cannot provide full light everywhere. If all units keep their porch lights on, the level of light in the community will be much more of a crime deterrent.

Board of Directors Motions

At the January 16 Meeting:

- Passed a motion to conditionally approve an Interior Alteration Request for relocation of a dryer.
- Passed a motion to approve expenditure of \$216.32 for the County to review a modification request regarding fire lane signs.
- Passed a motion to reaffirm an email vote which approved purchase and installation of decorative door trim for an outside door.
- Passed a motion to approve a one-year contract with Champion Waste for \$44,496 for removal of bulk trash. (This motion was later rescinded.)
- Passed a motion to approve a bid of \$1790 from Premier Aquatics for refurbishing bearings and seals for two pool pumps.
- Passed motions to not waive charges for rules violations for two Co-owners.
- Passed a motion to approve waiving a violation charge except a \$50 administrative fee.
- Passed a motion to approve a personnel measure for an employee.

COMPLETE MINUTES OF BOARD MEETINGS
AVAILABLE AT THE OFFICE

Rules Review

February is the month in which the Board reviews our Rules and Regulations each year. If you have any recommendations for changes to our rules, please submit them in writing to the Board for consideration. You can email your comments to meadowsoffice@verizon.net or drop them in the black mailbox in front of the Clubhouse.



Security Totals

December 15, 2019 – January 14, 2020

Calls for service and/or situations involving or requiring security assistance, by street:

Avocado Court: 1

Cool Oak Lane: 10

Golden Oak Court/Road: 13

Rustling Leaves Lane: 4

Saguaro Place: 3

Saint Germain Drive: 10

Strasburg Drive: 4

Turin Lane: 2

Vehicles Ticketed: 85

Vehicles Towed: 4

Calls referred to FCPD/FCFD: 4

The Meadows



Fire Regulations

- Kerosene, or any fuel heaters, are forbidden by Meadows regulations.
- Residents should not store combustibles in furnace rooms. It is a serious fire hazard and is against County and Meadows regulations.
- Smoke detectors are required on *each level* of homes in The Meadows.
- Charcoal grills only are prohibited on The Meadows property.
- Residents should maintain a fire extinguisher in their units. It should be rated at least 2A:10BC.



Carbon Monoxide Detectors

The furnaces and most hot water heaters in The Meadows use gas. It is imperative that all homes have a working carbon monoxide detector. Carbon monoxide is a colorless and odorless gas which can cause death.

Parking in The Meadows

A reminder: any vehicle parked on Meadows property must display a valid parking permit. The acceptable forms of a permit can be a Meadows parking sticker, a green Visitor hang tag, or a red Frequent Visitor Hang tag. Residents may not use Visitor tags. For details on our parking rules and regulations, please contact The Meadows office, or refer to the *2019 Meadows Rules and Regulations, Section X: Rules Governing Motor Vehicles*.



Don't Feed the Critters!

It has recently been noted in some areas around the community that people are putting out various types of food items to feed the birds, squirrels, etc. It should be noted that it is against Meadows rules to do this, in fact even dogs and cats must be fed inside your unit and no food for them left on the Common Elements.

In the past we have had a rodent problem in some areas of the community, which was either caused or made worse by having a food source available for the mice, and even worse, rats. The rat problem has been controlled, we have bait stations in several places within our development; however if food items are left out, the rats are more likely to feed on this rather than the bait which will control their population.

Our feathered and furry friends for the most part have food provided for them by nature, so we do not need to feed them. And we certainly don't want to attract rats into our community. If you do see any rodents, please let the office know so action can be taken to eradicate them.

Utilities Must Remain On!

ALL Co-Owners are required to keep the utilities on in their units. The heat must be set at or above 65°F in all units, vacant or occupied. This temperature may seem a little high, but one must consider that the furnace room where the pipes originate is unheated and may be affected by the wind chill factor. Another thing to consider is if the water is turned off, it remains in the pipes and is subject to even quicker freezing. Every year, major damage to several units has occurred as the result of pipes freezing and breaking in this manner.

Any damage resulting from broken pipes, etc., caused by improper heat being maintained in a unit will be the responsibility of the Co-Owner. A minimum of 65 degrees Fahrenheit must be maintained during the winter months. – Rules and Regulations.

In addition, to this regulation, The Meadows Rules also includes a Utility Maintenance Requirement for all units. It states:

In the event that a Co-Owner does not keep electric and/or gas utilities connected as required, the Council of Co-Owners shall take any and all measures reasonably necessary to protect the common elements of the condominium which shall include but are not limited to the appropriation of funds to reconnect and maintain electric and gas utilities. All costs and changes incurred by the Council shall be assessed against the unit owner.

You can help by reporting vacant units to the office as soon as you notice them. Send reports to the office via email, fax or phone. Make sure that you include the address. Report any evidence of possible broken pipes or water coming from a unit immediately!

What To Do If You Experience a Leak

If you experience a leak in your unit you must contact your own plumber to respond.

If your leak appears to be from a neighboring unit you should attempt to reach your neighbor and have them shut off the water to their unit to minimize damage. Most shut off valves are located in the utility closet behind the hot water heater; however, if there have been any plumbing changes in the unit by a current or previous Co-Owner, the valve may have been moved. If the neighbor is not reachable or unable to shut off the water, contact the Fire Department and they will report and turn the water off. In these cases, you may contact the Management Office on the next business day; however, since this is a neighbor-to-neighbor issue, The Meadows involvement is limited. You are encouraged to contact your neighbor directly or if that is not possible, file a claim through your homeowner's insurance company.

The only exception to the procedures outlined above is if you are in an upper unit and inspection of your attic indicates the leak is coming from the roof. If this is the case, please contact the office to schedule an appointment for a maintenance technician to inspect the leak. In the meantime, simply place a bucket or pan under the leak to keep the water from penetrating into your living space. While this is not an after-hours emergency call, we do ask that you let us know as soon as possible so that we may see the attic while it is still wet. This helps us determine where the problem is.

Ice & Snow and Our Trash Service

In the interest of safety, drivers will make a judgement call as to whether they can make it up and down our streets in inclement weather. If your vehicle skids five feet in the snow, a large trash truck will slide at least thirty feet. The rule of thumb on snow/ice days should be to put your trash out. If the trucks can't get there that day, they will not return for it until the next scheduled pickup day. (If your trash is not picked up, remove it until the next scheduled pickup.)

Council of Co-Owners
The Meadows
6100 Strasburg Drive
Centreville, VA 20121

The Meadow Lark is published each month exclusively for the benefit of the residents and owners of The Meadows. It is the official publication of the Council of Co-Owners and is under the purview of the Board of Directors. News items, personal ads, and such are welcomed and should be placed in the large mailbox in front of the Clubhouse, emailed to meadowsoffice@verizon.net or faxed to 703-815-0755. The deadline is the 20th of each month. Personal ads must be 25 words or less, on 8½x11-inch paper. Include your name, Meadows address, and telephone number. They must be renewed each month. The Meadows does not endorse any advertisers.

EDITOR: Bill Liedtke

This article originally appeared in February 2015.

Please Shovel the Sidewalks!



When it snows, please do yourself a favor and shovel the snow off the sidewalks (and steps) in front of and adjacent to your unit. Did you know the The Meadows rules require that this be done? It is only common sense to remove the snow and ice from in front of your residence. Why take a chance on having someone slip and fall on the ice/snow—that

someone is most likely to be you! Most people leave their unit several times a day to go to work, go to the store, run errands, etc. Each time you go out you will have to walk on the steps and sidewalk outside *your* unit, and if these areas have not been shoveled you increase your chances of being the victim of a fall. Please be reminded that salt products are prohibited because they damage concrete.

Fairfax County, unlike many other local jurisdictions, does not have a law that requires homeowners to shovel the snow off of their sidewalks. The County does, however, heavily encourage all residents to keep their sidewalks clear and safe. Be a good neighbor, help prevent your neighbors (as well as yourself) from falling and hurting themselves in front of your unit

Work together with your neighbors to ensure the sidewalks on your street are shoveled. If one of your neighbors is elderly or unable to get out and shovel perhaps for medical reasons, pitch in and make sure their steps and sidewalk are shoveled. There are three units in each of our buildings, work out a plan with your two neighbors so that each time it does snow the sidewalks in your area are not hazardous.

Meadows Office
Monday–Friday, 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM
Phone: 703-830-4464
Fax: 703-815-0755
E-Mail: meadowsoffice@verizon.net
Website: mymeadows.net

24-Hour EMERGENCY ONLY
Service First: 1-888-980-8958

Security
703-628-9481

Towing
Battlefield Towing: 703-378-0059

Trash
Champion Waste: 703-239-8540

Remodeling?

Any desired changes to the exterior or interior of your unit must be submitted on an ARF or Request for Interior Alteration form to the Board of Directors for approval **PRIOR** to the change being done.

A/C UNITS

If you replace your air conditioning unit, you may install it inside your utility room or submit an ARF for proposed exterior installation.

Satellite Dishes in The Meadows



Required Action to Avoid Pipe Freeze and Water Damage

To safeguard against costly frozen/broken pipes it is required that ALL units, to include those that are vacant and/or bank owned, maintain a *minimum* temperature of **65° Fahrenheit** during the winter months. To this end, all utilities must remain connected and all machinery (i.e. furnace, hot water heater, thermostat, etc.) must be in proper working order.

Thank you for your prompt attention to these important matters.