

The Meadow Lark



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

2021 Budget Approved

The Meadows Board of Directors unanimously adopted a budget for 2021. A copy of the budget can be found on our website (www.mymeadows.net) or picked up in the Management Office. The adopted 2021 budget addresses the cost of maintaining and operating our aging community in the COVID era, while minimizing the financial impact as much as possible for our Co-Owners. Beginning **January 1, 2021 the monthly assessment for a three bedroom condominium will be \$355 and for a two bedroom will be \$315.** This is an average increase of about 3%, which will ensure that the needs of our 50 year-old community are met in the year ahead, as well as in the future through reserve funding.

We understand that any increase in the condominium fee matters, which is why we work so hard every year to adopt a budget that makes certain The Meadows is financially sound without being a drain on the wallets of our Co-Owners. Projects common to older properties, such as tree maintenance, waterproofing, and asphalt replacement are both costly and required. The 2021 budget process was made even more difficult by the drastic changes COVID-19 has required. So many people are now working and schooling from home and doing more washing of hands and clothes due to the virus; all of which are good things to do in a pandemic, but they also drive up the amount of water used and volume of trash produced, which in turn affect the budget.

You will receive new coupon books in the mail in early December. If you do not have them by December 15th, please contact SFMC at (703) 392-6006. Please note that your payment will be due on the 1st of the month even if you have not received your coupon book.

Annual Meeting for 2020

The Annual Meeting of the Council of Co-Owners of The Meadows will be held Tuesday, December 8 at 7:30 PM on Zoom due to Covid-19. The link to the meeting was in the Annual Meeting package and will be posted on the community website the day before the meeting.

The election of new Board members to the Board of Directors will be held at this meeting. Five two-year terms on the Board are up for election this year, ten candidates are running for these positions. If you cannot attend the meeting, it is very important that you send in the proxy you received in the mail, and you can also cast your votes for members of the Board of Directors by returning the ballot. The proxy and ballot need to be returned by 4:30 PM Monday, December 7. They can be mailed or placed in the black Council mailbox located outside the Clubhouse.

Holiday Office Hours



Closing at noon
on December 24 and 31

Closed for the day
on December 25 and January 1

DECEMBER

Board of Directors Meeting: Because of the holiday season, the Board of Directors will not meet in December. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, January 21, 2021, 7:30 PM via Zoom. 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.

Annual Meeting: Tuesday, December 8, 7:30 PM via Zoom.

Holiday Decorating Contest: Friday, December 18, 5:30–7 PM.

Christmas Tree Pickup: December 28–January 14.

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

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT 2021 CONDO FEES

Please be advised of the new Condo fees for 2021. The new fees for a TWO bedroom unit will be \$315 and the fee for a THREE bedroom unit will be \$355. If you have not received your new coupons for 2021 by December 15 please call SFMC at (703) 392-6006. Please note that your payment will be due on the 1st of each month even if you have not received your coupon book. Copies of the 2021 budget may be obtained from The Meadows Office or online at www.mymeadows.net.

President's Corner

This year, with all of its craziness, has flown by. I can't believe the holidays are fast approaching! Where has the year gone? It seems as though it's been mostly a "COVID" blur. As we enter the holiday season, with all of the frenzy most of us experience during "normal times", please take time to remind yourselves of several safety tips in addition to remaining steadfast with all of the recommended health safety procedures we've grown accustomed to over the past 9+ months. To help ensure a happy and safe holiday season, when decorating with lights make sure to only use Underwriters Laboratory (UL) approved lights and electric cords and thoroughly inspect them prior to use for broken or frayed wires and loose connections. Always unplug lights before leaving the house or going to bed.

During the holidays we are often reminded of the diversity that our world is made up of. People celebrate the holidays according to their separate heritage, traditions, and beliefs. Our community is sort of like a microcosm of the world. We are made up of people of varying differences, but we are all connected by the fact that we share a community together. And, although we have our differences in opinions, perceptions and desires, we can benefit through cooperation, compliance and respect for our neighbors. During this holiday season as we celebrate (safely!) in our own tradition, let's try to hold onto that spirit of unity, harmony and peace that all traditions embrace and apply it to all of our community neighbors... now and in the coming year.

~ Linda Lachapelle

Turn the Water Off!

Everyone is reminded that all outside water spigots are required to be turned off by December 1st. In order to prevent pipes freezing and damage to your unit or those of your neighbors, please turn off both the front and rear faucets located in all lower units.

Board of Directors Motions

At the November 19 Meeting:

- Passed a motion to approve use of a car cover.
- Passed a motion to deny a request for use of the clubhouse for a lending library.
- Passed a motion to accept a bid from Happy Toads Farm of \$525 to repair a road sign that is displaced.
- Passed a motion to accept a proposal from Champion Waste for an additional monthly charge of \$1335.90 for trash removal because of an increase in trash volume due to Covid-19.
- Passed a motion to waive a portion of a violation charge.
- Passed a motion to approve performance evaluations for four staff members.
- Passed a motion to not issue pay increases for staff for 2021.

COMPLETE MINUTES OF BOARD MEETINGS
AVAILABLE AT THE OFFICE

Christmas Tree Pick-Up



According to Fairfax County regulations, Christmas trees must be recycled—they cannot be put out with your trash. For your convenience, a drop off area will be located next to the Clubhouse on Strasburg Drive, December 28 – January 14.

All decorations, including tinsel and garlands, must be removed. If you use a carry plastic bag, this must also be removed.

Meadows Website
www.mymeadows.net



Security Totals

October 15 – November 14, 2020

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

Avocado Court:	1
Cool Oak Lane:	5
Golden Oak Court/Road:	4
Rustling Leaves Lane:	1
Saguaro Place:	2
Saint Germain Drive:	1
Strasburg Drive:	4
Turin Lane:	3
Vehicles Ticketed:	91
Vehicles Towed:	5
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.



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.

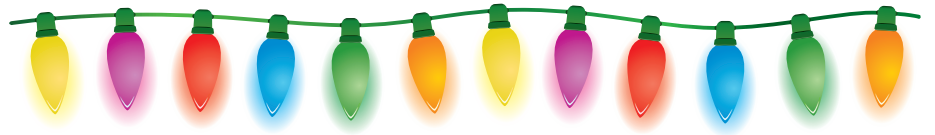
Frozen Pipes = Big Trouble!

Our Management is trying to make sure that the utilities remain on and the thermostats are set to the proper temperature in all units to prevent pipes from freezing and breaking. This is done to prevent water damage to the affected home as well as the possibility of water damage to surrounding homes.

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! See the back page for office and emergency after hour phone numbers.

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 Extended 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.*



Decorating Contest

There will be a Holiday Decorating Contest which will be judged on Friday, December 18 between 5:30 and 7:00 PM. Please be sure to have your lights turned on during this time for the judges to see. Happy Holidays to all residents of The Meadows!

Holiday Tip From Security

We are in the holiday season, and many people are receiving more packages at this time of year than is usual. Thieves are smart enough to know this, and can take packages from people's front porches or steps. If you are expecting a package, be on the lookout for the mailman or delivery driver so you can receive the merchandise you ordered without someone else getting it first. Help your neighbors out as well, if they have a package sitting on their front porch take it in and give it to them once they are at home.

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!

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.

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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



Safety Reminders

■ Keep Your Porch Lights On!

In order to promote safety in our neighborhood, everyone is reminded to keep 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.

■ Regular Furnace Maintenance

It is critical to ensure safe and efficient operation of your furnace regardless of the age of the unit. Many heating and air conditioning companies offer discounted specials this time of year.

■ 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.

Important Safety Issue!

It has been noticed that the insulation covering the electric wiring and gas lines running from the meters into the utility closet at some units have deteriorated, which could eventually result in exposed wiring. Exposed electrical wiring may cause injury, so please check the wiring behind your unit as soon as possible.

These sections of wiring and gas lines belong to the Co-Owner and it is the Co-Owner's responsibility to maintain them; however, we have been made aware that the utility companies may perform this work at no cost. You can reach Washington Gas at (703) 750-1000 and NOVEC at (703) 335-0500.

Please take a moment to inspect your wiring and gas line and contact the utility company or a certified electrician to make necessary repairs as soon as possible.

Reminder for Pet Owners

The Meadows Rules and Regulations state that all pet feces must be bagged and removed from the Common Elements immediately. In addition, please be reminded that the Fairfax County Leash Law is in effect at The Meadows. This law requires dogs to be on a leash at all times when outside. For the health and safety of our residents, please immediately remove dog feces and keep dogs leashed at all times when on the Common Elements. It is important to remember that violations of these policies could result in the assessment of penalties in the amount of \$50 per occurrence.

In addition, please do not leave the baggies you use to scoop up your dog's waste anywhere on the Common Elements. These baggies should be placed in the proper pet waste stations that we have located throughout the community or should be taken to your unit for proper disposal.

