

The Meadow Lark



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

SEPTEMBER

Planting Vegetables Rule

This is a friendly reminder that last year the Board of Directors passed a new rule regarding the planting of vegetables, as well as fruit and herbs. It has been noted that at a few places on our property this rule is not being followed. Here is the new rule:

“Herbs, vegetables, and fruit trees are not permitted to be planted in garden beds or into the ground within The Meadows, but are permitted to be planted within pots, window boxes, and/or planter boxes that are designed for gardening purposes and placed on balconies, rear patios, and/or front patios. The Co-owner/resident shall be responsible for the maintenance and pest control for such plants. Ivy and other invasive ground covering plants are prohibited.”

Please be aware of this rule, and when planting your garden follow its requirements. Once you plant in pots or boxes they must be placed on your patio and/or balcony, and may not be located anywhere on the Common Elements.

Board of Directors Meeting: Thursday, September 14, 2023, 7:30 PM. 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 Board or committee meeting. (Meetings are held in the Clubhouse (Board meetings also held via Zoom.)

Vacant Seat on the Board of Directors

There is an open seat on the Board of Directors. Volunteers are needed to apply for this position, if you are interested the Board would like to talk with you! To be considered for appointment you must be a Co-owner and your account must be in good standing. The Board meets on the second Thursday evening of every month. If you meet these requirements and are interested in serving, please drop an email to meadowsoffice72@gmail.com or stop by the Management Office to complete an application. If you have an interest in how our community is governed and want to be a part of this process, this may be a job for you.

Pool Hours

LAST POOL DATES

SEPTEMBER 1 - 4

12 PM – 8 PM

Minimize Your Risk of Fire: Clean Your Dryer Vent

Did you know that a common cause of household fire is a dirty dryer vent? Since your dryer vent accumulates a lot of lint it must be cleaned and inspected at least once per year. If the lint is allowed to accumulate it can create an airflow obstruction and the hot air pushed into the vent from your dryer can cause the extremely flammable lint to ignite. In some units, birds have made nests in the dryer vent which is even more hazardous.

At The Meadows many units have very long dryer vents and these can be obstructed much more quickly than those in most newer homes, this is especially true in upper units. Our Co-Owners must be vigilant in cleaning these vents to avoid a potential fire disaster that could affect not only your unit, but multiple other units.

Be a responsible Co-Owner and neighbor and take the time to have your dryer vents cleaned and inspected at least once per year. This is a quick and inexpensive task that will save you and your neighbors from potential danger.



President's Corner

Hello Meadows Community! Over the course of the last 10-12 months, we've had several residents ask what the Association is doing to address the issues with trash collection and/or ask why we haven't tried certain solutions. Below is that information and explanations.

What we're doing:

1. Bulk trash removal.
2. Enforcing trash pickup times by Champion.
3. Added several new Pet Waste Stations.
4. Hired a Groundskeeper.
5. Fining Residents who are breaking the rules.
6. Security also reports offenders to the office so fines can be issued.
7. Increased pest control.
8. Sent out multiple notices about trash rules and printed them in both English and Spanish.

What we have tried or considered that was not/would not be successful:

1. **Adding dumpsters to the property.** Due to our Governing Documents and Master Deed/Proffers with the County, we must have a certain number of parking spaces (so we cannot put dumpsters in parking spaces) and must have a certain amount of "Green Space" so we cannot put them in grassy areas. Dumpsters also draw rats, raccoons, opossums, feral cats, etc. They also look and smell terrible, especially in the hot summer.
2. **Using trash bins.** The cost would add about \$9/home/month which would cost an extra \$68,000/year and increase your dues by \$9/month. Sadly, these tend to be overfilled and not put away after use, as well.
3. **Additional trash pickups.** The cost for this would be approximately an additional \$6+/home/month and an extra \$45,000/year and increase your dues that amount as well.

How can you help?

1. Tell us the name or address of neighbors putting trash out before or after allowed times so we can fine them. Your identity will not be disclosed.
2. If you have any ideas or suggestions not listed above, please let us know.

Kristina Berry

Board of Directors Motions

At the July 13 Meeting:

- Passed two motions to approve Interior Alteration Requests.
- Passed four motions to approve requests related to Architectural Review Forms.
- Passed a motion to approve spending up to \$8400 to remove and trim trees and grind stumps.
- Passed a motion to deny a reimbursement request for an account.
- Passed a motion to approve write-off of an account.
- Passed a motion to approve a fourth day of bereavement for a staff member.

Security Totals

July 15 - August 14, 2023

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

Avocado Court:	3
Cool Oak Lane:	2
Golden Oak Court/Road:	13
Rustling Leaves Lane:	1
Saguaro Place:	5
Saint Germain Drive:	2
Strasburg Drive:	1
Turin Lane:	9
Vehicles Ticketed:	18
Vehicles Towed:	13
Violation Letters Sent:	32
Calls referred to FCPD/FCFD:	6

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 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.

Be Careful Where You Drink!

As fall approaches, people may still be out enjoying the weather, cook outs, and family gatherings. As a reminder, it is illegal to offer or consume alcoholic beverages in a public setting (VA Code 4.1-308). This includes your porches, patios, and all common areas of The Meadows. Also, if you are outside and have had too much to drink you could be in violation of the "Public Intoxication" law (VA Code 18.2-388). It is important for residents to share this information with their guests as non-residents of The Meadows may also be issued a trespassing ban if they are found in violation of either of the two aforementioned Codes as these violate Meadows rules under Section V. Rules Governing Behavior; Rule 1: No noxious or offensive activities shall be conducted in or about any unit, the common elements, or vehicle parked on The Meadows property; nor shall anything be done or be permitted to remain in or about any unit or vehicle parked on property which may reasonably be or become a nuisance or annoyance to any other residents.

Please enjoy your summer. Be mindful of neighbors and drink responsibly if you choose to do so, keep your drinks inside your homes.

Don't Feed the Critters!

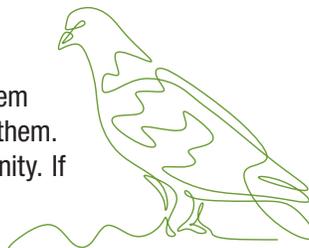
It has recently been noted in some areas around the community that people are putting out various types of food items to feed the birds, squirrels, etc. It should be noted that it is against Meadows rules to do this, in fact even dogs and cats must be fed inside your unit and no food for them left on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



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 blue 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 2021 Meadows Rules and Regulations, Section X: Rules Governing Motor Vehicles.



Bits & Pieces

◆ No Charcoal Grills

Everyone is reminded that due to insurance requirements charcoal grills are not allowed anywhere within The Meadows.

You may use your propane grills for holiday and other cookouts, but please do so responsibly—keep the grill as far away from the walls of your unit as possible.

◆ Curfew Reminder

The Meadows has a curfew in effect for minors under the age of 18. Please refer to The Meadows Rules and Regulations.

◆ 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 beginning in September.

◆ 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.

Taking Care of Trash

Trash is an issue that no one really wants to deal with, but its existence is a fact of life. Some people just can't seem to dispose of trash properly. In order to keep our community looking as nice as possible, everyone is asked to please not leave trash on the Common Elements, and if you see some unsightly trash, please be a good citizen and pick it up.

To keep your community clean, please contact the Management Office at 703-830-4464 or meadowsoffice@verizon.net to report any neighbors who you feel are not following the rules related to trash and its removal.

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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Towing
Battlefield Towing: 703-378-0059

Trash
Champion Waste: 703-239-8540

Bulk Trash
Kramer Enterprises: 804-221-1743

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



What To Do If You Experience a Leak

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

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.

Noise Reminder

In the warm months we like to spend time outside enjoying the warm weather and socializing with friends and neighbors. We need to remember to minimize disturbances to others even when we are outdoors. Loud music and boisterous conversations can create a lot of unwanted noise for others. During any season residents of upper units should be especially careful of heavy walking and running in their units in the late and overnight hours.

Please remind children to be respectful of others while playing: avoid rowdy horseplay and loud games near windows and patios, never use items from neighbor's porches or patios and do not bounce balls on the exterior of the buildings.

Meadows Website:
www.mymeadows.net