

The Meadow Lark



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

Stranger Danger

Here is a brief summarization of two incidents reported to our Security personnel. A resident outside of her unit reported seeing a man facing her as he stood looking over the hood of his car. She went inside and locked her storm door. Then she heard a vague knocking at the door. She ignored it and then heard it again. When she went to the door, the same man said that he wanted to come in and pray. She closed her door quickly and locked both locks. In another instance, a man across the street stood near his van and jumped rope, then paced up and down the street. He was then observed tapping on an occupied car and yelling. The occupant had gotten out but then got back in the car and drove off. He got in his van and followed her.

These are samples of strangers in our neighborhood who may have been up to no good. If you observe someone who does not appear to belong and you feel uncomfortable by what they are doing, don't hesitate to call the police first, and if it is during evening hours then call our Security personnel. Be watchful of strangers in the neighborhood.

Be Safe in Your Home

It seems that frequently you hear or read about crime that has affected an area near where you live or even in your own community. While you cannot stop a criminal from doing things that are hurtful or illegal, there are many actions that you can take in advance to protect your property and your family. To protect your property at night, leaving your porch lights on, front and rear, is an excellent deterrent to criminals. The bad guys prefer to work under the cloak of darkness so no one sees them. Lighting up the area around your unit will make your area less susceptible to their actions.

If you see anything that is suspicious, always call the Police immediately. Another important safety item is to always lock all of your doors and windows. A large percentage of break-ins, etc. are at homes where the criminal entered through an unlocked door or window. Also keep your car doors locked and all valuables out of sight. In addition, make sure your children are properly supervised and you know where they are at all times.

New Meadows Rules

At the September 14 Board of Directors meeting the following new rules were passed:

Section V. Rule 12. In accordance with Section 4.1-1108 of the Virginia Code, the consumption of marijuana or marijuana products in any public place (including playgrounds, streets, sidewalks, patios, etc.) is prohibited within the Meadows Community. Additionally, the offering of marijuana or marijuana products to another, whether accepted or not, in a public place is prohibited within the Meadows Community.

Section VI. Rule 9. I. In accordance with Section 4.1-1101 of the Virginia Code, it shall be unlawful for a resident to cultivate more than four (4) marijuana plants for personal use at their place of residence and to have marijuana plants visible from a public way without the use of aircraft, binoculars, or other optical aids within the Meadows Community. This rule shall prohibit residents from planting, growing, or displaying marijuana plant(s) on common elements, outdoor patios, balconies, and/or planter boxes within the Meadows Community.

In addition, as of September 15 only a maximum of two parking passes will be issued to any unit in The Meadows.

OCTOBER

Board of Directors Meeting: Thursday, October 12, 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.

Deadline to Run for the Board: October 15
Looking forward to:

Candidates Night: November 9, 7:00 PM
Annual Meeting: Tuesday, December 12, 7:30 PM

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.

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.

President's Corner

This is important and is being presented again to help avoid sewer backups.

Recently there have been some backups in our community which have caused sewage to backflow into both lower units and common areas. The presence of sewage in these areas presents a hazardous condition for all residents. These incidents may have been caused by flushing items in the toilet which are not compatible with our piping and sewer system. Here is a list of items that should NOT be flushed in toilets: *diapers, wipes, "flushable" wipes, Kleenex, paper towels, sanitary products, dental floss, bandages, cotton balls and hair.* Please be sure you are not flushing any of these items. Online research also recommends that you should also not flush medications, as well as fats, oils, and grease. These last three items may be problematic for drains and piping and can cause plumbing issues. Keep what you are flushing to just good old toilet paper, and not too much at one time.

Recientemente ha habido algunos desbordamientos en nuestra comunidad que han provocado el reflujo de aguas residuales tanto en las unidades inferiores como en las áreas comunes. La presencia de aguas residuales en estas áreas presenta una condición peligrosa para todos los residentes. Estos incidentes pueden haber sido causados por tirar elementos en el inodoro que no son compatibles con nuestro sistema de tuberías y alcantarillado. Aquí hay una lista de artículos que NO deben tirarse en los inodoros: *pañales, toallitas, toallitas desechables, Kleenex, toallas de papel, productos sanitarios, hilo dental, vendas, bolas de algodón y cabello.* Asegúrese de no tirar ninguno de estos artículos. La investigación en línea también recomienda que tampoco debe desechar los medicamentos, así como las grasas, los aceites y las grasas. Estos últimos tres elementos pueden ser problemáticos para los desagües y las tuberías y pueden causar problemas de plomería. Mantenga lo que está tirando solo en papel higiénico viejo y bueno, y no demasiado a la vez.

Kristina Berry

Board of Directors Motions

At the August 10 Meeting:

- Passed a motion to approve transferring \$100,000 from the Money Market fund to a CD.
- Passed a motion to approve using ETC to perform a visual inspection of the community.
- Passed a motion to approve an Architectural Review Form.
- Passed a motion to reaffirm an email vote for a waterproofing change order.
- Passed a motion to reaffirm an email vote for removal and replacement of a lifeguard chair.
- Passed a motion to reaffirm an email vote for hiring a new Maintenance Technician.
- Passed a motion to approve an Architectural Review Form and an Interior Alteration Request for the same unit.

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.

Meadows Website

www.mymeadows.net

Security Totals

August 15 - Sept. 14, 2023

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

Avocado Court:	1
Cool Oak Lane:	10
Golden Oak Court/Road:	10
Rustling Leaves Lane:	6
Saguaro Place:	0
Saint Germain Drive:	5
Strasburg Drive:	3
Turin Lane:	2
Vehicles Ticketed:	15
Vehicles Towed:	22
Violation Letters Sent:	37
Calls referred to FCPD/FCFD:	10

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.

Community Improvement: Good Neighbor Top Ten

Being on bad terms with your neighbor can make your life frustrating, day after day. But taking the time to establish good terms with your neighbors has numerous benefits. The community will be friendlier, the neighborhood safer, and the area a nicer and more comfortable place to live.

1. **Introduce Yourself** – Whether you're new to the neighborhood or have not got around to the task of meeting your neighbor after years of living next door, introduce yourself. Say hello, offer a welcome gift, or just give a helpful hint about the area: "The garbage truck comes on Mondays and Thursdays. We usually see them on our street around 7 AM." An unfamiliar neighbor is not a good neighbor.
 2. **Consider Your Neighbor's Lifestyle** – Get to know your neighbors, what they do for a living, what their schedules might be like, and so on. Sometimes, you can remedy problems before they even start; for example, if they work nights, quiet mornings will be important for them. If they have young children, quiet evenings will be very important to them. Similarly, give them information that'll help them be more considerate of your lifestyle. If you do a lot of yard work, or if your teenage son plays the drums, let them know in advance and mention that if it's getting too loud, they shouldn't hesitate to let you know.
 3. **Be Aware of Shared Walls** – Position noisy household appliances, especially TVs and speakers, away from shared walls. If you live above someone consider the time of day you do that aerobic workout you love so much. If you live below someone consider the strong scent of your cooking or preferred candles. A neighbor coming through your ceiling is not a good neighbor.
 4. **Control Your Dog** – Keep your dogs on a leash and pick up after them. Respect planting areas that your neighbors spend countless hours on. It is all fun petting and friendly licks until that poorly timed lift of the leg. Also, it is neighborly to be aware of others who would rather steer clear of your lovable "Rex." Dander allergies and dog fears are real, so crossing the street with your pet in certain areas can go a long way. A frightened neighbor is not a good neighbor. **BONUS: Dog Barking** – I know I am guilty of having my dog annoy my neighbors with the ill-timed barking fits. Whether you have a "yippee" dog or a "woof-er" dog, most others don't care to hear it. This is not the easiest fix, but talking to your neighbors about it can smooth things over before annoyances boil over.
 5. **Practice Parking Etiquette** – When you park your vehicle, be sure not to block anyone's access, or make them have to pull out of a very tight spot. Don't over-rev the engine of your car or motorcycle early in the morning or late at night. Avoid slamming your doors or shining your headlights into your neighbor's windows late at night. A trapped neighbor is not a good neighbor.
 6. **Slow Down, You're Driving Too Fast** – An injured neighbor is not a good neighbor.
 7. **Take Your Garbage Out** – Pretty simple, really. The dead animal stench coming from your rotting garbage makes everyone feel sick, particularly those of us down wind. We have specific garbage times for a reason. If you accidentally miss the collection, bring it back in immediately and try to contain it well. Garbage can attract vermin, insects, and other pests, and is also unsightly. A smelly neighbor is not a good neighbor.
 8. **Invite Me to the Party, Or Give Me Fair Warning** – If you're going to fill up the street with cars and have that deejay blasting his tunes out into the universe through speakers bigger than a cow, then at least give me a bit of warning first. A sleepless neighbor is not a good neighbor. Ok, so your neighbor would never do this, right? If you're planning a party, be sure to give your neighbors plenty of warning, letting them know when it's going to start and how long you expect it to go on. Leave them a telephone number to contact if they need to ask you to turn it down. If you get on well with your neighbors, why not invite them too?
 9. **Be Aware of Your Surroundings** – Keep your eyes on anyone you don't know acting suspiciously around your neighbor's home. When in doubt, call security or the police so they can quickly curtail any criminal activity. A robbed neighbor is not a good neighbor.
 10. **Be Adults** – We are bound to have disagreements. If an issue arises, talk to your neighbor directly and try to work out a solution that is agreeable. If you hear about things second-hand then disagreements can easily grow. It is best to give your reasons for a request to your neighbor yourself. A gossipy neighbor is not a good neighbor. Having said that, sometimes conflicts are not easily resolved. In these cases the best thing may be simple avoidance to circumvent an escalating conflict.
- So there you go. Ten easy-to-follow rules that will help make our neighborhood a better place; the Ten Commandments of the Good Neighbors, as it were. I'm sure there are other items that you can think of that might take the place of one or another of these on my list. Living by these might seem a matter of simple courtesy for some of us, but some people live in a bubble or else they just don't give a hoot. I am going to channel Robert Frost when I say, "Good fences make good neighbors."

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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 meadowsoffice72@gmail.com 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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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



YES

Roofs
Fronts of Buildings
Common Grounds

NO

Volunteers for Board Needed

At this year's Annual Meeting in December there will be an election for five members of The Meadows Board of Directors. Candidates are needed to volunteer for all of these important positions. 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. To qualify you must be a Co-owner in good standing with your account.

If you would like to run for the Board, you need to submit an application form by October 15. Application forms may be obtained from the Meadows office, or one can be emailed to you upon request. Contact the office at meadowsoffice72@gmail.com.

All candidates running for the Board will appear at the Candidates Night which be held on Thursday, November 9 at the clubhouse.

Requirements for Installing Exterior HVAC Units

EPA changes in air conditioning and heating standards have made maintenance and availability of interior HVAC units much more difficult. While there should be no problem maintaining an existing interior unit for the rest of its useful life, units installed in the near future will have difficulty finding a machine that will fit into the utility closet and obtaining the refrigerant for these units will become pricey. Eventually, the refrigerant currently used will no longer be available and these units will not be able to be recharged.

As a result of these changes, The Meadows Board of Directors has reconsidered allowing HVAC units to be installed on the Common Elements. Going forward, Co-Owner's who would like to install an HVAC unit on the grounds will need to follow the steps below:

Any Co-Owner wishing to install an HVAC unit on the Common Elements must submit their request in writing to the Management Office.

Once a request is received an appointment will be made for The Meadows Maintenance Supervisor to meet with the Co-Owner and/or the Co-Owner's HVAC contractor to review the specifications and provide detailed requirements for the installation.

After this meeting the Co-Owner must submit a completed Architectural Review Form (ARF) outlining the agreed upon details of the proposed installation, an Installation Agreement and a copy of the contractor's license. The Board of Directors will then review the documents and make a determination on whether or not to approve the installation.

REMEMBER:

**ANY HVAC UNIT INSTALLED ON THE COMMON ELEMENTS
WITHOUT WRITTEN BOARD APPROVAL
MAY BE REQUIRED TO BE REMOVED AT THE CO-OWNER'S EXPENSE.**

**Meadows Website:
www.mymeadows.net**