

# The Meadow Lark



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

## Keep the Noise Down!

Our residents may not be aware that in Fairfax County there are ordinances governing noise that can be bothersome. Between the hours of 10 PM and 7 AM unwanted noise that is plainly audible in a person's residential dwelling with doors and windows closed can be reason to call the police. Generally, the police will respond and after locating the source of the noise will issue a warning to the offender. If the noise continues, a second call to the police can be made and upon return by an officer a citation can be issued if the noise has not ceased. These are hours during which most people will be getting their daily sleep.

We live in a community where our neighbors are very close by, right next door or directly above or below your residence. Particularly between these hours do not perform functions that cause noise, such as moving in or moving out, doing construction or cleaning that makes noise, or having the volume of your television or stereo at an excessive level.

Not as well known is another part of the Fairfax County noise ordinance that is in effect 24 hours each day. This covers excessive noise at any time of day. The ordinance states that "no person shall permit, operate, or cause any source of sound or sound generation to create a sound which exceeds the limit", which is 60 decibels in residential districts. This can apply to many things such as loud car radios, loudspeakers, or racing of car engines.

Please be considerate of your neighbors, and keep the noise in your unit down.

## 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.

## 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.

## MAY

**Board of Directors Meeting:** Thursday, May 9, 2024, 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](http://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 are also held via Zoom).*

## YARD SALE RETURNS

**Saturday, May 4**

8:00 AM – 1:00 PM

(Rain Date – Sunday, May 5)

The annual Yard Sale will once again be held right here in the community (really a "Sidewalk Sale"), just like previous years.

You may place your wares for sale in front of your unit, in your reserved parking space, on your front balcony or porch, or in the common areas near your unit. Be careful not to block access to any other parking spaces or to the sidewalks which will be used for passage throughout the community.

## President's Corner

Hello Meadows Community! There is a lot to cover this month, so let's jump right in.

Firstly, vehicles parked in The Meadows WITHOUT a Resident Parking Sticker or Visitor Hang Tag are subject to towing at ANY TIME (day or night) at the owner's expense.

Secondly, there will be several exterior improvement projects commencing such as paving, painting, and façade repairs.

Residents should be on the lookout for and abide by notices related to these projects.

Lastly, as the weather gets nicer, the Board would like to remind Residents and their guests of the following Rules and Regulations:

1. Hose spigots (front and back) should be turned on by **April 15th**. Residents can contact the management office if they need assistance.

2. Charcoal grills are **not** permitted to be used under any circumstances.

3. Children's pools **may not** be placed in common areas and must be drained and stored away daily. Pools may only be used on rear patio and balcony areas.

4. Patios, balconies, and front porches **shall not** be used for storage except for normal patio accessories or other objects in good condition and working order that have been approved in writing and in advance by the Board of Directors. Storage on these areas may include a) bicycles, b) one piece of exercise equipment, and c) satellite dishes that are 39 inches or less in diameter.

5. Only vehicles with a **valid Meadows parking sticker may be washed on The Meadows property or with water from a Meadows spigot.**

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Management Office during operating hours.

Kristina Berry

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

## Board of Directors Motions

At the March 14 Meeting:

- Passed a motion to allow Battlefield Towing 24 hour access to tow vehicles in violation of our Rules and Regulations.-
- Passed a motion to approve a new rule requiring 80% of floor surfaces (excluding kitchens and bathrooms) be covered with carpet over padding, pending a review by legal.
- Passed a motion to purchase a new golf cart for no more than \$10,000.
- Passed two motions to approve Architectural Review Forms for installation of storm doors.
- Passed a motion to approve 11 assessed fines

## 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.

## Grilling Season Is Here GAS GRILLS ONLY

Everyone is reminded that per Meadows Rules and Regulations charcoal grills are not allowed anywhere on Meadows property. In a recent survey of the property it was noted that there are charcoal grills still located behind units.

Charcoal grills are now considered to be a fire hazard, and our insurance company will not insure our property with them being used. It is requested that if you do have a charcoal grill that you remove it from the property. In doing so you can avoid a violation letter and a possible fine for violation of our rules.

## Security Totals

March 15 - April 14, 2024

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

GO:	12
CO:	2
Stras.:	5
RLL:	3
Avo:	1
Tur:	1
STG:	3
Sag.:	3
Vehicles Ticketed:	3
Vehicles Towed:	43
Violation Letters Sent:	19
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.

## Overcrowding

### Important Information on Occupancy

It is important to remember that The Meadows follows Fairfax County Code regarding the number of individuals permitted to reside within a unit. The residency restrictions are quite lengthy and are based on square footage, familial status, egress/entrance points, and many other intricate calculations, as well as numerous exceptions to each of these standards. State and Federal regulations also have to be factored in to the complex occupancy equation.

A very brief overview of Fairfax County occupancy restrictions can be found here: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/code/property/overcrowding.htm>. If you would like more detailed information regarding the occupancy standards, contact the Fairfax County Department of Code Compliance at (703) 324-1300.

Often we find that authorized tenants of over-occupied units have sub-leased to additional people without the knowledge or consent of the unit Co-Owner. Off-site Co-Owners should be especially concerned about this issue as it can create excessive wear and tear to your unit, as well as hefty fines from Fairfax County and The Meadows. We encourage you to visit your unit often and conduct unannounced inspections to make certain that your unit is in compliance with County regulations and your lease agreement.

### Occupancy Reporting Process

When you suspect a unit may be in violation of occupancy restrictions, please immediately notify the Fairfax County Code Compliance Office to report your suspicions. The County now has a task force in place that handles overcrowding, so they are able to respond to complaints much more quickly than they could in the past. They can be reached by telephone at (703) 324-1300 or an on-line report can be filed here: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/complaints](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/complaints).

After you have reported this to the County, please also report this to the Management Office in writing and provide the case number. Once we receive your written report we will send a letter to the Co-Owner and follow up with Fairfax County officials to be sure they communicate with us on the status of their investigation. Should the County determine that the unit is in fact over-occupied The Meadows may assess financial penalties to the unit Co-Owner.

We hope that by working together as a community we can ensure that The Meadows and our residents are protected from the potential problems that result from over-occupied units.

## 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.

## 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 [meadowsoffice72@gmail.com](mailto:meadowsoffice72@gmail.com) to report any neighbors who you feel are not following the rules related to trash and its removal.

## Parking in The Meadows

Vehicles parked on Meadows property must display a valid parking permit. The acceptable forms of a permit can either be a Meadows parking sticker, a blue Visitor hang tag, or a red Extended Visitor Hang tag. For details on our parking rules and regulations, please feel free to contact The Meadows office, or refer to the 2021 Meadows Rules and Regulations, Section X: Rules Governing Motor Vehicles.



## Greetings & Good News Solicited

Everyone likes to hear good news. One thing that will allow The Meadow Lark to publicize good news is for our residents to submit items to us. We used to list important events or milestones in this newsletter, but it seems that people just aren't sending such news in to be recognized any more.

Accordingly, a call is being sent out to everyone to send in your good news! We are willing to publish all birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, weddings, births, awards and anything else that may be noteworthy in the life of your friends and loved ones. You can drop a quick note in the black mailbox outside the clubhouse, or call or email the office.



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

**Meadows Office**  
Monday–Friday, 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM  
Phone: 703-830-4464  
Fax: 703-815-0755  
E-Mail: meadowsoffice72@gmail.com  
Website: mymeadows.net

**24-Hour EMERGENCY ONLY**  
**Cardinal: 703-569-5797**

Security  
703-628-9481

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 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.

## 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](http://www.mymeadows.net)