



Emerald Hills Homeowners Association March 2016 Newsletter



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Your Board of Directors (BOD) would like to thank every resident who has made our neighborhood one of the most desirable places to live in Augusta County.

As of our December BOD meeting, we now have a full board and ARC for the first time in many years. We thank John Murie for coming on board as Vice President, and Mona Troensegaard as Secretary. Starke Smith, Mona Troensegaard, and Jim Eiland for staffing our ARC team, with Jim as ARC Chair. Please join us in welcoming these excellent volunteers.



Your BOD is committed to continuing the excellent quality of life we enjoy here in Emerald Hills. Again, thank you very much for your understanding, patience, and most importantly, your support.

APMS FULLY ON-BOARD

In April of 2015, our BOD made a decision to contract Association & Property Management Services (APMS) to assist us in management of our HOA. Frequent changes in HOA management and conduct laws in the Commonwealth of Virginia have made it difficult and very time consuming for Emerald Hills Homeowners Association to continue on as a "self-managed" HOA. Hiring APMS has helped to move us towards being a professional organization in legal compliance, while freeing up our volunteer BOD of many routine tasks. In doing so, it's become easier to attract more volunteers to our BOD and ARC.



Gradually, we are addressing various items in Emerald Hills such as grounds maintenance, property violations, and unpaid assessments. Some items, like unapproved modifications and disrepair are being addressed with assistance of APMS by letters of violations. Although some may find this negative, our aim is to maintain the overall harmony of neighborhood design; exactly as per our governing Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions. In light of this, it's very important that all buyers have received and reviewed the disclosure package and that the seller's agent order one and provide it to purchasers, per state law.

Please contact APMS at 540-423-3879 for neighborhood questions, concerns, or complaints.

ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OBLIGATION

According to our covenants, our association is legally bound to oversee the upkeep, maintenance, and improvement of Easements and Common Areas. In order to accomplish this, owners are assessed an annual fee per lot. Our upcoming 2016 - 2017 assessment will rise slightly again this year to \$50 per owned lot. This rate will allow us to operate at our current level of service while still maintaining a strong reserve.

All property owners are required to pay the annual assessment for each lot owned. The annual assessment period runs from July 1st through June 30th. Billing invoices will be sent out by APMS in June, payable on receipt, and due no later than July 31. A 12% late fee is added to assessment balance if not paid by July 31. Unpaid invoices are subject to collection fees, including legal and registered mailing fees. Failure to pay assessment for three years may result in a lien being perfected on the related property.

Dues

PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT REQUESTS

According to our covenants, owners are required to get approval from Architecture Review (ARC) before starting any new building, performing exterior modifications to existing structures, or altering your property. This includes new construction, exterior painting, structural additions, fences, walls, sheds, pools, etc. Please contact our Board, our ARC, or visit our "<http://ehhoa.info/>" website to obtain a "Property Improvement Request Form". Please note that Modification Forms should be sent to "EHHOA ARC, PO Box 1024, Fishersville, VA 22939" rather than to APMS.

ABOVE GROUND vs SEASONAL POOLS

Above ground pools are considered permanent structures, large in size, with rigid sidewalls. These pools will not be approved by Architecture Review. On the other hand, a seasonal pool is a small pool usually purchased from a local department store such as Walmart, K-Mart, or Big Lots. Seasonal pools are temporary in nature, small, made of vinyl or hard plastic with sidewalls ranging from a foot to approximately three feet high. Seasonal pools have historically been acceptable in the community as long as they are not put up before the weekend prior to Memorial Day and are taken down by the weekend following Labor Day.



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OWNER, RESIDENT, PROPERTY STATUS

Emerald Hills Homeowners Association, Inc. is a legal Virginia corporation and is required to maintain a reasonable member list as a corporation in good standing as well as a basis for our Federal and State tax filings. Our Treasurer requests that owners provide status of property sales, rentals, and mailing address changes. Providing this information in a timely manner saves us the cost and effort of obtaining it from the county. Please contact APMS or use the 'Contact information update' form on the APMS website to update your information.

AUGUSTA COUNTY SHERIFF & VDOT

The Augusta County Sheriff's Department is responsible for the general public safety of our community and roadways. 25mph is the maximum speed on our roads and only when conditions are ideal. Please slow down when approaching pedestrians. Pedestrian Safety Tip: "Walk left, ride right." Do not hesitate to call the Sheriff's Department at 540-245-5333 with issues dealing with speeding traffic, ATVs, mini/off-road bikes, illegal fireworks, and other illegal behavior. Call 911 in case of an emergency. Also note that VDOT maintains and plows our roads. Please contact VDOT if you have questions about road maintenance.

ONLY SPECIFIC SIGNS ALLOWED

Please be aware that, as per our covenants, only specific signs are allowed. Article II, Section Four says "No sign of any kind shall be displayed to the public view on any of said lots except one sign of not more than five (5) square feet advertising the property for sale or rent, or signs used by the builder to advertise the property during construction. One sign not exceeding one-half (1/2) square foot displaying the name of the owner of the property shall be permitted on any of said lots". Other signs, such as political endorsements, will be considered in violation of our covenants.



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DOG OWNER RESPONSIBILITY

Please consider your neighbors. Uncontrolled dog barking continues as a leading neighborhood complaint. Leaving a barking dog outside or in a house with windows open will likely be a nuisance to your neighbors. Please do not allow your dog to run loose into the road as people walk. Please be courteous and clean up after your dog when walking them.



Dogs not under direct control of their owner are deemed to be 'roaming' and prohibited in Augusta County. The Augusta County Animal Control Department is responsible for issues related to wild or domestic animals that may be an annoyance or danger to our community. Please do not hesitate to call the animal control officer at 540-245-5635 if you see stray dogs or a wild animal that is acting strangely.

VEHICLE PARKING REMINDER

Vehicles parked along the roadways on a permanent or long term basis is not allowed. By way of a reminder, Article II, Section Ten, of our Covenants contains the text "No recreational vehicle or boat shall be permitted to be parked in front of the dwelling constructed on any lot. No large commercial vehicles shall be permitted on any lot.". Generally, the board has handled this on a case by case basis. Also note that vehicles parked on or partly on the roads poses a danger for our residents, especially our children.

NEIGHBORHOOD YARD SALE

Our Annual Neighborhood Yard Sale, sponsored by our Homeowners Association, is coming Saturday, May 7th. More information will be posted on our website as the time approaches.



ANNUAL MEETING IN SEPTEMBER

Our next annual meeting is currently set for 7-8pm September 19th at the Preston L. Yancey Fire House. Please watch your listserv email or our website for details as the time gets closer.

EDITORIALS

Why Living in an HOA Community is Important to Me - by Mona J. Troensegaard

In 2003 my husband and I purchased our home here in Emerald Hills Subdivision, after living in Charlottesville for 23 years. High upon the list of must have's was that it be in a neighborhood that had an active HOA. The neighborhood that we were moving from had an HOA when it was built in the late 50's, but by the time we moved there in 1986 it was no longer active. From 1986 to 2002 we saw our neighborhood deteriorate and become a Hodge podge of bad additions, odd fences; including chain link across the front yards, and a preponderance of rental properties.

In the year 2000 a group of neighbors decided that it would be a good idea to reactivate the HOA, but it was too late to undo years of violations to the covenants,



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and after about a year of trying it was given up as a lost cause. Because I have experienced first-hand what can happen to a neighborhood as it ages, I am committed to keeping our Emerald Hills HOA active and strong. In 2015 when there was a need for people on the board, I agreed to serve as Secretary and on the Architectural Review Committee (ARC), not because I have nothing better to do with my time, but because there was a need.

We are entering a critical period in the history of our neighborhood, most of the houses are at least 10 to 20 years old, and will begin to need more upkeep. This is where the ARC enters the picture, the goal being to keep our neighborhood looking in harmony. One of the greatest assets of Emerald Hills is that we have diverse architectural styles, not five of this model etc., but at the same time there is a feeling of harmony achieved through color. With over 25 years working in the Interior Design field, I know we want to express our creativity, and we can do that with our interiors. The covenants require that we get approval for any and all changes to the exteriors of our property; this is for the protection and benefit of ourselves and our neighbors. A suggestion for choosing colors for front doors and shutters is to look at the colors in your roof and siding and choose a deep darker version of that color to create contrast, and harmony. Also you might drive through the neighborhood and look for color combinations that are similar to your house. When submitting the application for color changes, it is very helpful and can eliminate misunderstanding, if you attach the color sample from the store with your request.

I am proud to live in this beautiful neighborhood and call it home; soon we will see our neighbors outside working on their lawns and gardens, all of us working together to keep our neighborhood one of the best in Augusta County. Happy Spring to all!

Spring Lawn Care Tips – by Starke Smith

1. Do soil tests to determine what type of nutrients are needed for your lawn, and fertilize accordingly.
2. What type of fertilizer to use; two types are fertilizer without weed killer, or fertilizer with weed killer such as Scott's Plus 2 which will kill most broad-leaf weeds. Others may chose not to use chemical fertilizers but opt for one of the green varieties.
3. When and how short to cut my grass? The old



rule of thumb is not to cut shorter than 3 inches, it is advisable not to cut it any shorter during a dry spell or it may kill your grass in places.

4. What if I don't like yard work, or don't have time to care for my yard? There are numerous Lawn care contractors in our area, many will mow and provide the needed chemical treatments, and others are mow only. If you have questions contact me or ask neighbors that have professional lawn care contractors.

Contact Us:

Emerald Hills Homeowners Association, Inc.

PO Box 1024
Fishersville, VA 22939
Board Email: Board@ehhoa.info
ARC Email: Arc@ehhoa.info
Website: <http://ehhoa.info/>

Association & Property Management Services

PO Box 2182
Harrisonburg, VA 22801
Phone: 540-423-3879
Email: Office@aapmrealty.com
Website: <http://aapmrealty.com/resident-central/>

EHHOA Board of Directors

Nicole Baucom, President
John Murie, Vice President
Mona Troensegaard, Secretary
Jack Cameron, Treasurer
Jim Eiland, ARC Chair

