

Long's Pond ESTATES

Homeowners Association Newsletter

www.longspond.org

January 2013

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

I would like to welcome everyone to 2013 at Longs Ponds Estates. The Board of Directors (BOD) hopes that everyone had a great holiday season! The Longs Ponds Estates BOD is looking forward to working with our friends and neighbors here. We have some exciting things happening this year.

I would like to remind everyone that the annual Community spring yard sale will be held on May 18, 2013, so start saving those treasures and make plans to participate.

For any issues or comments, feel free to contact me at board@longsponds.org.

Thanks,

Jon Handrock
President – Longs Pond HOA
2012-2013



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

Wednesday, February 20, 2013 at 7:30 PM
Wednesday, March 20, 2013 at 7:30 PM
Wednesday, April 17, 2013 at 7:30 PM
Wednesday, May 17, 2013 at 7:30 PM

Wednesday, June 19, 2013 at 7:30 PM
Wednesday, July 17, 2013 at 7:30 PM
Wednesday, August 21, 2013 at 7:30 PM

ANNUAL MEETING:

Thursday, September 19, 2013 at 7 PM

OPEN BURNING

Open burning may be an easy way to get rid of excess yard debris and trash, but it also contributes to air pollution. The smoke from open burning contributes to particulate matter pollution making it unhealthy to you and your neighbors.

As of July 1, 2007, Lexington County Outdoor Burning Ordinance prohibits the open burning of leaves, tree branches and yard trimmings at private residences within 75 feet of any structure and/or property line. Citizens who burn debris outdoors must take adequate steps to prevent any fire from spreading within 75 feet of any structure. Open burning that is done for the purpose of clearing land or maintaining a right-of-way must be conducted in compliance with South Carolina air quality regulations. Such open burning is prohibited between April 1 and October 30, when air quality problems are most prevalent in Lexington County.

Here are a few things to do with that yard debris instead of burning it:

- Start a compost pile. Composting creates an organic soil enhancing material that reduces your need to fertilize.
- Grasscycle by leaving grass clippings on the ground. They serve as a natural way to fertilize your yard.
- Grow native, drought tolerant plants that require less watering and pruning.

Questions about the County's open burn ordinance should be directed to the County's Fire Services Department at 803-785-8141.

Did You Know?

State law prohibits the burning of the following items:

- Household garbage and trash
- Paper
- Motor and waste heating oils
- Asphaltic materials
- Tires and other rubber products
- Building materials
- Plastics
- Paints
- Household Chemicals
- Agricultural Chemicals
- Electric wire or any material with metal content

For more information on the SC burn laws visit <http://www.scdhec.gov/environment/baq/openburning.aspx>.

HOME SECURITY TIPS

Making sure that your home is secure should be a priority in your life, not only because you want to protect what's rightfully yours, but more specifically, because it could be the most important thing that you do for your family and for yourself.

LOCK YOUR LOCKS

When it comes to home security, the single most important thing that you can do is to make sure that both your windows and doors are locked and your garage door is closed. We no longer live in a time when it is safe to go to bed at night with the door unlocked, the windows open or the garage door up. So do yourself – and your family – a favor by double checking those locks and making sure that all latches and hinges are functioning properly. And that your garage door is fully closed.

LIGHT YOUR LAWN

What would you do if you were to hear a noise outside but had no way to see without opening the door? The proper lighting outside your home is essential, as it allows you to view your outside space from the safety of your home's interior. A

bright light, or even a motion light, is perfect. And for home security, it is a must.

KEEP OUT

One way to ensure the security of your home and family is to make sure that the possible entry ways are minimized. This means that you should take a look around your home, evaluate how many ways a potential intruder could conceivably find a way in and do your best to make the necessary upgrades and repairs to prevent that from happening.

CLEAN IT UP

If you have any clutter in the yard, such as gardening or lawn tools, place them in a locked storage building or your garage. This is vital to home security because an intruder could use almost anything to break into your home, but you can deter them by making their task more difficult.

CUSTOMIZE YOUR SYSTEM

If you don't have a home security system, get one. If you purchase a home that already has a system in place, change the code, just as you would change the locks to any doors. Before you bought the home, who knew the security code that the former owner had programmed? You have no idea, right? That's why you need to change the information. It's also important that you not leave the code written on a piece of paper, which you leave lying around the house. The code to your security system is private information and it should be treated as such in order to protect the security of your home and family.

TRIM DOWN

If you have large trees, bushes or hedges in your yard, trim them to a level that will allow you to see out the window without an obstructed view. If you hear a noise or a knock at the door, you will need to be able to turn on the porch light and glance outside the window before opening the door. An important rule of thumb is to remove or trim anything that may block your view of the lawn in any way.

MONEY SAVING TIPS

In these tough economic times, many of us are trying to stretch our dollars and keep our debt as low as possible. The following tips from the National Foundation for Credit Counseling (NFCC), offer easy ways to save:

- Empty the change in your pocket into a jar each night. Pocket change can add up to between \$30 and \$50 a month.
- Cut \$5 a day out of your incidental spending. Mindless spending and impulse shopping take a bigger chunk out of your spending than you might care to admit.
- Resolve to carve \$10 a month from each of five discretionary spending categories. For example:

Food: plan meals in advance and never grocery shop on the run.

Eating out: order water to drink when dining at a restaurant.

Utilities: lower the thermostat at home.

Shopping: stay out of malls, and shop only when an item is needed.

Medical: sign up for one of the discount plans on prescriptions currently being offered by many national drug chains.

- Kick your bad habits. Buying a pack of cigarettes and a lottery ticket each day can add up quickly.
- Eliminate bank fees. Bank with an institution that has ATMs near where you live and work, eliminating any fees assessed by using a machine outside of your network. Don't pay for your checking account when many banks offer free checking with few strings attached. Never overdraw your account.
- Get an insurance check-up. You don't want to be over-insured or underinsured, but if you can handle raising your deductible, it will save you money each month.
- Don't have too much of a good thing. Examine your cell phone package. Are the minutes right for your calling patterns? Look at your cable plan. Are

you paying for channels you never watch? Switching to a plan that is right for you yields big savings.

- Stop charging and pay with cash. Studies show that people who pay for their purchases with cash typically save about 20 percent. Therefore, if you put \$1,000 onto a charge card each month, you stand to save big bucks.

For professional help finding hidden money in your budget, call a National Foundation for Credit Counseling member agency. To locate the counselor closest to you, dial (800) 388-2227, or go online to www.DebtAdvice.org. To find a Spanish-speaking counselor, call (800) 682-9832.

MORE MONEY SAVING TIPS

Before you head out to the grocery store or the mall, do a little web browsing for online coupons that can save you a bundle. According to the Promotion Marketing Association Coupon Council, the average savings per coupon is \$1.15.

Most online coupon sites are searchable by brand name or product category, which allows you to find coupons quickly for the specific items on your list—a big plus for list shoppers. If you're headed to a particular store, be sure to check that store's website for special offers. Well-known product manufacturers have printable coupons listed on their websites.

Of course, you'll need to print the coupons to take with you, but the online versions are easier to find and there's no clipping involved. Some sites will

require you to download software to print the coupons. This is necessary for the barcode to print correctly and scan easily at the checkout counter.

Most sites will want you to register using your e-mail address. If you're a serious coupon user, this can be good, since the sites will provide customized information and incentives based on your favorite brands.

Entering "free coupons" or "grocery coupons," in your web browser will bring up thousands of sites, all offering similar basics; and each one usually has a few extras or special features. For example, one may e-mail coupons to you for grocery stores

in your neighborhood based on your zip code. Another will invite you to sign up to receive free samples of your favorite products in the mail. Websites and features seem almost endless, so it's easy to find a few you like. For example, typical sites include:

- www.ShopAtHome.com. This site lists stores alphabetically, so you can look for deals and coupons before leaving home. It offers financial incentives for joining.
- www.eBates.com. Joining this site earns you rebates when you shop at certain *online* stores.
- www.southern saver.com. This site lists the weekly advertising circulars for all area grocery stores, as well as a pages and pages of coupons. You are also given the opportunity to work on your grocery list, highlighting those items that have a corresponding coupon.

Beware of websites “selling” coupons. Some are legitimate, but many are fraudulent. Considering how many websites have free coupons, you may never face this problem.

HOME MAINTENANCE

Use the Home Maintenance Checklist that follows to make sure your home is in good repair. This schedule will help you decide what time of year is best for each safety precaution.

Fall

Outside:

- Remove garden hoses from spouts. Drain and store for the winter. Wrap spouts in insulation.
- Drain in-ground sprinkler systems.
- Clear debris out of window wells, gutters, downspouts, and storm drains.
- Check weather stripping on windows and doors for fit and condition. Replace as necessary.
- Check windows, doors, and siding for holes and cracks. Caulk as necessary.
- Check and clean chimney (if you don't do it in the spring).

- Inspect all soffit vents and other venting systems to make sure they're clear of debris.
- Check bricks or blocks for cracked mortar or loose joints.
- Check painted surfaces for paint failure, water damage, or mildew.
- Examine all trim for fit, damage, and condition.
- Check caulking where two different materials meet, where wood siding joins the foundation wall, at inside corners, and where the window and door trim meets the siding.
- Check for loose putty around glass panes.
- Check for broken or cracked glass and damaged screens or storm windows.
- Insulate outdoor faucets, pipes in unheated garages, and pipes in crawl spaces with materials such as rags or newspapers.

Inside:

- Have furnace checked and serviced if necessary.
- Remove hair from drains in sinks, tubs, and showers. Use a drain cleaner approved for the materials in your plumbing system if necessary.
- Test all smoke alarms (when standard time resumes). Replace batteries as necessary.
- Test all ground-fault circuit interrupters, especially after electrical storms.

Winter

Outside:

- Check roof for damage and/or icicles indicating potential ice dams.

Inside:

- Check basement for leaks and seepage during thaws.
- Remove hair from drains in sinks, tubs, and showers. Use a drain cleaner approved for the materials in your plumbing system if necessary.

- Test all ground-fault circuit interrupters, especially after electrical storms.
- If leaving the house for an extended period, avoid frozen pipes by opening the cabinet doors to allow heat to reach the pipes. Don't turn the heat completely off.

Spring

Outside:

- Clear leaves and other debris from around outside air conditioner. Remove cover if used.
- Clear debris out of window wells, storm drains, gutters, downspouts, and down-spout extenders.
- Inspect gutters for signs of sagging or damage. Fix as necessary. Check down-spout extenders to make sure they're firmly attached.
- Trim back overhanging limbs on trees. Trim back shrubs if overgrown around house.
- Check weather stripping on windows and doors for fit and condition. Repair as necessary.
- Clean screens on roof vents and louvers.
- Clean chimney cap if necessary.
- Seek and destroy early signs of bird and stinging insect nests in key spots -- eaves, ledges, etc.
- Repair any weather damage/holes/cracks on the following: roof, siding, trim, and windows.
- Have chimney cleaned and checked (if you don't do it in the fall).
- Remove insulation from outdoor faucets, pipes in unheated garages, pipes in crawl spaces, etc.
- Turn on water to outdoor faucets. Turn on sprinkler system; check sprinkler heads. Make repairs as necessary.
- Clean and inspect all window and door screens. Make repairs/replacements as necessary.
- Have air conditioner checked and serviced if necessary.
- Check bricks or blocks for cracked mortar or loose joints.
- Check painted surfaces for paint failure, water damage, or mildew.
- Examine all trim for fit, damage, and condition.

- Check caulking where two different materials meet, where wood siding joins the foundation wall, at inside corners, and where the window and door trim meets the siding.
- Check for broken or cracked glass and damaged screens or storm windows.

Inside:

- Test smoke alarms (at onset of daylight saving time). Replace weak batteries.
- Clean out sump tank and clear screen on sump pump.
- Remove hair from drains in sinks, tubs, and showers. Use a drain cleaner approved for the materials in your plumbing system if necessary.
- Check for loose putty around glass panes.
- Test all ground-fault circuit interrupters, especially after electrical storms.

Summer

Outside:

- Check sludge and scum level in septic tank (if you have a septic system). Have system serviced if necessary.
- Have lateral sewer line inspected and cleared, or apply a root killer.

Inside:

- Test all ground-fault circuit interrupters, if you don't do it monthly (on outside circuits, too).
- Inspect all electrical cords for wear.
- Inspect washer hoses and dryer vent system (both indoors and out).
- Remove hair from drains in sinks, tubs, and showers. Use a drain cleaner approved for the materials in your plumbing system if necessary.
- Check pressure levels on fire extinguishers. Service if necessary.

TRIVIA CORNER

The Great Wall of China is Out of Sight



Part of the mystique surrounding this amazing engineering marvel is that the 1,864-mile-long wall of China can be seen from space. But when one actually stops to think about this claim, it simply crumbles. Why would the Great Wall be seen from space when Beijing’s new Golden Resources Shopping Mall, the world’s largest at six million square feet, can’t be?

The foundation for the wall story started in 1938, when Richard Halliburton, in his book *Second Book of Marvels*, announced that the Great Wall is the only man-made object visible from the moon. It would be another 31 years before *Apollo 11* actually landed on the moon. And according to the astronauts, not even the earth’s largest mountain ranges are visible from the moon.

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The letter *D* in D=Day has given rise to many assumptions of its meaning: Dooms-Day, Death-Day, Deliverance-Day, etc. But the truth is the *D* stands for “Day” in the same manner that the *H* in H-Hour stands for “Hour.”

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King for a Day

In a bizarre quirk in American history, we actually had a president who served for only one day, and his name was David Rice Atchison. James K. Polk’s term ended at noon on March 4, 1849, and Zachary Taylor was scheduled to take the presidential oath of office that same day. But March 4th fell on a Sunday, and Taylor decided to take the oath on Monday instead. That meant from noon on March 4th, when Polk’s term expired, until noon of March 5th, when Taylor was

sworn in, the United States was without a president. The Constitution states: “*In case of the removal, death, resignation or disability of both the President and Vice President of the United States, the President of the Senate Pro Tempore shall act as President.*” The president of the Senate pro tempore at the time was – you got it – David Rice Atchison. Atchison was never sworn in, never lived at the White House, and didn’t know he had been president for a day until years later.

Stupid History (Tales of Stupidity, Strangeness and Mythconceptions Throughout the Ages © 2007

COMMUNITY LOT

In order to make the common lot for the Community a more enjoyable place for all neighbors, indigenous trees will be installed along the bordering homes that currently do not have a treed border.