

THE STATE OF THE ESTATES

Woodridge Estates Homeowners Association Newsletter

October 2022

FELLOW WOODRIDGPHILES: Welcome to fall! You already are too late for Christmas shopping, but the stores should have Valentine's Day stuff available any day now. You don't want to miss that! And surprise—we actually had a spot of rain at the start of the rainy season! Woohoo!

HEADS UPs!

● **No new water restrictions through November.** Notice of new restrictions usually is given well in advance, so we probably will not face any additional restrictions through November, *but keep your eyes and ears open on the news.* The basics remain watering only one day per week (odd numbered addresses on Saturdays, even numbered on Sundays), ten minutes per station, no watering between 8 am and 6 pm, no lawn watering at all, low-flow non-spray sprinklers or hand watering with an auto shut-off nozzle only, no fountains or car/hardscape washdowns, and no Slip-n-Slides or fake snow makers. Go here for more details: <https://www.toakswater.org/conservationstages> . The Acorn and Ventura County Star also are great local resources for updated info. (Hey, there probably is an unread Acorn lying out on your driveway right now!]¹

● We have said it before and we will say it again: *Water your trees and shrubs!* Everyone needs to hand water their trees and shrubs as needed to keep them alive. Please don't neglect them—our grass may be dead or dying, but the watering restrictions allow for tree and shrub hand-watering any day of the week before 8 am and after 6 pm.

● **Fall Back:** Set your clocks back one hour when you go to bed on Saturday, November 5—Daylight Saving Time ends, and you don't want to be late for church, golf, or your favorite football games on Sunday November 6! (And then also go change your irrigation, pool pump, and outdoor light timers—please?)

● **Gateminder Holiday Bonuses:** Please watch your email for a special invitation to contribute to a fund for holiday cash bonuses to our gatekeepers. This was a success last year, and candidly is greatly preferred over cookies and other treats—the HOA would love to see even greater resident contribution participation this year (and fewer crumbs in the recently refurbished gatehouse).

● **Sidewalk repair** throughout the community is expected to start sometime in November. Also, we have a *new holiday gate-lighting* company this year, and you may see the lights being installed very soon due to vendor scheduling. They will not be turned on, though, until Thanksgiving. So hold off on those emails and calls about non-working holiday lights until then, but do check at night first, okay?).

¹ It is the lack of news about the success or lack thereof of the TO/Ventura County water restrictions in terms of water conservation that tells us the current restrictions must be working pretty well. The powers that be likely are holding back any such good news for fear we reluctant subservients will stop abiding by the restrictions now in place when we hear they are working. But we are just guessing. (An educated and reasonable guess, but just a guess nevertheless.)

NEIGHBORHOOD BASICS

● **Website:** The Woodridge community website is at www.woodridgeestatesresident.com. Suggestions for and contributions to the website are invited. Please check it out!

● **Emergencies:** Always call 911 first in a genuine emergency in or around the community. Our Gatehouse personnel are not “security guards”—you can let them know of any problems, but ***first call 911 in any emergency.***

Police: 805-494-8200/8201 Fire: 805-371-1111 ext 34

● **Get the GateKey app** at www.gatekey.com/resident-login . Tutorial access is on the site. This is especially important during the holiday season!

● **Management Contact:** Email your requests, concerns, and inquiries to PMP Community Care at care@pmpmanage.com to automatically open a “ticket.” If you really need to speak with someone, call (805) 642-2400 and ask for Julie Phan. You also can submit a request via your PMP Management account at www.woodridgecommunityassociation.com and its “Dashboard.”

● **Fire Prevention:** Ventura County fire prevention news is here: <https://vcfd.org/fire-prevention/fire-hazard-reduction-program-fhrp/> . Our community website has a section on our common area wildfire prevention plan as well. *All annual brush clearance is complete for this year.*

AND NOW, LET THE “JOURNALISM” BEGIN

HOLIDAY SECURITY ALERT!!

It is that time of year again—yes, the holidays are coming, but so are the porch pirates, burglars, and other grinch-like villains. The Thousand Oaks Police (Ventura County Sheriff) are trying hard to get the word out about security precautions in light of the increase in burglaries in and around TO—especially those targeting homes adjacent to open space from which the baddies can unobtrusively observe homeowner comings and goings and plan accordingly. They also use fake stakeout trucks (i.e., with Amazon or FedEx, etc., fake signage—trademark laws alone apparently do not deter them, *quelle surprise*)—to accomplish the same thing simply by parking on the street. And these nefarious activities are not just for un-gated communities! No! We behind the gates are not immune!

Most of these recent home burglaries are occurring between 5 and 10 pm, second story windows are not an obstacle, and some of the responsible miscreants reportedly have perused local real estate records and websites to learn home floorplans so they can get into your bedrooms and closets and jewelry drawers and get out again before the coppers can react to the alarm—if you even have an alarm and remember to turn it on. These ne’er-do-wells also stake out parking lots in shopping areas to watch for people walking to their vehicles laden with shopping bags. And some of these malefactors are strolling the streets at night to look for things left in cars parked on streets and even driveways.

This threat is serious, people. You can read all about it with just a glance at any recent local paper or the NextDoor app, or just talk to a few neighbors and it won’t take long to hear a story about a recent local theft. Woodridge had one such burglary last year on Eaglewood!

Our crime reporter Joel Thursday offers these suggestions via the TO po-po:

That beautiful holiday tree visible through your picture windows is likewise appreciated by the law-abiding challenged—so drapes work well, and back rooms work better.

When you leave for your evening coffee/barstool/dinner jaunt, make sure you leave a few lights on, and our constabulary also recommends leaving a tv on as well. (Think “Home Alone.”)

Keep your head on a swivel in shopping area parking lots and try to keep at least one hand free at all times (for self protection/defense). Act aware and you will be treated as such—the oblivious are the main targets.

Turn on your outside lights and get a timer for them—leave them all on into the wee hours!

Don’t leave anything visible in your car—sunglasses alone will tempt the guys looking into cars when they get frustrated searching for laptops and gym bags.

Pick up your newspapers and porch deliveries frequently and ask a neighbor to do it for you when you are out of town. Same with your trash bins—it is better not to put them out until you get back if you will be gone past the pick-up day.

Keep your car doors locked at all times, whether inside your car or away from it, even when parked at home and in your garage (if you can get in there).

Get an alarm system, and then actually use it, including while in your home!

Please use the Gatekey app for your visitors and vendors—keeping track of approved visitors and vendors is critical to everyone’s safety, especially this time of year.

Wishing everyone a happy and safe holiday season—just use good sense (not so common these days) and you should be fine, but good sense includes vigilance . . . Remember, you are not being paranoid if someone actually is there! ²

COMMON AREA UPDATES

Your HOA Landscaping Committee’s effort to manage our common area irrigation, both before and since the local drought watering restrictions, has paid off in substantial HOA savings on water costs. The savings will be contributed to the HOA reserve fund (which, by the way, now puts your HOA at the “lowest risk” level per a recent HOA independent Reserve Study) and used to offset drought damage to our common area landscaping—those longer-term plans are still being considered.

The new planter in front of the gatehouse doesn’t just look great, it has been a great deterrent to turn-around accidents and the great flowerpotdemic of 2020-2021. (It also looks beautiful.) Unfortunately, it doesn’t help with visitors running into the gate-arm. That feature was an add-

² Speaking of security and our front gate, please stop at the visitor entrance once in awhile to welcome new gateminders as well as our new gatekeeping supervisor, Wendy. See also the “Heads Up” above regarding a holiday bonus drive for our diligent gate crew. Please participate when those instructions come your way!

on to the original entry gate design, and is too close to the gatehouse to be seen over the hood of large trucks, so, well, stuff happens. Our gateminders are getting extra training in how to help people avoid gate-arm collisions, and we wish them the best. But everyone is in a hurry these days, so the good news is that the repairs, when needed, are not uber-expensive. (Your HOA goes after negligent drivers to recover those costs when it can.)

Common area tree trimming continues during the drought under arborist standards. The tree-trimming schedule is available on the community website, and Heavenly Ridge is up next, on December 10. See https://www.woodridgeestateresident.com/files/ugd/fccece_3af9912827cc41caa0bf1104f55c2926.pdf and try to remember not to park on the street that day. The schedule will be similar for next year, so make a note to check the website and the schedule next year before your street's turn next comes around.

*And **don't forget to water your own trees and shrubs, especially your median trees!** It is allowed as necessary (any day of the week!) for their well-being (just not between 8 am and 6 pm), and those of you who have replaced lawns with artificial turf need to pay special attention to your trees because they are not getting the lawn-water they used to get.*

ASK THE NEWSLETTER

This month's anonymous comments and questions:

Question: How come some people still have green grass?

- (a) They don't read the Newsletter (or anything else) and thus don't know the restrictions
- (b) They are righteously indignant rebels who won't be told what to do on their own property
- (c) They won the lottery and haven't yet returned from their around-the-world cruise
- (d) They have no idea how to adjust their own irrigation systems, and communicate poorly with their gardeners (who also don't read the Newsletter)
- (e) They still are using sprayer heads on their irrigation lines instead of only drip lines, so some of the lawn still gets a bit of water when the shrubs are being sprayed
- (f) Some grasses—most of our lawns have a mix—tolerate drought pretty well, and go dormant instead of brown, but stay pretty green
- (g) Two or more of the above³

Question: Election Day is November 8. Where is our local voting booth?

You can vote in person at any Ventura County "Voting Center," a list of which you can find at www.venturavote.org. The nearest in-person location is the Sunset Hills Country Club at 4155 Erbes Road (take a left at the Sunset Hills/Erbes Road intersection as you leave Woodridge and you will find the club on the left at the bottom of the big hill), and it will be open for voting November 5-7 from 10 am to 6 pm and on election day, November 8, 7 am to 8 pm. (Note: Multiple days on which you can vote does not mean you can vote each day.) But you also can just drop your ballot in your mailbox and put up the little arm—the mailperson will take it from there. (Though exactly where is a reasonable question.)

³ Our "Most Deadeast Lawn" Award will be handed out during the "In Memoriam" segment of the Motion Picture Academy Awards in February. We were invited to participate in hopes of rekindling interest in that show.

Question: *Do we really need another reminder that we are supposed to pull our trash cans back behind our side gates on Thursday evenings after garbage pickup?*

Yes, apparently we do. Not only is it an HOA rule, but the street sweeper comes early Friday mornings and works best for us all if it does not have to maneuver around your un-returned trash cans.

Question: *What do you think about having a “meet and greet” for our community?*

It so happens that your HOA Board is considering just such an event! If you would attend at an off-Woodridge location, or if you would not, let the Newsletter know at jbriggs@jbriggslaw.com and we will pass the results along to the HOA. Seriously, please let us know your thoughts on whether you would attend and any location suggestions (including your house!).

Question: *How about leaving some of the holiday gate lights up all year--they so purty!*

Another great survey question! If you like that idea, or don't, let the Newsletter know and we will report the results to the HOA Board.

Question: *Have you ever seen the rain comin' down on a sunny day?*

Yes, down on the corner. We were chasin' down a hoodoo there.

Thanks to those of you writing to us, all feedback is appreciated!

OLD BUSINESS

- HOA holiday decoration rule reminder:

Section 1.14 Holiday Decorations and Lights

Halloween decorations may be installed beginning October 1st and must be removed within two (2) weeks after October 31st. Winter holiday decorations may be displayed starting the week of Thanksgiving and must be removed by the end of the second weekend in January. Related sound elements are only permitted between the hours of 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Any decorations that impede any portion of the walkway or streets are prohibited. The ARC reserves the right to approve, disapprove, holiday displays.

- Can't say it often enough (as if you couldn't tell): **HAND-WATER YOUR TREES AND SHRUBS AS NEEDED TO KEEP THEM ALIVE, YOU ARE ALLOWED TO DO SO.** Especially your median trees and those of you who have installed artificial turf!
- Call the TO Police non-emergency response line, 805-654-9511, to report anyone you see anywhere in the city *who seems to need medical care or non-emergency law enforcement intervention* (a/k/a “homeless” persons). Resources are available to help those who need and want it, *and those who don't will find other places to stay where quality of life crimes are not enforced* if law enforcement knows to reach out to them.

The TO City Council recently announced a plan to build a temporary shelter facility on unused city land in a Newbury Park industrial area—this will help TO enforce its anti-public space camping laws, a very big step forward in fighting local homelessness. Here is an excellent article about

this new plan: <https://www.toacorn.com/articles/city-changes-shelter-strategy/>. Also check out this article: <https://www.vcstar.com/story/news/local/communities/conejo-valley/2022/09/24/thousand-oaks-emergency-homeless-shelter-project-homekey-ventura-county/8091111001/> And a really good article on homelessness generally is here: <https://www.lamag.com/citythinkblog/skid-row-nation-how-l-a-s-homelessness-crisis-response-spread-across-the-country/>.

MISCELLANEOUS

Election Day: Tuesday, November 8. You probably already have received your vote-by-mail ballot by the time you read this, as every registered voter will be getting one. Your Newsletter respectfully encourages you to do a little research on the candidates and ballot propositions and then vote accordingly. It is not that hard, and its importance cannot be overstated. It is, of course, easier to just complain about the results (or lack of same), but you only earn that right by learning and voting!⁴

Here is an article on a recent “candidate forum” that identifies all the TO City Council candidates: <https://www.toacorn.com/articles/ten-council-candidates-face-the-music-at-lundring-center/>. It takes only about 24 minutes to look up each of their websites (just type “[candidate name] for city council” in your search browser), read their positions on issues, and make your picks; you get to vote for three. Please make that small effort and vote as you will based on candidate positions, not just familiar names or nice faces. Please.

Holidays of Next Month: November 11 (a Friday) is Veterans Day. Sadly, most of you only get to take this day off if you work for the government or a bank. But you can still thank a veteran while out to lunch! (Instead of “Thanks for your service,” try “I appreciate what you have done for us all”—nice for vets to hear something a little different now and then. But any acknowledgment is appreciated!)

November 24 is Thanksgiving, so here’s hoping the long-predicted turkey shortage does not come to pass. (Wouldn’t hurt to go with a frozen bird this year, and buy it early. If you are vegetarian/vegan, even last year’s tofurky is probably still okay to eat (notice we didn’t say “good” to eat).) Banks and the Post Office will be open on Friday, November 25, but most government offices will be closed both Thursday and Friday. Plan ahead, all you “Black Friday” freaks!

NextDoor App Quote of the Month (abbreviated): “I offered my old washer and dryer for sale and a guy came by to test them both before buying—he did a load of laundry and then just left. Have I been scammed?” *Are you sure that wasn’t just your child in college?*

Definition of the Month: Procrastination: Working tomorrow for a better today.

New Word of the Month: “Based”: Newfangled slang for the opposite of “woke” in political parlance.

⁴ Our default position on propositions is “no,” but we encourage a “yes” vote on the proposition calling for summary execution of those who do not pick up after their dogs. “Off with their heads!”

*That's all s/he/it/they/we wrote for this month. **Please find a list of helpful local phone numbers at www.woodridgeestateresident.com/helpfulphonenumber**. Let us know of any others you can suggest. (This month's un-helpful number is 1-555-prop26andprop27truth.)*

NEXT HOA BOARD MEETING: November 17, 2022, watch your email for a Zoom invitation a few days before the 20th.

Note that your HOA Board is considering resuming in-person meetings in January, perhaps with contemporaneous "Zoom" access. In-person location is the PMP conference room, 515 Marin Street, Suite 404 (opposite The Oaks mall off Hillcrest). Note also that there is no HOA Board meeting in December. (Don't worry, the Board members are not paid for that month. Kidding! They get the same pay—\$00.00—for that month as all the others.)

TO PROVIDE INFORMATION AND IDEAS FOR THIS NEWSLETTER, WRITE jbriggs@jbriggslaw.com

SEND COMPLAINTS ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER TO aeneuman@whatmeworry.usa