

Spring Meadow Estates HOA News

A PUBLICATION OF THE SPRING MEADOW ESTATES
HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

→ SUMMER 2008

MANAGER'S CORNER

Dear Community Members,

Hello Everyone! I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to all residents of Spring Meadow. My name is Tracey Harmel and I am your Homeowner Association manager. It is exciting to be involved with your community, especially with your Committee Chairs and members. They are taking a proactive approach toward insuring the community looks good and has a social spirit. I will strive to protect your home investment by enforcing the Covenants, Restriction and Conditions and maintaining the common areas.

I have been driving the property on a weekly basis for several months now and most homeowners are doing a great job with maintaining their lawns and storing their trash bins out of sight. As a reminder the association is striving for well manicured lawns which include mowing, edging, and a weed free turf. Landscaping is a big part of a communities' image in keeping property values. Also the trash bins must be stored out of public view. Violations are issued for those homeowners who fail to abide by the deed restrictions.

As a Homeowner Association Member you too are the eyes and ears of your community. If you see something that needs to be addressed please contact me. We can work together to make sure Spring Meadow remains a beautiful community and great place to live.

Please contact me at: 214-871-9700 ext 275 or email me at: tracey.harmel@premiercommunities.net

Until next time Have a Great Summer!

BABYSITTING CO-OP

As an at-home mom, do you want to put a new twist on an old idea to get some guilt-free time to yourself? Come join our newly forming babysitting co-op. Cooperatives have been around for hundreds of years. Based on the values of self-help and self-responsibility, they were organized voluntarily by a group of persons to meet a common economic, social, and cultural needs.



A babysitting co-op gives you:

- no-cost, quality childcare.
- a support network of other women who deal with many of the same daily issues as you do.
- the opportunity to spend time on yourself.
- a new group of friends for you and your children.

Come join the organization of the new **SPRING MEADOW ESTATES BABYSITTING CO-OP!**

Our first meeting will be announced soon via flyers delivered to your home.

Hope to see you there!

Carol Campion
ccampiohome@verizon.net

WHEN YOU GO ON VACATION

One of the times your home is most vulnerable is when it is left empty for an extended period of time. Darkened windows, un-retrieved mail or newspapers and closed windows in hotter weather all advertise your absence to a potential burglar.

- The best protection for your apartment during your absence is to have a house sitter. A friend you trust staying at your house can take care of your pets and/or plants in addition to making sure the house is inhabited.
- Have a neighbor check on your apartment while you're away— turning on lights, radios or TVs and opening and closing curtains will give your apartment the appearance of someone home.
- If you don't have a friend or neighbor to housesit or check your apartment while you're away – perhaps even if you do – you should keep not only lights but a TV or radio on a timer. If you're like me and have your TV on almost all the time you're home [NOTE: I don't watch it, it's just background noise.], the absence of the sound and that blueish light in the windows announces that you're not there.
- Make sure whoever is checking your apartment while you're away knows how to work your alarm system and who to call in case of a problem.
- Unless you have a house sitter, stop your mail and any newspaper or other delivery. Nothing announces an empty apartment better than a stack of newspapers or an overflowing mailbox. Ask a nearby neighbor to pick up any packages delivered while you're gone.
- If you have a garden or plants on your balcony, make sure someone is watering the plants regularly or put the plants where they can't be seen. Plants slowly dying due to lack of water may announce your absence.
- Check your lease. Many landlords require that you notify them if your apartment is going to be left empty for any period of time (this is so they can enter in case of emergency even if they can't reach you). If you've got a house sitter this isn't necessary.



DRINKING WATER TO MAINTAIN GOOD HEALTH

From Shereen Jegtvig, *Your Guide to Nutrition: The Beverage Your Body Needs Most*

WATER

When we were kids in school, we learned that each molecule of water is made up of two hydrogen atoms and one oxygen atom. We also learned that it was great fun to fill up our squirt guns with water, at least until the principal caught us. What we really didn't learn, however, was how much water we needed in order to be healthy human beings.

WHY WE NEED WATER

Our bodies are estimated to be about 60 to 70% water. Blood is mostly water, and our muscles, lungs, and brain all contain a lot of water. Water is needed to regulate body temperature and to provide the means for nutrients to travel to all our organs. Water also transports oxygen to our cells, removes waste, and protects our joints and organs.

SIGNS OF DEHYDRATION

We lose water through urination, respiration, and by sweating. If you are very active, you lose more water than if you are sedentary. Diuretics such as caffeine and alcohol cause us to lose water by tricking our bodies into thinking we have more water than we need.

Symptoms of mild dehydration include chronic pains in joints and muscles, lower back pain, headaches, and constipation. A strong odor to your urine, along with a yellow or amber color indicates that you are not getting enough water. (Note that riboflavin, a B Vitamin, will make your urine bright yellow.) Thirst is an obvious sign of dehydration and in fact, you need water long before you feel thirsty.

HOW MUCH WATER TO DRINK

A good rule of thumb is to take your body weight in pounds and divide that number in half. That gives you the number of ounces of water per day that you need to drink. For example, if you weigh 160 pounds, you should drink at least 80 ounces of water per day. If you exercise you should drink another 8 ounce glass of water for every 20 minutes you are active. If you drink coffee or alcohol, you should drink at least an equal amount of water. When you are traveling on an airplane, it is good to drink 8 ounces of water for every hour you are on board the plane. If you live in an arid climate, you should add another 2 servings per day. As you can see, your daily need for water can add up to quite a lot.

The best source for water is plain, pure drinking water. Juices and sodas have a lot of sugar in them and aren't a good source, so if you drink them, they don't count towards your daily amount. Diet sodas aren't a good choice either. Herbal teas that aren't diuretic are fine. Sports drinks contain electrolytes and may be beneficial, just look out for added sugar and calories that you don't need.

CARRY A WATER BOTTLE

It may be difficult to drink enough water on a busy day. Be sure you have water handy at all times by keeping a bottle for water with you when you are working, traveling, or exercising. If you get bored with plain water, add a bit of lemon or lime for a touch of flavor. There are some brands of flavored water available, but some of them have sugar or artificial sweeteners which you don't need.



4 Steps to a Healthy Heart ▶



Fast food may seem like a time saver, but you'll pay for it later. Stock your kitchen with healthful grab & go foods like bananas, almonds, whole grain cereals, soy protein bars, blueberries, or oatmeal!



Exercise doesn't have to mean a 60 minute class at the gym. Squeeze it in where you can: take the stairs instead of the elevator, park farther than usual so you have to walk further, and do quick 20-minute bursts of activity throughout the week!



Who has time to take smoke breaks or constantly stop in the store for more cigarettes? Kick the habit and you'll have more time to get stuff done. Plus, your risk of heart disease drops dramatically within just one year!



What you don't know can hurt you. It takes about an hour a year to get your cholesterol and blood pressure checked. Make it happen!

Whoopie Pies

Two pillowy devil's-food cookies enclosing a cloudlike marshmallow filling -- it's a child's dream of a cookie, but you'll no doubt find them quite tasty, too.

Cookie Dough:

2 cup(s) all-purpose flour
1 cup(s) sugar
3/4 cup(s) milk
1/2 cup(s) unsweetened cocoa
6 tablespoon(s) butter or margarine, melted
1 teaspoon(s) baking soda
1 teaspoon(s) vanilla extract
1/4 teaspoon(s) salt
1 large egg

Marshmallow Creme Filling:

6 tablespoon(s) butter or margarine, slightly softened
1 cup(s) confectioners' sugar
1 jar(s) (7- to 7 1/2-ounce)
marshmallow crème
1 teaspoon(s) vanilla extract

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease 2 large cookie sheets.
- Prepare Cookie Dough: In large bowl, with spoon, mix all dough ingredients until smooth.
- Drop dough by heaping tablespoons, 2 inches apart, on each prepared cookie sheet. (There will be 12 rounds per sheet.)
- Bake 12 to 14 minutes, rotating sheets between upper and lower racks halfway through baking, until puffy and toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. With wide spatula, transfer cookies to wire racks to cool completely.
- Prepare Marshmallow Crème Filling: In large bowl, with mixer at medium speed, beat butter until smooth. Reduce speed to low; gradually beat in confectioners' sugar. Beat in marshmallow crème and vanilla until smooth.
- Spread 1 rounded tablespoon filling on flat side of 12 cookies. Top with remaining cookies.



LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE SUGGESTIONS

WATER: With a new installation, plants need to be watered every other day, unless the weather is extremely wet or hot/dry. After 1 month, cut back to twice a week for approximately 30 minutes. (Two fifteen minutes periods within a short time is also okay.) If we have a significant rain of about 1/2 inch, one watering can be skipped. Too much water can also damage plants especially with our heavy soils, so it is hard to give absolute rules. If it seems that the soil is staying too wet, try spacing the watering days out rather than watering for a shorter time. It is important to water deeply in order to encourage deep root growth. Occasional inspection of the landscape after sprinklers have been on will indicate area where there may be sprinkler problem that needs to be repaired. During winter, water once a week if there is no rain. During summer, water three times a week if the temperature is over 90 degrees.

MULCH: A 2-3" organic layer of shredded bark mulch maintained in the planting beds at all times. This cools the soil in the summer, warms the soil in the winter, maintains even moisture levels, discourages weeds and breaks down over time to add organic matter to the soil. The best time to mulch is in December before a hard freeze and in late spring when temperatures rise above 90 degrees.

INSECT AND DISEASE CONTROL: Most of the plants should be troubled little with insect or disease. If you notice a problem, it is best to take a sample of the problem to a nursery to be sure that you have correctly identified the problem before treatment. Then treat only the problem areas and adjacent plants that are similar rather than treating the entire landscape. Insecticides used on the entire landscaping on a regular basis will kill beneficial insects and end up creating more of a problem than before.



COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE NEWS

The purpose of the communications committee is to keep the association members informed of events and information pertaining to the community. As our newest residents may want to know, our portal for doing so is the community website at www.springmeadowstates.net. The website is for your benefit and use. We've added to the section titled 'hire your neighbor' to help our residents inform neighbors of their side businesses or primary pursuits that may be of use to them. It's always good to help each other out that way when we can. There are new pictures posted of the Spring Fling which was a huge success! I hope our efforts do their part to build a cohesive community where neighbors know neighbors. The association is working to build a babysitting co-op. With so many new (or renewed) parents in our neighborhood, this will allow time for date night with our spouses. When this comes to fruition, the website will inform and facilitate the sign up for this idea. As always, please feel free to submit any ideas or news that you feel the community could benefit from.

Sincerely,

Darin Petersen

darin@springmeadowstates.net

SOCIAL/WELCOME COMMITTEE NEWS

During the past few months the Committee was busy planning for the next Resident Outing on May 18. Food, Egg Toss game Balloon Stomp activity, Door Prizes, and the visit of a Fire Department truck was present along with several Policemen with their car for the children to inspect. Over 100 people were present and enjoyed the activities on a very nice afternoon of weather. The first Bunko party was held on Monday, June 2 at the home of Carol Champion with about twelve women present who enjoyed dinner and several hours of learning and playing the game. Other Residents are invited to join the group at the next meeting on July 7. Each meeting will be held on the First Monday of the month at rotating homes with dinner being served followed by games. Other small Community gatherings are being planned for "Get Acquainted" purposes in the different areas of the Subdivision. There was a great interest in forming a Men's Poker Night. We need a Volunteer to set up this game night.

Don Aswell, *Chairman*

ADVISORY COMMITTEE NEWS

The Advisory Committee was established in February and we are up and running full speed ahead. The Committee members are: Lynda Rubey, Darin Peterson, Denise Paquette Boots and Carol Champion. We are eager and dedicated to serve the community and thrilled with the way it is progressing. If you have a problem that you wish the Advisory Committee to address, please do not hesitate to contact any of our members.

There has been lots of activity in our community since our last newsletter. We have seen the rains come and go with flooding our waterfall area which took some clean up by our landscapers. The waterfall itself broke down and repairs were needed. New spring flowers were planted in our common areas. We have welcomed several new neighbors to our community. We had a great Spring Fling. New construction continues, a chemical spill occurred in the street of Sandi Lane where the Fire Department was called and we have several new babies born (congratulations to the proud parents).

The Advisory Committee has had 10

ACC requests presented. These requests consist of: Three swimming pools, one for landscape borders, two for patio covers, one to re-stain shutters, one to move and replace a fence, one for a storage building and one to add a sunroom. We review the request and give our opinion back to Premier for a final determination to be made. Remember if you are doing any work on the exterior of your home, you must present an ACC request for approval before the work is done.

We'll be seeing you in the neighborhood.

Lynda Rubey-Chairperson

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Denise Paquette Boots

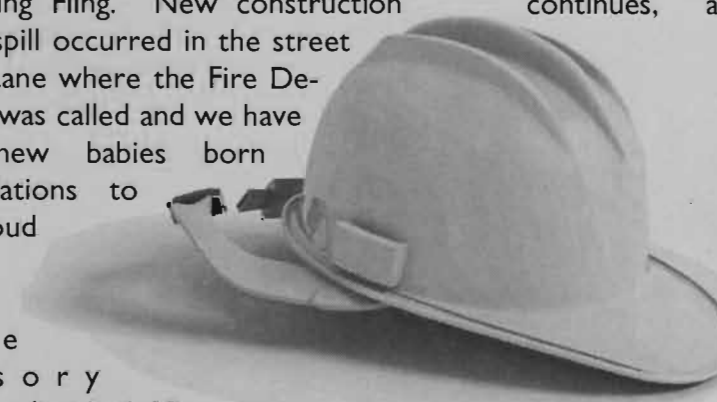
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Saving Big Bucks on your Energy Bill in the Summer

Take care of the pennies, and the dollars will take care of themselves.

The fact of this matter is -- you have control over your life! You can make small changes in the ways that you do things that add up to big savings every month. It won't happen without some effort, but aren't we all tired of high utility bills? Which would you rather do -- give your money to a big corporation, or spend it on something nice for yourself or your kids? It's your choice. Even if you're renting, there are many things you can do to save money on your monthly energy bills.

Use Less Hot Water

Turn the thermostat on the hot water heater to 120 degrees. Install low-flow showerheads and faucets. Take quick showers not baths. Wash clothes in cold water. Insulate the hot water tank, but don't cover the top, bottom, thermostat, or burner compartment. You can buy a "jacket" designed for insulating a water heater at many home supply stores, or the tank can be wrapped with insulating materials secured with duct tape. Not fancy, but serviceable.

Lighting.

Remember your grandmother's advice: turn off the lights when you aren't using them (no, it doesn't take more energy to turn them off and on than it does to leave them on, that's an urban myth). Switch from incandescent lights to fluorescent. Not only do they use less electricity, they are also cooler -- 90% of the electricity used by an incandescent light bulb is converted to heat. The best choice is "compact fluorescent". Although they are more expensive than incandescent (starting at \$8), they will last 10 times as long, and each saves about \$45 of electricity during its life. (Best prices are at discount/warehouse stores, and bulbs are available that will fit ordinary light fixtures and lamps.) Don't use overhead lights when a table lamp will do. Use less lighting during the day when natural light is available.

Pay attention to details.

Many modern appliances have "ghost loads" -- such as instant-on circuits that draw power all the time, even when you think it is "off". When an appliance isn't being used, make sure it is turned completely off, unplug it if necessary -- especially the television (which consumes lots of energy and generates lots of heat). Never use the television for "background noise" while you're doing something else; a radio consumes less power. Go barefoot in the house, and wear loose-fitting light clothes made from natural fabrics like cotton. Don't cool unused rooms, keep them closed unless necessary for air circulation in your house. If your air conditioner is in the sun, shade it -- but don't block its air circulation. Wash dishes by hand, don't use the dish washer. Dress lightly for sleeping, and use cotton sheets and a cotton mattress pad (or several cotton sheets if you don't have a pad). If you smoke, do it outside. Hang your clothes out to dry, especially heavy items like jeans and towels. (No dryer can duplicate that great smell of clothes that have been dried on the line outside.)

Cooking

If you have an electric stove, whenever possible use a crock-pot, toaster oven, or electric frying pan, all of which use much less electricity than the stove. When using the stove, turn the burner off several minutes before the cooking is done. The recipe will finish as the burners cool down. Use a pressure cooker. Cook with the smallest pan necessary to do the job. Cover water you are bringing to boil. Keep the inside of a microwave oven clean. Whenever possible, cook outside or eat meals that don't require a lot of cooking. Cooking inside adds a lot of humidity and heat during the summer. Using a grill and/or camp stove outside. If you do cook inside, do so early in the morning while it's cool. You could really go for the gusto and build a simple solar oven and bake bread or cook a roast or casserole using the hot afternoon sunlight (yes, you can really do this, and you don't need a degree in rocket science to make one). Contact us at 405-557-0436 for more information about this.

Turn the thermostat up.

If you have a central air conditioner, every degree you turn the thermostat up saves you money. If you are going to be gone for several hours, turn it up ten degrees. If you have a window unit, turn it off while you're gone. Don't run the air conditioner in the morning when it is cool.

Let cool air in.

If the weather is such that it cools down at night or in the morning, ventilate your house. Put a box fan in a window on the north side of the house to draw in cool air. On the south side of the house, put another box fan in a window so that it draws warm air out of the house. Many older houses are designed so that air circulates freely if doors and windows are opened properly. A ceiling fan can help circulate air creating an effect where the temperature seems several degrees cooler. For other indoor uses, box fans are inefficient and usually noisy, rotary fans are better. Variable speed fans will help you get the right amount of air. Use a fan (the exhaust fan, if there is one installed) to move cooking heat outside, but be sure to turn it off after the burners cool down, or you'll send your cool air outside.

Keep hydrated.

Drink lots of water. Sugar, caffeine, alcohol, and big heavy meals will make you feel warmer. Caffeine and alcohol will dehydrate you, so even if you drink a super big gulp soft drink twice a day, you still need 6 to 8 glasses of water. Large amounts of very cold drinks will fool your body into thinking you are cold, so your body's thermostat will try to warm you up. The idea that an ice cold soft drink is the perfect solution for your thirst on a hot summer day is something you have been brainwashed to believe by billions of dollars in advertising. Water is better. Keep a 500ml bottle of cool (not cold) water handy, and give yourself a little spritz every once in a while.

Eleven Good Ideas

Read more. Learn more. Keep books in your home. Use maps and dictionaries -- often. Read to your children every day. Ask many questions. Learn many things. Teach others. If you always do what you always do, you will always get what you always get. Be wary of the tendency to resort to bad habits when you are under stress. To avoid fools, take steps

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TEN COMMANDMENTS OF HUMAN RELATIONS

1. **Speak to People.** There is nothing so nice as a cheerful word of greeting.
2. **Smile at People.** It takes 72 muscles to frown, only 14 to smile.
3. **Call People by name.** The sweetest music to anyone's ears is the sound of his own name.
4. **Be Friendly** and helpful. If you would have friends, be a friend.
5. **Be Cordial.** Speak and act as if everything you do is a genuine pleasure.
6. **Be Genuinely** interested in people. You can like almost everybody if you try.
7. **Be Generous** with praise – cautious with criticism.
8. **Be Considerate** with the feelings of others. There are usually three sides to a controversy; Yours, the other fellow's, and the right side.
9. **Be Alert** to give service. What counts most in life is what we do for others.
10. **Add to this** a good sense of humor, a big dose of patience and a dash of humility and you will be rewarded many-fold.

