

# Summer

## at Stetson Hills 2023

### A LETTER FROM THE BOARD

#### Dear Owners and Neighbors,

With all the heavy spring and summer rain and historical rainfall totals, we hope you are drying out and enjoying your summer with family and friends. The turbulent weather may have put your improvement projects behind schedule as contractors struggle to catch up. Don't delay critical projects to long as summer will go by quickly, school will be back in session in a month plus and the fall is some of the best time to enjoy Colorado versus trying to scramble before winter comes.

Thank you to all the patrons and volunteers that supported the spring April Easter Egg event. This year's attendance was outstanding. We hope all the children and parents had an enjoyable time meeting the Easter Bunny and finding golden eggs. Look forward to meeting a new bunny next year. This event is only possible through the owners' donations and volunteers helping to ensure this event is successful.

The spring Landscaping Clean-Up event had over a 100 owners drop off dead trees and a monstrous amount of dead and overgrown vegetation. This event is one of two per year to help owners maintain their landscaping and reduce fire danger risk by removing overgrown trees and vegetation. If you have dead and overgrown trees, please remove them before they fall on your home or your neighbors and cause damage. A second event will be held in the fall. This event is a prime opportunity for owners to meet their fellow neighbors as everyone works together to help maintain the Community. Thank you to all the owners that have replaced trees this year and installed great new landscaping.

Due to the extreme rains this year proper drainage and stormwater management is critical. There were several homes that were flooded out due to old & broken sump pumps, improper grading, blocked drainage easements, and neighbors that made unapproved changes that negatively impacted the adjacent property. Ensuring your home's foundation stays dry and protected is a critical component in maintaining your property. Owners must submit for landscaping, grading, and other improvements as required by the covenants. This includes adding concrete and accessory structures. Heavy thunderstorm downpours can cause flooding damage if proper drainage is not maintained along the drainage easements.

With all the numerous heavy abrasive rains and small hail events house siding and trim has taken a beating. Be sure to inspect your siding and trim and replace damaged and deteriorated wood and repaint siding. Ensure all trim is sealed to prevent water intrusion behind siding. Homes with the older hardboard siding must ensure its kept sealed or irreversible damage will occur necessitating siding replacement. Even homes painted after the 2016 Hail Bomb are showing wear on sun exposed sides if they only had one coat of paint. If you have had your windows replaced ensure the contractor installed the proper drip caps and the windows are fully caulked. All repairs must be complete and match the original construction or better.

Continued on next page ...

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### **Community Website**

[StetsonHillsHOA.com](http://StetsonHillsHOA.com)

### **Management Company**

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#### **REMINDER:**

Quarterly assessments of \$50.00  
are due on July 1st and  
considered late by July 10th

Xeriscaping has been an extremely popular improvement with many owners. Please be sure to refer to the xeriscaping article later in the newsletter and submit your complete plan for approval before starting the project. In the fall the HOA will post pre-approved xeriscape designs and plans for small, medium, and large yards based on the CSU Water Wise website. Owners will be able to choose a pre-approved plan or still design and submit their own plan or one from a landscaper.

The HOA is in the process of replacing several mailboxes. These mailboxes are a sizeable cost and investment to the HOA. There are over 220 cluster mailboxes around the Community. Over the next few months, the Board will review additional plans for more life-cycle replacement as budget & reserves allow along with USPS permitted contractor availability for this niche type of work. Owners will always be notified well in advance before a mailbox is put temporarily out service as required by USPS with mail picked up at the nearest post office. As a courtesy reminder no signs of any type are permitted to be attached to the mailboxes. This includes advertisements or type other placards. Anything attached to the postal boxes will be removed without notice as required by USPS regulations.

Thank you for all the work you do to maintain your home and care for your neighborhood.

## **Ridgeview at Stetson Hills Master HOA Board of Directors**

**WELCOME NEW OWNERS!** We are happy that you have chosen Ridgeview at Stetson Hills Master HOA as your home. We hope you are getting settled and checking out the area. We understand that buying a home and moving can be a stressful time. Once you are settled in, please take a few moments to review the Association's website at [StetsonHillsHOA.com](http://StetsonHillsHOA.com) for information about the Community. The Board of Directors is made up of owners who volunteer their time and whose function is to further HOA common interests, ensure the entire Community is properly maintained and managed in accordance with the Covenants, and to keep Ridgeview at Stetson Hills Master HOA a Community of which we can all be proud. We hope you will become involved in the activities of the Association. Options for keeping abreast of HOA news are our [Facebook page](#) and our email distribution list. If you would like to be added to the list, please send your contact information to [StetsonHillsMaster@eHammersmith.com](mailto:StetsonHillsMaster@eHammersmith.com).

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## PORTAL INFORMATION AND WAYS TO PAY

**Don't forget to pay your quarterly assessment!** Owners please ensure you stay current with quarterly assessments. Please ensure you contact the management company if you have any questions about your owner's statement. Assessments are due on the 1st of January, 1st of April, 1st of July, and 1st of October. Assessments are \$50.00 per quarter in 2023. Owners will incur late fees if the payment is received after the 10th. You may pay online at [portal.ehammersmith.com](https://portal.ehammersmith.com) or mail your check made payable to Stetson Hills Master HOA to:

Pacific Premier Bank  
c/o Hammersmith Payment Center  
PO Box 173701  
Denver, CO 80217-3701

Please ensure you sign up on the homeowner portal at [portal.ehammersmith.com](https://portal.ehammersmith.com). Here you can manage your account, submit Architectural Requests, review HOA Governing Documents, submit violations, and a host of other items that improves service levels and responsiveness for all members.

## HOME REPAIRS, IMPROVEMENTS & THE ARCHITECTURAL PROCESS

One of the key aspects of being part of a HOA is the safeguard that the Covenants provide on the exterior appearance and maintenance of homes. Maintaining a 24 year old community is not easy. A HOA Community with covenants and architectural standards serves to ensure that homes and properties are properly maintained, neighborhood integrity is preserved, and the value of the community protected. This is no small task with more than 3,000 homes spread nearly 1,000 acres. Continual maintenance is a fact of life when owning a home, especially here in Colorado, Our Community boasts countless superbly maintained homes, a testament to our great owners, new and old. What follows are some important things to know about home repairs, improvements, and the architectural process:

**Article 5 (Living Environment Standards)** of the Covenants stipulates that all owners are required to maintain and repair the exterior of their property. This includes the exterior of the home, landscaping, fencing, driveway, and even sidewalks. A good rule of thumb is that if you can observe damage or deterioration from the street, then it's time to take action before the deterioration gets worse and becomes more costly to repair.

**Article 6 (Architectural Control)** of the Covenants details the requirements for owners to follow as it relates to improvement requests, submission, and the approval process. All changes and additions to the exterior of the home, property, landscaping, and driveways all require prior approval from the HOA Architectural Committee before changes are made. This safeguard protects all owners and our Community. Changes must be in accordance to the Architectural Standards. These standards serve to ensure improvements are professionally completed, uniformly consistent, uphold appearance, and value. Unapproved improvements risk complete removal or correction at owner's expense, which can be completely avoided by adhering to the Architectural Standards and following the approval process. The Architectural Standards and Improvement Request Form can be found online on the [owners portal](#) available 24/7. Owners can also submit the requests electronically through the [owners portal](#). Be sure the request form and any attachments are complete before submission. If you have any questions please contact Hammersmith at 719.389.0700.



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## PAINTING

Fresh Paint! Summer is here and our first early painting season is underway even with the crazy rains. Plan your painting project well head to ensure success. Don't wait to get a notice for failed paint. Paint is designed to protect the exterior siding of the home and once it fails, very costly damage can occur. Many homes in the Community have older obsolete siding that is prone to deterioration if not sealed well. Painting is best done in accordance with the manufacturer's application directions. Ensure the siding surface is prepped and don't paint over rotted trim or siding. The HOA has painting standards for good reason and the paint request form can be found on the HOA website. Please follow the instructions to ensure that the request can be reviewed in a timely manner by the Architectural Committee. Summer months get busy for the volunteer ARC Committee members, so the information requested on the paint request form ensures a successful professional paint project and a timely review. Missing information will delay your request and approval. Do your homework well in advance on the colors and scheme. There are free professional exterior color consultants at nearby paint specific stores. Picking random colors isn't always the wisest choice when it comes to painting a home, and mistakes can be very costly to correct if the improvement was not approved by the Architectural Committee.

When choosing paint color chips, always view in natural outside light. The store overhead fluorescent lighting will always make the color chip seem more subtle than it will outside in natural light. Darker primary colors will be even more bright outside. Safest bet is to always choose a shade or two lighter. The darker colors often fail and fade at a faster rate in the intense UV exposure in Colorado Springs. Put thought and consideration into your color(s) and scheme choice against existing neighborhood color palettes and adjacent homes. All changes to your home must be approved by the Architectural Committee, including paint. The HOA has a set of pre-approved paint schemes that were developed by Sherwin Williams and can be found at the following site: <https://www.sherwin-williams.com/homeowners/color/find-and-explore-colors/hoa/colorado-springs/co/stetson-hills-hoa/>. You must still submit a paint request and obtain approval when using the pre-approved schemes but you don't have to submit color chips as you otherwise would. Ensure you detail the scheme number (#) on your paint request. If you mix and match schemes, base or trim colors, the paint request must be reviewed in detail as a routine request.

When choosing a paint company, endeavor to get at least two bids. Ensure the proposal stipulates what manufacturer, grade of paint to be used, number of coats of paint to be applied, pressure washing, prep work, caulking, masking, areas on the home to be painted, warranty period, project completion date, total cost, and payment schedule (we recommend you don't pay in advance). Ensure you read the contract carefully. Most reputable companies will ask for you to conduct a walk through with their job foreman before they release the crew from the site. Ensure you spend adequate time inspecting the work. Ask your neighbors for referrals. Checking references, prior work portfolios, insurance and business licenses are prudent actions. If you choose to tackle the painting project yourself and never have painted an entire house before, get some experienced advice. Renting equipment and still buying high quality paint can save considerable money, but does come with a time commitment and challenge on larger two-story homes. Have a great summer, and thank you for the investment in your home that comes with new paint.



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## GRILLING SAFELY THIS SUMMER

- Always supervise a barbecue grill when in use. Don't add charcoal starter fluid when coals have already been ignited.
- Never grill indoors – not in your house or any enclosed area, including your garage.
- Make sure everyone, including children and pets, stays away from the grill and never leave it unattended.
- Keep the grill out in the open, away from the house, the deck, tree branches, or anything that could catch fire.
- Use long-handled tools especially made for cooking on the grill to keep the chef safe.

Take extreme care when BBQ or cooking under a covered patio to prevent setting the patio cover on fire due to excessive heat, flare-ups or misuse of starting fluids.

Don't cook or BBQ during high winds and always have a fire extinguisher or garden hose available.

## OUTDOOR FIREPLACES & FIRE PITS

Summer is a great opportunity for outdoor entertaining in backyards and patios within our Community. Owners with outdoor fireplaces, firepits, and chiminea please be sure to inspect your equipment before firing it up for the season. Ensure you only burn permitted combustibles and always have a rated fire extinguisher nearby. Trash, plastics, leaves are not permitted at any time. Fire pits and fireplaces should not be operated within 15 ft. of a neighboring structure or combustible material, such as a tree, bush, or fence. Stay current on City and County burn restrictions and bans. The [CSFD website](#) is a great resource of information. If burning wood, ensure that the fire is not smoldering and producing smoke into adjoining homes, and never leave a fire unattended. Please refer to the HOA Architectural Standard for construction and operation details. Have a great outdoor season!



## HOME FIRE PREVENTION & SAFETY

One of the most important improvements you can do is investing time in fire prevention safety in and around your home. With the close proximity of homes to each other, a house fire can have devastating effects for owners and neighbors in just a few minutes. As summer takes hold, take an afternoon to do a fire prevention inspection of your home and action the following items to help prevent house fires:

- Inspect and test all fire and smoke detectors. Replace detectors if 10 years old. Install new high quality batteries once a year.
- Ensure every bedroom has a carbon monoxide detector that functions properly.
- Have a properly rated fire extinguisher accessible in the kitchen, and consider one for the garage and 2nd floor.
- Get rid of those mountains of discarded boxes and other combustibles taking up your garage.
- Properly dispose of old solvents, fuel, rags etc. Ensure proper containers are used at all times.
- Have a fire escape ladder for the upstairs bedrooms.
- Talk and rehearse through fire evacuation drills with home occupants twice a year.
- Ensure all exits from the home are not blocked and allow two exits from every room.
- Have your fireplace, furnace and gas water heater inspected annually.
- Do not store extra gasoline or propane tanks in sheds or garages.
- Ensure clear space around the home and between accessory structures is maintained.
- Remove daisy chained outlet strips and do not overload circuits. Contact an electrician if a breaker trips continually.
- Clean out the dryer exhaust hose and vent at least annually or more often if airflow is poor.
- Move sheds away from other houses and clear of required setbacks. EMS needs access through side yards.
- Never toss fire pit ashes over the fence into greenspaces. Place in a sturdy metal can and drown with water.

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# COMMUNITY REMINDERS

**DUTY TO RESTRAIN ANIMALS:** Please ensure your furry companions are being handled properly to avoid incidents. City Code 6.7.107 (Duty to Restrain) requires that animals be restrained. Owners cannot let their animals (dogs & cats) roam free in residential subdivisions and neighborhoods. Pet owners must ensure their animals do not chase, molest, or attack other pets being walked on a leash along sidewalks and around parks. These types of incidents have a negative impact on the neighborhood, create injuries, preventable disputes, and costly liability risk. For immediate type incidents, please contact the Humane Society of the Pikes Peak Region, Animal Law Enforcement 719-302-8798. The HOA has several City and HOA parks. None of the parks located inside the HOA Community are open run or off leash dog parks. Dogs must be on a leash when in a City or HOA park and along designated trails. City Code and HOA Covenants require that pet owners pick up after their pets. HOA pet waste stations are provided across the entire community. Thank you to all the responsible pet owners.

**PARKING:** As a courtesy reminder parking covenants and rules apply within the Community. This includes parking or storing unused, inoperable, wrecked, or unregistered vehicles in the street, unauthorized oversize commercial vehicles, parking or storing RVs or trailers in the street or on the lot, and parking on the yard not in a driveway. Additionally, vehicle maintenance, to include changing oil and fluids, is not permitted in the street and must be done inside the garage. Thank you for your cooperation.

**SCOOP THE POOP** when walking throughout the Community, parks, or in the common area landscaping along neighborhood sidewalks. There is no dedicated service for removal of pet waste and responsible parties can be held liable for cleanup costs. Please use provided pet waste stations.



**GARBAGE RECEPTACLES:** Please ensure all garbage receptacles are placed inside your garage or behind a fence except on pick up day. Receptacles must be put away to prevent windblown trash, lost trash cans, and damage to vehicles during wind events. Receptacles are not permitted by Covenant to be stored on the sides of homes or in the driveway visible from the street. Thank you for your cooperation.



## SIGNING UP FOR EL PASO COUNTY WEATHER ALERTS

To stay ahead of the curve and to stay informed of upcoming weather and emergency events. Please visit <https://colorado-springs.gov/emergencyalerts> to sign up for alerts.

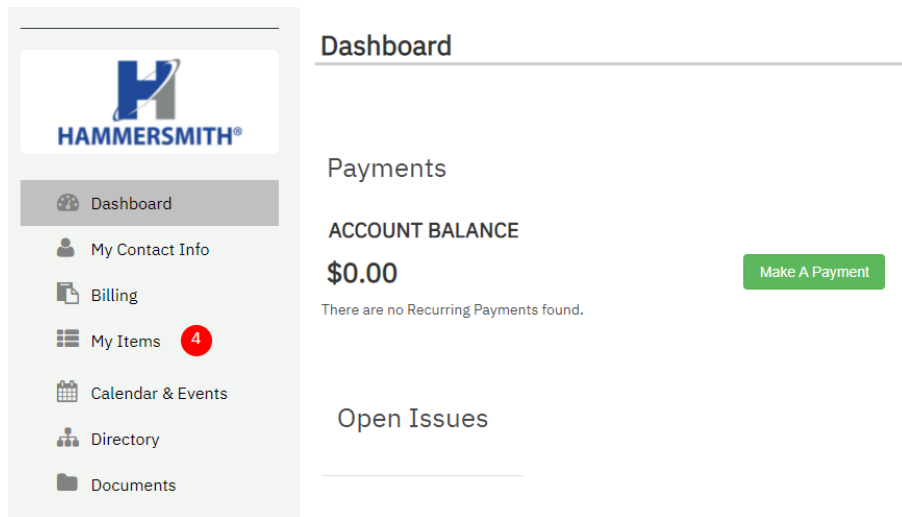


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## COMMUNITY REMINDERS, cont'd

**OWNERS PORTAL:** Owners, please ensure you take full advantage of the functionality of the online system and Owner's portal access at [StetsonHillsHOA.com](http://StetsonHillsHOA.com). Vantaca is the software that the HOA uses to provide online service, information, and manage owners accounts. All HOA information can be found within the Owners portal to include Governing documents, required policies, Financials, Reserve Study, Board minutes, etc. Requests can also be submitted online through the system to include architectural requests, work orders, billing questions, and violation complaints. Owners can check their account 24/7 and contact the Community Manager through the portal which improves service and lowers costs for the HOA. Owners may contact the Community Manager at [StetsonHillsMaster@eHammersmith.com](mailto:StetsonHillsMaster@eHammersmith.com).



**OWNER CONTACT INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS:** Owners, please ensure you keep your contact information current. Owners are responsible for maintaining current contact information for the property with the HOA Management Company whether owner occupied or rented. Please ensure you check your owner account within the portal and update your contact information to include email address. Only owners may change their property contact information. If the property is rented, please ensure you provide contact information for your property management company. Failure of an owner to provide current and correct contact information does not relieve responsibility for payment of assessments or maintenance of the property. The HOA routinely sends out important notices each month and quarterly emailed newsletters to inform owners.

**RENTAL PROPERTIES, COVENANTS & MAINTENANCE:** Owners if you are renting your home, please ensure your property management company's contact information is listed in the portal, especially if you reside out of state. Ensure your leasing company or property Mgmt. Company goes over the Covenants and Architectural standards with the tenants before they sign a lease and move in. This helps both you and the renter. Owners are responsible for any violations that occur while the property is being rented to include lack of required maintenance of the property. Please ensure the property is kept up to include weeds, debris and exterior maintenance. As a reminder, per Section 3.1 of the Covenants an owner may rent his property provided that the Dwelling Unit is rented pursuant to a lease or rental agreement which is (a) in writing, (b) for a term of at least thirty (30) days and (c) subject to all the provisions of the Declaration. Short-term rentals such as Airbnb or VRBO, boarding houses are not permitted. Thank you.





## OVER THE FENCE

Our Community was built out with cedar privacy fences around homes. Many of these privacy fences were installed by the builder or original owners and are 17-24 years old and have seen better days. For the homes that do have cedar privacy fences there are some important points to consider when preparing to do fence maintenance or replacement as not all fences are the same and issues can arise. First many privacy fences are shared between two or more owners along the property line. Before you decide to rip down a fence and either replace it or change the best advice is **talk to all your neighbors** that could be affected. If you cannot prove that the fence is owned by one owner and set inside that owner's property the fence is most likely shared. If it is shared work with your neighbor(s) on sharing the cost of repair or replacement as it is a win-win for all neighbors. It is than not possible the next step calls for some prudent planning and consideration. Again, talk to your neighbors before altering shared fence.



If you are doing minor maintenance or simply re-staining with clear stain or previously approved wood colored stain then no request is needed. If you have a shared fence, you can do maintenance as necessary to the fence. If you are removing or replacing a fence or making changes to a fence such as height, location, gates you must obtain Committee approval. Issues result when changes are made that impact the owner on the other side of the fence or your surrounding neighbors that share that common fence. Irregular lot shapes further complicate this. Not all privacy fences are the common max 6ft and certain subdivision have different heights. Changing fence height on a shared fence can impact several neighbors which then impacts others. If you have the rail side of the shared fence in your backyard that does not have pickets adding pickets (the same height) on your side is permitted at which time that fence would then become a double facing fence since it now has pickets on both sides. What is not permitted are double fences which are two separate and distinct fences (post, rails, pickets) that run parallel along the property line each on their own side versus just having one shared fence. Adding pickets to a shared fence that are taller than the other side of the fence can also be very problematic as it makes transitioning the fences lines between adjoining homes very difficult and can impact numerous neighbors. If you have questions, please refer to the Architectural Standards posted on the HOA website or email the Community Manager.

## SAFETY & SECURITY

Summer is in full swing, which brings great weather and fun times. Not all the visitors to our community are welcome additions though. Petty property crime increases during the summer months, and our community is not immune to thievery whether its car burglaries or porch pirates. Ensure you are closing your garage door, removing all the visible belongings from your vehicle, rolling up windows and locking the doors every night. Ensure you remove your garage door opener from your car as well when parking in the driveway. CSPD has put out several public service announcements on this as well. Keep your garage doors down during the day and check them at night. Consider setting a reminder on your phone if you are prone to leaving it up by mistake. Ensure you are locking your door that leads into your garage. If you observe suspicious individuals wandering on foot or driving the neighborhood report them immediately to CSPD. Summer is a great time to get out and meet all your neighbors and talk about forming a Neighborhood Watch Program (NWP). The CSPD website provide all the details:

<https://coloradosprings.gov/police-department/page/neighborhood-watch>.

Please slow down and watch out for children playing as you drive.

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## COOLING THE HOUSE FROM THE TOP DOWN

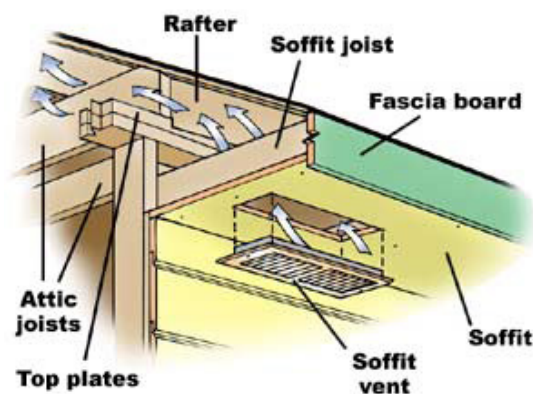
Summer brings great weather in Colorado Springs, but the higher temperatures and solar heating loads wreak havoc on keeping our homes cool during the hot summer months. When our homes were originally built, many did not come furnished with AC units installed if you can believe that, and HVAC ducting was poorly balanced throughout the home. Many homes suffer with very poor air return from the upper levels of two story homes and poor air flow to upper level rooms. These shortfalls create hot and cold areas in the home during the year. Couple that with the intense solar heating load on the roofs and attics and your upstairs bedrooms can be 5-10F degrees hotter than the main level. If you have southeast facing corner lot it can be even worse. No matter how much you run the AC the upstairs never cools down. You could have another common problem that is causing this issue, that thankfully is generally easy to check and rectify with minimal cost. A good ladder and maybe a handy neighbor to help is all that is needed to get started.

This huge shortfall when the homes were built was inadequate attic venting. Depending on your model and construction of home, you may have gable end venting or soffit venting that is supposed to provide cooler air into the attic. If you don't have the proper ventilation to your attic, you essentially have a convection oven in your attic heating your house from the top down, trapping ~140F air in your attic all day and night. This trapped attic heat also reduces the life span of your roof shingles and roof sheathing.

Many of the homes with soffit venting were not installed properly. The number of soffit vents and corresponding square inches of soffit vent area to roof vent area was poorly calculated and very often disastrously installed by the builder. Removing your soffit vents you may find that there is no opening there at all or the hole cut was a fraction of the vent cover size (very common). If the hole was even cut properly, the vent is typically plugged and covered with blown-in attic insulation (rafter vents were often not used during construction), making the soffit vent worthless in allowing cool air up into the attic from the eaves. Correcting and/or adding additional soffit vents and clearing out the plugged insulation will allow the system to function properly and cool down your upper levels of the home immediately and noticeably. It will save on your cooling costs assuredly and your AC won't be running all night long. Filling in low uneven spots in your attic insulation and increasing up from R-39 to R-49 will also save on costs and keep your house cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter. Gaining careful access into your attic space is needed but is a worthwhile effort.

Here is a good article for figuring out the area and number of soffit vents needed: <https://todayshomeowner.com/adding-soffit-vents/>

Consult with a qualified and licensed roofing company or contractor for specific details and requirements for your home.



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## KEEPING THE PEACE & BARKING DOGS

Residents that have a barking dog(s) in their neighborhood have a few options depending on your tolerance and level of frustration with the barking.

- **Option 1:** The HOA recommends reaching out to your neighbor and letting them know that the dog(s) have been barking excessively and your request to reduce the duration, time, or frequency of the barking. Please note dogs can bark for many understandable and justified reasons. Some possible examples which may cross over into a potential nuisance realm could include 1) being left alone outside and barking for hours at time or all day, 2) excessive barking at 4am, or 3) unprovoked barking such that neighbors can't go outside in their backyards. In dealing with these types of issues and concerns, it's suggested to use the neighbor-to-neighbor option as a first attempt. If you're unsure how your neighbor will react, perhaps consider sending a letter to them or leaving a note on their door. Sometimes getting to know your neighbor and dog may help or ask the owner to invest in a barking deterrent device. Neighbors that have dogs on both sides of the fence have a responsibility to manage barking such that other neighbors are not negatively affected as well. **In any event neighbors should always endeavor to be considerate, respectful and polite when dealing with this issue.**

- **Option 2:** Contact Hammersmith at 719.389.0700 with the barking dog(s) address, and we'll send out a warning notice advising the owner of the barking complaint and begin the violation process if the issue is not rectified. Keep in mind, while the enforcement process is confidential, it is subject to the Enforcement Policy timelines and thus, may take time to remedy. The Enforcement Policy can be found on our website at [StetsonHillsHOA.com](http://StetsonHillsHOA.com). Subsequent complaints do require verifiable details and all involved owners may be asked to attend a Board meeting to help resolve the issue.

- **Option 3:** If option 1 and option 2 above fail to remedy the situation, you can contact Animal Law Enforcement at 719.473.1741 with barking dog(s) address.

If no complaints have been made previously there are 2 options:

- Animal Law Enforcement can send a letter in the mail advising the pet owner of the barking complaint or,
- Animal Law Enforcement can dispatch an officer to issue a written warning giving the pet owner 72 hours from the date the warning was issued to abate the noise. The written warning requires the eye witness be identified by name only on the notice issued to the pet owner. Once the written warning has been issued any further complaints must be a signed complaint. The signed complaint is a penalty assessment or summons to court and requires corroborating evidence. Keep in mind, this process may not remain confidential. In order for a written warning to be issued the law requires an Animal Law Enforcement Officer to identify the eyewitness by name to the pet owner. The law also requires the Officer verify that the eyewitness is within 500 feet of the nuisance animal. This course of action results in the owner being put on notice immediately and less time for the barking to possibly continue unabated. If you have more questions or if you're a dog owner and would like to better understand your rights, please go to: <https://www.hsppr.org/law/animal-lawenforcement-faq>.

# LANDSCAPING & XERISCAPING

With summer in full swing, maintaining your landscaping is a labor of love. Sod to xeriscaping conversions is a popular alternative but require planning. The following provides a simple breakdown of the xeriscaping principles. Ensure you refer to the Architectural Standards for design requirements. Expanded information about each of the Xeriscape fundamentals may be obtained by logging onto our utility website. Colorado Waterwise Program and the Colorado Springs Utilities Xeriscaping webpages have a plethora of information, sample downloadable designs and pertinent tips at

<http://plantselect.org/garden/coloradosprings-utilities-xeriscape-demonstration-garden-colorado-springs/>.

All of our local landscaping material supply companies also can provide expertise on ground prep.

## WHAT IS XERISCAPE?

It's not a specific look or specific group of plants. Rather, xeriscape is a combination of seven common-sense gardening principles that save water, time and resources while creating an aesthetically attractive landscape that adds value to the property and blends well with our Rocky Mountain Front Range region.



## The Seven Principles of Xeriscape are:

1. Plan and Design for water conservation and curb appeal from the start. A design makes it easy to complete your project in phases. First, draw a base plan, which is an outline of the complete yard area landscape drawn to scale. It includes the house, driveway, site conditions, and any plants that are already there. If you are unsure of what will look good hiring a Landscape Architect will enable you to install yourself with a higher sense of confidence. There are hundreds of great examples in the HOA. Scale, proportion and area coverage are important. Planting the wrong species of plant or too close to the house or foundation can lead to future issues. Maintain grades and drainage.
2. Create Practical Turf Areas of manageable size, shape, and grade. Grass lawns use more water to maintain – but this doesn't mean you can't have any grass in your Xeriscaped yard, it just means you have to use it strategically. A design will consider where grass will be most useful and enhance the landscape and integrate with other plants. Unless you have amended the soil with organic material well under your sod it will continue to have habitual problems. Think about where kids will play and how it blends with your neighbors.
3. Carefully select Low-Water and drought tolerant Plants and group them according to their water needs (hydro zoning). Ensure you factor plant types for sun exposure and protection from the elements. Enlist the aid of our local nurseries for plant selection, get a Front Range guidebook, and choose plants that work for our elevation. This part is often the hardest to choose plants that will fit, look good and survive. Ensure you allow for proper growth spacing. Water later in day or early in morning to prevent evaporation. Be sure to include trees. Trees provide substantial enhancing visual impact and directly save on home cooling costs. Be sure to check the city listing of suitable street trees when planting in streetscapes.
4. Use Soil Amendments as you plant. Much of the soil in the HOA is a dense clay. Amending the soil with organic material is crucial for plants to thrive. Proper soil preparation will help keep plants cool, reduce evaporation, and retain moisture.

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## The Seven Principles of Xeriscape, Cont'd:

5. Use Mulches like cedar mulch, bark mulch or cobble rock to reduce evaporation, keep the soil cool and prevent weeds. Choose organic wood mulch that doesn't blow or wash away and use edging and borders to separate areas. Too much rock mulch can bake and reduce moisture for certain plants killing them so it's best for shady areas. Too much surrounding rock can also heat your house increasing your utility bills.



6. Irrigate Efficiently with properly designed systems (including drip system, house or water can) and by applying the right amount of water at the right time. Some plants may be able to live on rainwater alone, but some will still require additional water especially as they get established in the first year. Don't over or underwater. Ensure you plan out your drip system. Converting existing sod irrigation sprinkler head to drip can be done very easily and cheaply. Ensure you check your drips to ensure they are functioning.

7. Maintain the Landscape Properly by mowing, weeding, pruning, fertilizing and watering properly. The first year is critical for establishing plants.

## WHAT XERISCAPE IS NOT

### **-XERISCAPE IS NOT ANTI-LAWN.**

Even though xeriscape landscaping can be spectacularly colorful, even lush, limited areas of more highly watered landscape-like grass lawns are consistent with wise water use. Sometimes a lawn is the best option. For example, turf grass is the best option for an athletic field since it stands up to heavy use. Xeriscape is "less lawn landscaping" rather than "lawn less landscaping."

### **-XERISCAPE IS NOT JUST ROCKS AND GRAVEL.**

It's not a "Zeroscape"; plants are a vital part of a beautiful xeriscape. And although rock gardens can add beauty, there are many wonderful choices other than rock for Xeriscape designs. There are dozens of kinds of organic mulch to choose from. By definition, Xeriscape means some water applied in well-controlled amounts and locations in the landscape. When submitting xeriscape design plans they must include drought tolerant plantings to include trees, shrubs, decorative tall grasses, junipers etc.

### **-XERISCAPE IS NOT NATIVE PLANTS ONLY.**

Although there are vast arrays of wonderful plants indigenous to all regions, non-invasive introduced plants, that are well adapted to the local regional climate, are wonderful additions to landscaping that uses water frugally. For example, many iris, tulips, and even roses are examples of introduced plants that are well adapted to non-irrigated landscaping in the Rocky Mountain region.

### **-XERISCAPE IS NOT A BORING MONOCULTURE OF SPINY PLANTS.**

On the contrary, well planned Xeriscapes are splendid examples of the beauty and diversity.



## PREVENTING COMMON VIOLATIONS

Ensure you plan out your summer projects and improvement well ahead. Stay ahead of potential Covenant notices by watching out for the following common violations. Community Inspections are done at least twice a month during the summer months. It saves everyone's time if the HOA doesn't have to send out notices. Please offer to help your neighbor if you notice an issue they might not know about. The HOA Community Manager will never enter the property, does not knock on, or leave a notice on the door. Inspections are conducted from the street in a HOA marked vehicle. Here are the top complaints and violations:

1. RVs/Campers/Boats/Trailers—parked for immediate loading/unloading only and cannot be stored on the street. Vehicles may not be parked in front, side or rear yards. Inoperable vehicles may not be left in the street or driveway on blocks or jacks.
2. Weeds—they cannot just be sprayed and left behind dead. They must be completely removed and disposed of properly. Spray early. Replace weed mat. Corner lots have extra responsibility.
3. Landscape & Lawn maintenance—lawns and plants must be alive, greening and free of weeds. Xeriscaping changes must be approved. Dead trees must be cut to the ground and stump removed and the tree replaced. Bare dirt yards must be corrected and landscaping restored.
4. Maintenance of home—fence staining, paint on siding, sheds, porch stairs, railing painting and trim/ accent or house base painting. Broken fences must be repaired and restained.
5. Trimming of trees/shrubs—they may not overhang low over the sidewalks. Proper pruning is important for the overall health of trees and shrubs. Vegetation may not block sidewalks or pose hazard.
6. Trash cans—must be stored out of sight on non-trash days. They cannot remain in driveways. Please don't leave trash outside or overflowing trash cans.
7. A/C units—window mounted A/C units that protrude to the exterior of the home are not permitted.
8. Basketball Hoops—cannot be left in the street or within 10 ft. of the sidewalk as they pose an injury and damage liability. They must be put away when not in use and have proper ballast when erected.
9. Architectural changes without approval—any exterior modifications require approval prior to being completed. The application can be downloaded from the Association website.
10. Trash, debris, and construction materials stored or dumped on sides of home or in backyards.

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# TREE SELECTION FOR EL PASO COUNTY

By Fredricka Bogardus, Colorado Master Gardener

Early summer is a good time to start thinking about adding some trees to your garden. Trees are an investment which if grown well, will add value and beauty to you landscape for decades to come. Trees provide shade, shelter for birds, sometimes spectacular spring blooms, fruit, or good fall color.

There are several factors to consider when selecting a tree. Scale is probably the most important factor. Pay close attention to mature size when selecting trees. Large trees can exceed 50', small trees may reach maturity at 20'. Like Goldilocks you need to find the size that is 'just right' for your garden. Growth rate is a factor to consider, while fast growing trees may seem like a good idea, they typically are more brittle, making storm damage a bigger problem.

If you are considering a flowering tree, think about fruit. Flowering trees that produce fruit can make a major mess in your landscape; are you willing to do the clean up every year? Some varieties produce no visible fruit, others have fruit that politely stays on the tree through winter (persistent fruit), providing a food source for birds and requiring little clean up. There is no right or wrong; just know what you are getting.

For an extensive list of recommended trees for our region consult the:

[Front Range Tree Recommendation List](#)

[Approved trees for use in Colorado Springs right of way plantings](#)

Trees not recommended for our region:

-Ash trees because of susceptibility to Emerald Ash Borer.

-Aspen trees are not recommended for Front Range urban landscapes, due to disease concerns and growth habit that can be difficult to manage in smaller gardens.

## SOCIAL EVENTS CALENDAR 2023

| EVENTS                            | DATE                                   | LOCATION          | EVENTS                          | DATE                                  | LOCATION       |
|-----------------------------------|--|-------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| BOARD MEETINGS                    | EVERY 3 <sup>RD</sup> WEDNESDAY @ 6pm* | Online            | COMMUNITY YARD SALE             | July 7 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup> | HOA Wide       |
| EASTER EGG DISTRIBUTION           | April 8 <sup>th</sup> @ 10:00 AM       | Jared Jensen Park | FALL CLEANING ROLL-OFF DUMPSTER | September 2nd @ 08:00 AM              | Sunshine House |
| SPRING CLEANING ROLL-OFF DUMPSTER | May 6 <sup>th</sup> @ 08:00 AM         | Sunshine House    | ANNUAL MEETING                  | November 18 <sup>th</sup> @ 10:00am   | TBD            |

| JANUARY |    |    |    |    |    |    | FEBRUARY |    |    |    |    |    |    | MARCH     |    |    |    |    |    |    | APRIL   |    |    |    |    |    |    | MAY      |    |    |    |    |    |    | JUNE     |    |    |    |    |    |    |   |  |   |   |
|---------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|---------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|--|---|---|
| S       | M  | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S        | M  | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S         | M  | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S       | M  | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S        | M  | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S        | M  | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  |   |  |   |   |
| 1       | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  |          |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  |           |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  |         |    |    |    |    |    | 1  | 1        | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  |    |          |    |    |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3 |  |   |   |
| 8       | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 5        | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 5         | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 2       | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 7        | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 4        | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 |   |  |   |   |
| 15      | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 12       | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 12        | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 9       | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 14       | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 11       | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |   |  |   |   |
| 22      | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 19       | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 19        | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 16      | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 21       | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 18       | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |   |  |   |   |
| 29      | 30 | 31 |    |    |    |    | 26       | 27 | 28 |    |    |    |    | 26        | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 23 | 24      | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 28 | 29       | 30 | 31 |    |    |    | 25 | 26       | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |    |    |   |  |   |   |
|         |    |    |    |    |    |    |          |    |    |    |    |    |    | 30        |    |    |    |    |    |    |         |    |    |    |    |    |    |          |    |    |    |    |    |    |          |    |    |    |    |    |    |   |  |   |   |
| JULY    |    |    |    |    |    |    | AUGUST   |    |    |    |    |    |    | SEPTEMBER |    |    |    |    |    |    | OCTOBER |    |    |    |    |    |    | NOVEMBER |    |    |    |    |    |    | DECEMBER |    |    |    |    |    |    |   |  |   |   |
| S       | M  | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S        | M  | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S         | M  | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S       | M  | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S        | M  | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S        | M  | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  |   |  |   |   |
|         |    |    |    |    |    | 1  |          |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |           |    |    |    |    | 1  | 2  | 1       | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  |          |    |    |    |    |    | 1  | 2        | 3  | 4  |    |    |    |    |   |  | 1 | 2 |
| 2       | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 6        | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 3         | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 8       | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 5        | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 3        | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  |   |  |   |   |
| 9       | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 13       | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 10        | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 15      | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 12       | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 10       | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |   |  |   |   |
| 16      | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 20       | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 17        | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 22      | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 19       | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 17       | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |   |  |   |   |
| 23      | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 27       | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    | 24        | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 29      | 30 | 31 |    |    |    |    | 26       | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |    |    | 24       | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |   |  |   |   |
| 30      | 31 |    |    |    |    |    |          |    |    |    |    |    |    |           |    |    |    |    |    |    |         |    |    |    |    |    |    |          |    |    |    |    |    |    | 31       |    |    |    |    |    |    |   |  |   |   |