

November 2013

Don't Forget About Plano Dog Laws

Just a reminder to all residents of Pitman Creek North, the City of Plano has both leash and "pooper scooper" laws which require:

- (1) all dogs must be on a leash of six feet or less when off of their owner's property and
- (2) owners must remove all waste left behind by their dog(s) in a safe and sanitary manner (failure to do so is considered a Class C misdemeanor and will be subject to fine).

Recently there have been several neighborhood dogs running loose, venturing into other people's yards. Please obey the city rules and be considerate of others here in PCN - we all benefit from having such a great neighborhood.



Pitman Creek North Homeowners Association Newsletter

Landscaping News

Vicki Blakely (Landscaping Chair) and her small team of volunteers were able to update the main entrance to Pitman Creek North with some beautiful fall plants and decorations, bringing a wonderfully festive fall welcome to our neighborhood. At the same time, volunteers also updated the large concrete PCN entrance sign by shadow painting the indented letters which has made the sign more visible. Currently, new plants to add winter color have been planted at the main entrance and holiday decorations will be going up soon. Landscaping donations are always welcome and should be forwarded to PCNHA - Landscaping, 1301 Custer Road, Suite 352-1017, Plano, TX 75075-7499.



Coyote Sightings

As many of you are aware, we have had an increasing number of coyote sightings within our neighborhood. There have been several mauled pets which have been attributed to this increase in the coyote population here in PCN. Neighbors have even observed them frolicking in their front yards!



Neighborhood Coyote on Tawakoni

As coyotes expand their range into urban metropolitan areas, conflicts between them and people/pets are on the rise. Feeding coyotes, accidentally or intentionally, can cause coyotes to lose fear of people. They associate humans or human places such as backyards with positive food rewards. Consequently, some coyotes develop nuisance behaviors that lead to conflicts with pets, increased daytime activity in residential areas, and more rarely, aggressive behavior towards people.

See [Why Is There a Coyote in My Yard? Food Lures and Other Answers](#)

Remember, an animal you keep inside your home is a pet, and an animal left outside is part of the food chain!



New Map Helps Owners Find Lost Pets

If you are missing a pet, Plano Animal Services has a new service to help make finding them a little easier.

Visit [the online lost pets map](#) in our virtual kennel to see the stray animals currently in the shelter. This map is intended to make it more convenient for owners to search for lost pets but is in no way meant to replace an actual in-shelter visit.

It is still the owner's responsibility to visit the shelter to identify pets even if the animal is not listed on the map.

Remember, pictures can be misleading so if there is any possible way a pictured animal might be your pet, please visit the shelter as soon as possible to verify its identity.

The Plano Television Network has created [a video tour](#) of the map.



Neighborhood Watch Works!

On November 3, 2013 at about 1:23 p.m. police were dispatched to a suspicious person call on Sacramento Terrace. The caller advised that a subject was seen knocking on the door and then standing by a window of the residence thereafter. The caller described the suspect and included a clothing description. The responding officer located a subject matching the physical and clothing description. The investigation determined that the suspect had outstanding warrants for his arrest and the suspect also had a probation violation for burglary of a habitation offense.

This is another shining example of the partnership of between residents and police. Please note that the caller did not observe any criminal violations. The caller trusted her intuition and called in the suspicious person.

It appears that a crime was prevented this day through the best crime-fighting team you can have — a good neighbor in partnership with the police. If you see something that you aren't sure is a crime, don't forget you can also call the non-emergency police number at 972-424-5678.

Please keep up the good work because... Neighborhood Watch Works!

Winter Stage 3 Water Restrictions in Effect

The City of Plano has implemented Winter Stage 3 Water Restrictions beginning November 1, 2013. The water restrictions include:

- Landscape watering with sprinklers is permitted once every other week, if needed. Watering from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. is allowed.
- Foundations, landscaping, including grass, shrubs and trees may be watered for up to two hours any day by a hand-held hose or soaker hose.
- NO hydroseeding, hydro-mulching or sprigging. Planting cool season grasses (such as rye) is not allowed.
- NO hosing of paved areas, buildings or windows. Hose end cutoff nozzle must be used when washing vehicles. Power washing is still allowed.
- NO operation of ornamental fountains or outdoor amenities which use treated water.
- Excessive water runoff and watering during a precipitation event are prohibited.

- Low-flow drip irrigation systems are not restricted.

During Stage 3, no variances for new landscaping will be granted.

Odd Addresses: Every other Tuesday
Even Addresses: Every other Thursday

See complete [Stage 3 Water Restrictions and an extended Watering Calendar](#).





Fire Safety – Especially During the Holidays

Sadly, Pitman Creek North has had two home fires over the last month, one from lightning and one cooking fire. October is yearly designated as the official Fire Prevention month, but this seems like an appropriate time to revisit fire facts and prevention tips.

The threat of winter fires is real:

- 905 people die in winter home fires each year.
- \$2,091,000,000 in property loss occurs from winter home fires.
- 67 percent of winter fires occur in one- and two-family homes.
- Cooking is the leading cause of all winter home fires.
- 5 to 8 p.m. is the most common time for winter home fires.

Safety Tips:

#1 - Furnace - have your furnace inspected. Once a year, it's a good idea to have your heating system inspected by a professional. To avoid the last-minute rush, consider scheduling this task in early fall, before the heating season begins.

Here are signs that you should have an inspection done sooner:

Noisy belts. Unusual screeches or whines may be a signal that belts connected to the blower motor are worn or damaged.

Poor performance. A heating system that doesn't seem to work as well as it once did could be a sign of various problems. Your heating ducts might be blocked, the burners might be misadjusted, or the blower motor could be on its last legs. One check you should be sure to conduct: Make sure your furnace filter is clean.

Erratic behavior. This could be caused by a faulty thermostat or a misadjusted furnace.



#2 - Fireplace - even if you use your fireplace only occasionally, you should check it annually for damage and hazards.

Inspect your flue for creosote. Creosote is a flammable by-product of burning wood. If it accumulates in a flue or chimney, the result can be a devastating fire. Have your chimney inspected annually for creosote buildup.

Look for flue blockages. Birds love to nest at the top of an unprotected flue. A chimney cap can prevent this from happening.

Check your chimney for damage. Make certain that the flue cap (the screen or baffle covering the top of the chimney) is in place. Inspect brick chimneys for loose or broken joints. If access is a problem, use binoculars.

#3 - Smoke and CO Detectors - replace the batteries in each smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) detector, then vacuum them with a soft brush attachment. Test the detectors by pressing the test button or holding a smoke source (like a blown-out candle) near the unit. If you haven't already, install a smoke detector on every floor of your home. Also, change out your smoke detector every 10 years.

Keep in mind on smoke detectors - you will want to have a combination smoke alarm which feature both ionization and photoelectric technologies. An ionization smoke alarm will respond faster to high energy fires, whereas photoelectric detectors respond to low energy smoldering fires. Simply put - a fire on your stove top (when frying up the bacon) it will burn hot & fast, versus, a fire in the attic which is slow burning.

#4 - Christmas Trees

- **Artificial Trees** - If you buy an artificial tree, make sure its label says "fire resistant"
- **Fresh Trees** - If you purchase a real tree, keeping it fresh will make it less of a fire hazard. If the tree is a conifer (e.g., pines, firs, cedars), "fresh" means the following:
 - The tree is green and does not shed needles when tapped on the ground.
 - Needles are hard to pull off the branches and do not break when bent.
 - Sticky resin is around the trunk.



Fire Safety – Especially During the Holidays (cont.)

To keep the tree fresh, cut a few inches off the trunk to expose live wood. Put the tree in a tree stand filled with water. Heated rooms can dry out a tree, so be sure to check the water levels in the stand and fill it as needed.

#5 - Kitchen Safety - cooking fires are the most common type of fires in U.S. households. By paying attention while cooking, you can prevent a kitchen fire.

- If you are frying, grilling, or broiling food, stay in the kitchen. Turn off the stove if you have to leave the kitchen, even if only for a short time.
- If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, you don't have to stay in the kitchen, but you do need to stay in the home. Check the food regularly and use a timer to remind you that you are cooking.
- Keep flammable objects—pot holders, oven mitts, wooden utensils, and paper or plastic bags—away from the stovetop. Wear close-fitting clothing that won't drape over or touch burners while you are cooking.
- Although turkey fryers may produce delicious holiday dinners, they pose significant fire hazards. For safe turkey fryer use tips visit the U.S. Fire Administration's page on cooking safety.

#6 - Federal Pacific Electric Panels - Federal Pacific Electric panels are one of the most common circuit breaker panels installed in homes in Plano during the 1980s when Pitman Creek North subdivision was built. As the years passed, it has been found that FPE panels can appear to work fine for years, but after one overcurrent or short circuit, they can overheat and become fire hazards, setting homes on fire. This has already had disastrous results right here in PCN. If you have a Federal Pacific Electric circuit breaker panel, be sure and have it replaced by a licensed electrician.

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