

# NEWSLETTER

## HOA Board Meetings

Regular Board of Directors meetings are held from 7:00PM to 9:00PM on the following dates: Thursday, September 17 (Sager residence); and Tuesday, November 14 (Sager residence). All homeowners are welcome to attend. ❖

## HOA Web Site

The Brookeville Farms HOA web site is located at [www.bfmdhoa.info](http://www.bfmdhoa.info). This site includes information pertaining to the HOA such as Architectural Review forms, minutes from previous board meetings, current and previous newsletters, as well as contact information for board members. ❖

## Community E-Mail List

The Brookeville Farms community maintains an e-mail distribution list to make it easier to communicate with our neighbors. The e-mail address is "[bfneighbors@bfmdhoa.info](mailto:bfneighbors@bfmdhoa.info)". This list has been used to find recommendations for service providers, find carpool buddies, and to participate in group purchasing agreements (like, propane and whole-house generators). The Homeowners Association newsletter is also distributed to this list.

To add your e-mail address to the list do the following:

- Using your web browser, go to the HOA web site - [www.bfmdhoa.info](http://www.bfmdhoa.info).
- Select "E-mail List" from the left column.
- Fill in the form at the bottom of the page. ❖

## Drowning

Drowning is a leading cause of injury-related death in children. In 2017, drowning claimed the lives of almost 1000 US children younger than 20 years. There are numerous swimming pools in our neighborhood. Let's do all we can to prevent a drowning tragedy here. A good article on preventing drowning is available on the American Academy of Pediatrics web site at: <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/143/5/e20190850.full.pdf> ❖

## Lawn Care Mistakes That Can Destroy Your Yard

Everyone wants a lawn covered with lush green grass and verdant plants. But what mistakes are preventing you from achieving this? Here are some common lawn care mistakes and how to prevent them.

### 1. Cutting Grass Too Short

Experts advise cutting off no more than 30 percent of the grass blade in a single pass. Cutting your grass too short or trimming it down to half of its previous size might be appealing—after all, if your grass is shorter, it will take longer to grow back—but this is not good for the long-term health of your lawn. In addition to damaging the blade, cutting your grass too short can indirectly damage the root system. This damage will limit the grass's ability to collect light and absorb water, leading to wilting or even plant death. Keeping your grass longer will help it to grow fuller and become more lush.

### 2. Using Only One Type of Seed

Using a mixture of seeds will result in a mixture of plant types. Different types of grass will survive better in different conditions. The different species will balance out each other's strengths and weaknesses, resulting in a more resilient lawn overall. This will make your turf more likely to survive extreme weather conditions such as prolonged heat or drought.

### 3. Ignoring the pH of the Soil

The optimal pH for grass is between 6.0 and 6.5. For reference, a neutral pH, such as that of water, is 7.0. This means that your lawn's soil should be slightly acidic in order to bolster plant growth. Sending away a soil sample for testing can be an easy way to get a gage on your lawn's pH. If the pH is out of whack, it can easily be adjusted using sulfur or lime treatments.

### 4. Forgetting to Sharpen Your Lawn Mower's Blade

A sharp blade will cut your grass more cleanly, while a dull blade can cause bruising and other

damage to each blade of grass. Damaged blades of grass are more susceptible to death or disease, so using a sharp lawn mower blade can contribute to the overall health of your lawn.

Most people should sharpen their lawn mower blades approximately twice a year. A good sign that your blade is too dull is that your lawn mower is tearing or crushing your grass instead of cutting it cleanly.

#### 5. Collecting Grass Clippings

Many lawn mowers come with an attached bag that will gather up the grass as it is cut. This is a visually appealing strategy, but it is not good for your lawn's long-term health. Instead, you should leave the grass clippings spread around your lawn. This self-mulching strategy will help fertilize your remaining grass. In particular, this is useful in maintaining your soil's nitrogen levels—a key factor in lawn health.

If you can avoid making these common lawn care mistakes, you will enjoy a lush, green lawn throughout the year. ❖

## Common Causes of AC Fires

According to the National Fire Protection Association, there were a reported 7400 fires in 2010 across the United States attributed to faulty air conditioning systems or related equipment.

When your air conditioner is not regularly maintained, it runs the risk of becoming faulty and catching fire. Common causes of air conditioning fires are:

#### 1. Flammable materials near the system

Allowing combustible materials such as paper, an accumulation of leaves, overgrown shrubs, or other debris too close to your air conditioning system puts it at a risk of catching fire. Keep the space around your unit free and clear with any materials or debris at least 3 feet away.

#### 2. Failing to keep the AC cleaned properly

Failing to clean your air conditioner properly results in the accumulation of dirt and dust particles in its air vents, filters, coils and fins. This obstructs normal air flow and could result in your unit malfunctioning and cause a fire.

#### 3. Faulty parts and equipment

When you neglect your air conditioning system, you may fail to notice faulty parts and equipment in it. For example, if the air conditioning fan has been slowly degrading and it finally stops functioning, heat may accumulate within the AC causing temperatures to rise excessively. This is likely to

ignite any nearby combustibles. It is advisable to have your system regularly serviced by a professional.



## Dehydration in Dogs

Severely dehydrated dogs require immediate emergency care. If your dog shows signs of shock, heat stroke, or severe dehydration, call your veterinarian immediately. She will likely request that the dog be brought in so that the doctor can re-hydrate him with intravenous fluids.

Vomiting, diarrhea, excessive panting, or playing in the scorching sun with no water can cause dehydration in dogs. The body loses valuable fluids and electrolytes that are essential in maintaining proper organ function.

When a dog's bodily fluid drops just five percent, you may begin to see signs of dehydration. The dog may be lethargic and his eyes, mouth, and nose may appear dry. His skin may lose its elasticity. In severe dehydration, your dog's eyes may appear sunken into his skull. He might show signs of shock, which include rapid heart rate, weak pulse, bright red gums and mucous membranes, weakness, shivering, listlessness, unconsciousness, and in extreme cases, death.

### Dehydration Test

Perform the following tests to gauge whether or not your dog is properly hydrated:

First test his skin's elasticity. With your thumb and fore finger, gently pinch your dog's skin between his shoulders, grasping just enough to lift it an inch or two from his body. When you release it, the skin should retract immediately. As the skin loses moisture, it loses its ability to pull back. In extreme cases, the skin does not pull back at all.

Another method for determining dehydration is to check your dog's gums for capillary refill time. First, lift your dog's lip and look at the color of his gums. Next, press the gum with your index finger so that it appears white. Release your finger and watch how quickly the color returns, or how quickly the capillaries in the gums refill. The gums of a normal dog refill immediately, and the gums of a dehydrated dog could take up to three seconds to refill.

### Slowly Re-hydrate

Severely dehydrated dogs require immediate emergency care. If your dog shows signs of shock, heat stroke, or severe dehydration, call your veterinarian immediately. She will likely request that the dog be brought in so that the doctor can re-

hydrate him with intravenous fluids. If your veterinarian recommends it, offer the dog small amounts of water on the way to the clinic.

Offer a mildly dehydrated dog small sips of water every few minutes. You can also mix electrolyte replacement powder with the water or offer him pieces of ice to lick. Too much water too quickly, however, could cause him to vomit, exacerbating his dehydration. Contact your veterinarian for additional recommendations.

### Preventing Dehydration

Offering your dog plenty of fluids will prevent dehydration, unless the condition is due to severe illness. Place several bowls of water around the house so that your dog can drink whenever he wants. If you're going to the dog park or for a ride, bring a portable bowl and bottled water with you.

After strenuous playing or exercise, offer your dog water in small amounts. Pour a little in his bowl, replenishing it every few minutes. No matter how tempting, don't let him drink too much too quickly.

Automatic water bowls, pet fountains, and hardware that attaches to an outside spigot are options for dog owners who work all day and aren't home to fill up the water dishes. Always offer your dog a bowl of clean, fresh water with every meal as a back-up.

If your dog refuses to drink for any reason for extended periods of time, contact your veterinarian immediately. As with humans, it's important for dogs to maintain their fluid levels for proper bodily function. A good rule of thumb: if you're out playing in the heat and you get thirsty, your dog is probably thirsty, too.. ❖

## Cyber Security Checklist

Threats to our cyber security are constantly growing. The most prevalent way for hackers and fraudsters to gain access is to exploit human behavior through social engineering or simply uncovering information that hasn't been well protected.

1. Use strong passwords and protect them
  - Create long passwords that contain symbols, numbers, and uppercase and lowercase letters
  - Don't store your passwords anywhere
  - Don't reuse or recycle your passwords
  - Don't share your passwords with anyone
  - Change your passwords using a randomly generated schedule
  - Ensure that your passwords bear no resemblance to former passwords

2. Opt in to multi-factor authentication  
Multi-factor authentication requires additional verifying information to grant access to an account. This gives your accounts an added layer of security. Multi-factor authentication can include: SMS or email notifications, Biometric identification, or Tokens.

3. Avoid links from unknown sources in text, email, instant message, social media and websites
  - Be suspicious of any message that asks you to provide personal information.
  - Hover your mouse over hyperlinks to inspect their true destination.
  - Make sure you're on the right site before entering personal information—such as your name, address, birth date, Social Security number, phone number or credit card number

4. Limit what you share on social media and who can view your profile

5. Secure your devices
  - Always keep your device's software updated
  - Install security software and keep it up to date
  - Download apps from trusted app stores
  - Turn off Wi-Fi/file sharing/AirDrop options when not in use
  - Avoid working with personal or sensitive data when you're using unsecured, public Wi-Fi

6. Secure your important documents  
Protect your Social Security cards, passports and birth certificates by storing them in a secure place such as a safe deposit box, and only carry them when you need them for a specific purpose.

7. Shred documents containing personal/financial information

When you're done reviewing your paper documents like your receipts, financial statements, or credit card bills, put them in the shredder instead of the trash.

8. Order your credit report annually from each credit bureau

Best practice: Order a free copy once a year from AnnualCreditReport.com and from a different bureau (Equifax, Experian, TransUnion) every four months so that you're always covered. ❖

"The true measure of a man is how he treats someone who can do him absolutely no good." -- Samuel Johnson