

Palomino Lakes

Property Owners Association & Mutual Water Company

February 2011

Annual Meeting scheduled

The Palomino Lakes Annual Meeting is scheduled for 10:00 AM, Saturday, May 21, 2011 at the Veterans Memorial Hall, 205 West First Street.

The annual meeting will include election of officers for the Property Owners Association and the Mutual Water Company. A Notice of Election with full particulars is being mailed separately.

Roads

Our roads continue to be our biggest concern and consume the biggest portion of our budget. We spent over \$33,000 last year on road maintenance, but that amount was still not sufficient to complete all that needed to be done. The roads seem to deteriorate as fast as they are repaired, owing mainly due to the substandard preparation of the road base when they were originally put down. In many areas we have found less than one inch of asphalt, placed over inferior road base material and preparation. All new asphalt used for repair is either four or six inches thick.

Although we realize that chip-seal is not popular with some people it is a cost effective way to maintain the integrity of older roads. It appears at this juncture that repairs to Palomino Road are holding up well, notwithstanding this winter's wear and tear, and that we can begin chip-sealing this summer. If that occurs, the Board will give ample notice to residents so that they can adjust their travel times accordingly as there will be delays.

State orders additional water testing

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) oversees the public health aspects of our water system. They make periodic inspections, and direct all water testing. CDPH has expressed concern in the past that our well may not be properly classified as a ground water well but may be more properly considered a surface water

system. CDPH has now ordered additional testing to properly determine the appropriate classification of our water system. This testing will cost an additional \$4,000 this year.

Should CDPH determine that our well is misclassified it will order additional water treatment. This is an area of significant concern for the Water Company. More information will be available at the annual meeting.

Fire and Weeds

Fire has always been a major concern for us. We have had two devastating fires in the past, losing homes to both fires. We live in a high fire danger area and some residents report that their insurance has been cancelled or not renewed because of the fire danger here. Accordingly, residents are reminded that our CC & R's were amended last year to require that weeds be cleared in accordance with California and Sonoma County Fire regulations. The deadline for clearing weeds is July 1st. Residents not in compliance may be fined \$125.00 plus \$25.00 per day thereafter for each day of non-compliance. The Board will seek the assistance of the local fire department in obtaining compliance.

The Board can recommend a local company for assistance with weed control if needed. The fire department is also willing to assist homeowners. Call any Board member for more information.

Please give this matter your serious attention as the Board will do it's best to enforce this requirement.

Also, residents are reminded to try to control star thistle on their property. Star thistle is a noxious weed that can quickly get out of control, as has happened on Cedar Lane. The Board sprays for star thistle wherever it is found near our roadways and is concentrating on Cedar Lane. The spray we use is quickly rendered inert and is not harmful to the environment. If you need assistance with controlling this weed, call the Board.

POA assessment increase

Effective April 1, 2011, the Property Owners Association assessment will increase from \$147.50 to \$150. This increase, the first in two years, will help to cover increasing costs. The POA budget for the period April 1, 2011 through March 31, 2012 follows:

ADMINISTRATION

Annual Meeting Expenses	Meeting room rental	200.00
Attorney Fees	General legal expenses	2,500.00
Membership communication	Duplication costs	400.00
	Envelopes, rubber stamps, etc.	300.00
	Web site	100.00
	Postage	500.00
Insurance	Annual liability insurance	4,500.00
Post Office Box Rental	P. O. Box 687	30.00
Records Storage		320.00
State Filings	Sec. of State, Franchise Tax Board	100.00
TOTAL ADMINISTRATION		12,350.00

MAINTENANCE & REPAIR

Landscaping Maintenance	Entrance Landscaping	200.00
	Weeds, tree trimming, poison oak removal	3,500.00
Road Repairs	Asphalt repair/chip seal	47,000.00
	Crack sealing	2,500.00
	Drainage ditch & culvert cleaning	900.00
	Road marking and signs	500.00
Utilities	PG&E	250.00
TOTAL MAINTENANCE & REPAIR		54,850.00

GRAND TOTAL **67,200.00**

Delinquent accounts

The Property Owners Association sends out bills quarterly to 112 property owners. More than 96% of those bills are paid promptly. Unfortunately the remaining few property owners cost the Association significant time, collection expenses and legal costs. The Association is obligated to collect all assessments and takes all legal steps to do so. These steps include the use of a collection agency and/or court action. Foreclosure can be used as a last resort. To the vast majority of you who meet your assessment obligation – THANK YOU. To those remaining few, save us all a lot of grief and pay your bill.

Dogs – again

Barking dogs. Dogs barking non-stop, apparently at nothing in particular, most often when their owners are at home and seemingly oblivious to the matter.

Barking dogs are a constant complaint, driving some home owners to distraction. Those homeowners are reminded that our web site contains information on how to use Sonoma County Animal Control to help with this issue. Complaint forms may be downloaded from our web site. Animal Control requires at least three complainants, one of whom should be a contact person.

Animal Control will respond to complaints. They have responded to our area on at least three occasions in the recent past, issuing strong warnings on each occasion. On subsequent calls to the same residence they may issue a citation.

No one is much concerned when a dog barks at a passing deer or walker, but when they bark incessantly, sometimes at late hours, it becomes a problem for everyone. Most of us moved to this area for the peace and quiet and dislike having it punctuated by barking dogs from every quarter. So if you are a dog owner, please show some concern for your neighbors and quiet your barking dog(s).

Vacation rentals

Your Board has not had many issues to deal with during the past fiscal year. Homes being used as vacation rentals became a matter of some concern after the Board received complaints of parties and loud noise emanating from one alleged vacation home. Since short term rentals violated the existing zoning regulations and our CC & R's, the Board got involved as did the Association attorney. However, as the Board was about to place the matter before the membership for a vote, the county adopted a new ordinance concerning vacation rentals, amending the zoning and imposing several restrictions and requirements. The new ordinance addressed most, if not all, of the concerns of the Board and residents and we decided not to pursue the matter further at that time.

Recent Mail Thefts

According to Cloverdale Postmaster Dave Meyers there have been 27 mail thefts reported in Palomino Lakes in the last several months. The postal service is actively investigating these thefts and postal inspectors have recently visited our subdivision.

If you are expecting mail that you have not received, Meyers recommends the following:

- You can file a complaint on-line at www.postalinspectors.uspis.gov, visit the Cloverdale post office and pick up a Mail Theft and Vandalism Complaint form, or phone Brian Richards, the Postal Inspector who has been assigned to this investigation, at 510-558-4300.
- If you were expecting credit cards, checks, account statements or other financial-type mail, contact the mailers as soon as possible.

The postal service also recommends the following steps to help prevent identity theft:

- Review your credit report annually at www.annualcreditreport.com. Report any unauthorized accounts to law enforcement.
- Promptly remove mail from your mailbox – identity thieves steal both incoming and outgoing mail.
- Pay attention to financial account statement mailing cycles – a missing statement may be an indication that your account address has been changed.
- Shred all financial documents when you are through with them – especially pre-approved credit card offers and any document containing any of your personal identifiers.
- Never give out your identifiers unless you initiate the contact – identifiers include account numbers, PINs, DOB, and SSN.

Postmaster Meyers recommends watching for suspicious or unusual activity near your or your neighbors' mailbox and reporting that activity to the Postal Inspection Service. He also recommends promptly removing mail from your box, requesting your mail to be held at the post office if you are away from home even for a day or two (or ask a trusted neighbor to retrieve your mail for you). A locking mailbox is another option.

Trash “theft”?

We have had several reports of a middle aged woman driving a blue Honda sedan who has been seen going through our trash bins and taking various items. The woman was seen rifling through trash cans after dark on Mountain Pine Road and Walnut Lane over the last weekend and was also seen going through trash on River Road.

While it seems that the woman is searching for aluminum cans and other metals, homeowners should be aware of the possibility of identity theft and be careful not to discard private or personal information.

At a minimum, this woman is trespassing and if she is seen again the Sheriff should be called - 565-2511.

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