

WESTMINSTER CRIER

Residential irrigation system maintenance
A handy guide for getting the most out of your
irrigation system
And for a healthy and attractive lawn

For an overview of our central system please visit the Westminster Community home page and under the **Owner Information** tab click on "Water, Lakes, and Irrigation"

Does your irrigation system require maintenance? --- It sure does --- Can you do it yourself? --- Yes --- and following are guide lines, or if you are like most of us, it's a lot easier and safer to contract the on-going maintenance of your system with an irrigation specialist. We recommend a minimum of quarterly visits. And for our many "snow birds" and rental properties, this assures someone will be checking on your system during your absence. This is important, for much can go wrong with your system, particularly in the summer, and often involving our frequent lightning storms and power surges. A system failure during the hot summer months could destroy your lawn.

Irrigation Continued

Our Central system is plumbed to and connected to each residence. Each residence has a control box which is linked to solenoids that control the irrigation for each zone on your property. Before the water reaches the solenoids it passes through a filter designed to keep matter out of the solenoids and out of the sprinkler heads, which also have filters.

At the rear of your property are two control boxes with flush green covers. Under one cover your systems main filter is located. This filter should be inspected at least quarterly and removed and cleaned as necessary. Under the second cover is where your systems solenoids are located. These mechanical/electrical devices open and close in accordance with your control box irrigation schedule. Your system will have a solenoid for each zone on your property. These devices require no maintenance but they do fail and then have to be replaced. Home owners can do the replacement but this is a job best handled by an irrigation specialist.

Typically each residence will have two types of sprinklers, pop-ups and rotaries. The pop ups provide a constant watering pattern while the rotaries, as the name implies, go back and forth over a designated area. To assure an equal amount of irrigation water rotary zones are programmed to receive more of irrigation water than the pop-ups.

Irrigation Continued

Do the sprinkler heads require maintenance?

Yes they do. Each head has a filter which should be checked quarterly but at least twice per year. You will need a tool to raise up the sprinkler heads and then to lock the head in place, (available at your local hardware store). Once the head is raised the top of the head twists off revealing the tubular filter which should be cleaned.

Anything else?? Spray patterns. Both your pop up and rotary heads are adjustable and were installed to provide coverage to a predetermined area. These areas include irrigation adjacent to side-walks and driveways. Over time sprinkler heads become misaligned and that's why you see our roads and driveways being watered. Using the same tool you used to clean the filters you can raise up the sprinkler head and realign it to restore the desired spray pattern.

Landscaping and planting beds. Ever notice shrubs and ornamentals blocking the spray pattern of sprinklers? Well, when the system was installed the plants were much smaller, and plants in Florida grow like crazy. Another common reason involves your lawn service company chopping off of the sprinkler stem when trimming your shrubs. Your lawn service company keeps a supply of sprinkler heads on their trucks for that reason. The problem is that they do not replace or restore the sprinkler shaft to its original length. So periodically you should review your planting beds to make sure your sprinklers are doing their job and adding height as necessary.

Irrigation Continued

What else?? Most of our lawns are a grass variety called St Augustine. St. Augustine grass is a moderate to high maintenance lawn because it requires fertile, well-drained soil that is rich in organic matter, and needs regular fertilization, water, and mowing. Even in decent soils, St. Augustine grass requires regular, high nitrogen, fertilizer. Our Westminster soil is awful and regular fertilizing is essential for a good looking lawn. When you drive through Westminster it's easy to spot the difference between a lawn receiving regular fertilizer treatment and irrigation and those that do not. The latter lawn is closer to yellow than green and usually has lots of weeds.

One attribute of St Augustine is the fact that it spreads by creeping (a lot like northern witch grass). Without ongoing attention to your sprinkler heads, the grass grows over the heads and prevents the heads from popping up. It's for this reason your local hardware store has a stock of circular cement rings to slow down the infiltration of this grass. Or you can simply get a trowel and chop the grass from around the sprinkler heads.

Irrigation Continued

What if I don't want to or cannot perform the necessary routine maintenance as described above? Call our association office. We have a list of local companies performing maintenance on residential systems. Or you can simply use the Yellow Pages or do a Google search for local companies. Most will provide a regularly scheduled service which we highly recommend. A service contract will assure that someone is taking a regular look at your system and dealing with issues before they become real problems.

Your Irrigation committee
Chuck Bennett
Jack Griffith
Rick Coronati
John Maestrelli

Message From ARC:

As many of you know, ARC has been working on revising some of our guidelines. We had posted them in the last issue of the Crier and had verbally presented them at several board meetings but it has come to our attention that we didn't give homeowners enough time to review all the documents and to be able to comment on them at the monthly member meeting if they wish to do so. Therefore, ARC will publish these revisions in each issue of the Crier until the June Board meeting. We have also posted them in the Community Center under the ARC sign and on the Westminster website. In addition, we sent a copy to each Neighborhood Association President for them to share with their homeowners. Even though the board approved all the revisions, we are going to ask for another vote after the community has had a chance to review all the changes and make comments. If you have further questions, please don't hesitate to contact ARC., Our emails are on the website.

Thanks You.

Barbara Waldman, Chair

Note- you will find the pertinent guidelines with the revisions in **bold, red and underlined**. or in the case of the Driveway Stain/Seal Form in **blue**.

Lawn Furnishings

f. ARC approval is required before installing any lawn furnishings. The ARC will evaluate all proposed or installed exterior decorative objects solely in terms of design, execution, and general appropriateness in order to prevent such objects from having a significant negative impact on adjoining homes, the neighborhood setting, and the Westminster Community at large. The ARC will not judge the individual artistic merits of any object, but rather will make its evaluation solely on the object's impact.

All approved lawn furnishings must be placed in an existing planting bed contiguous to the house or garage. No lawn furnishings may be placed on the grass in the front yard, with the exception of holiday decorations and approved For Sale or For Rent signs.

Planting beds should include not less than two feet and not more than four feet adjacent to the foundation of each side, front and rear of the home. This should apply to homes with rear lanais. Front Landscape beds may exceed this distance from the Foundation, but must be completed in good taste and with the approval of the ARC.

ARC revisions continued- lawn furnishings

Decorative items may not exceed 18" by 36" and should be aesthetically pleasing and must be placed in existing planting beds contiguous to the house.

Decorative flags may be no larger than 24" by 40" and should also be aesthetically pleasing.

American flags are exempt and are included in existing covenants and ARC guidelines

Game day flags may be erected in existing planting beds contiguous to the house or on flagpoles attached to the house. They may be displayed on game day and must be removed within 48 hours afterwards. (This is in our guidelines already, p 15, (h).)

Political signs are not permitted under any circumstances.

No bird feeders of any kind are allowed on the property.

g) All hedges, shrubs, and trees must be properly trimmed and maintained as determined by the ARC

h) Trees and branches must be trimmed with a clearance of **seven (7) feet over sidewalks and fourteen (14) feet over streets.**

i) All non-native, invasive plants must be removed. See Addendum B.

j) Shrubs which obstruct vision sight lines at driveways, street intersections and on corner lots are dangerous for vehicular traffic and are prohibited.

ARC Revisions Continued- Lawn Furnishings

k) Any tree or plant may be used in landscaping except those on the list of unapproved Landscape? Plant materials in Addendum "B".

m) Removal of any tree with a trunk diameter greater than 3 inches must have the approval of the ARC, unless it is diseased, dead or replaced by an identical specimen. The ARC may require the Owner to replace the removed tree or trees.

n) Vegetable Gardens: The ARC views this as a landscaping issue and should be considered on an individual basis.

ARC Guideline Revisions Continued

Air Conditioners

a) Wall or window air conditioning or heating units are not permitted.

b) Compressors and fans for central air conditioning or heat pump systems which are located outside the exterior of the building shall be adequately walled or landscaped with natural landscaping that maintains its green year round to prevent being viewed from any street.

Westminster Community Association Approved For Rent / For Sale Sign Guidelines

Signs. No sign may be erected or displayed in or on any Lot, Living Unit, or structure, except a "For Sale" or "For Rent" sign no larger than ten (10) inches in height and no more than eighteen (18) inches in width is permitted.

For Rent signs may be erected only for rentals of 12 months or more. Once the lease is signed, the sign must come down within 7 days. It may be erected again 30 days before the lease expires.

The sign shall conform to the drawing depicted on the attached sheet. The party seeking to erect or place a sign on their property shall be required to purchase the sign and sign post from a vendor designated by the Association. The vendor so designated by the Association shall be the only party authorized to place or install the sign on the owner's property. Owner's rights to install a sign shall be further subject to the following restrictions and those which may be later promulgated by the Architectural Review Committee:

A. The sign shall contain only the telephone number and the name of either the homeowner or the real estate company listing the property, if any;

B. Telephone number letters shall not exceed four (4) inches in height and the lettering indicating the homeowner or real estate company shall not exceed two (2)

Sign Guidelines Continued

inches in height;

C. Coloring of the lettering shall be white with a Dark Green Background;

D. For single-family homes and villas, one (1) sign may be located in the front of the property, no closer than Fifteen (15) feet from the street pavement and another sign may be located along the rear of the house, no farther than (3) feet from the house;

E. For condominiums, two (2) signs are permitted. One (1) sign may be located in the rear window of the unit;

F. Note: Notwithstanding the foregoing, the individual neighborhood associations may prevent, prohibit, or impose additional restrictions on the placement of signs in their respective neighborhoods;

G. The Architectural Review Committee requires that all signs installed or placed within the Community be constructed or installed by a vendor designated and approved by the Association, to insure conformity with these restrictions.

This is intended for ARC use, not as an amendment to the Doc's.

Garages, Driveways and Walkways

a) Conversions of garages to living space or other uses are prohibited, even though some are not readily apparent from the exteriors of applicable Units.

b) Materials used for driveways and walkways must be concrete, brick or paver blocks. Any changes from the original installation **MUST be approved by the ARC.**

(This includes the painting of any driveway or walkway.) Delete previous sentence.

Add: **Stamped concrete driveways may not be painted a solid color.**

An appropriate sealer must be used to restore the original color.

Pavers may not be painted a solid color, but must be cleaned and sealed according to paver manufacturer's directions.

c) Walkways and driveways

DELETE: (should be compatible with each other and the home, as determined by ARC.)

ADD: **Walkways from the driveway to the front door must be the same color as the driveway.**

The Driveway/ Stain/ Paint request form seen following has some changes that are indicated in blue on the form.



PLEASE NOTE: YOU MAY NOT PROCEED WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL FROM THE ARC COMMITTEE.

DRIVEWAY STAIN/PAINT REQUEST FORM

Submit to: ARC Chairperson/ Property Manager
2001 Oxford Ridge Circle
Lehigh Acres, FL 33973

Date: _____ Phone: 239. 491. 2767

Homeowner: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (Home) _____ (Cell) _____

*Where would you like your approved/denied copy sent? _____

Please select one: (E-MAIL, MAIL, FAX, OR PERSONAL PICK UP)

The driveway color must conform to a color in the ARC approved driveway stain color palette. Driveways must be prepared according to the directions below, driveway must be properly maintained with no chipping, bubbling or peeling.

Stamped concrete driveways may not be painted a solid color. An appropriate sealer must be used to restore the original colors.

Pavers may not be painted a solid color, but must be cleaned and sealed according to paver manufacturer's directions.

Please read the following and be advised that Staining/ Sealing your driveway is a very involved process and must be completed properly to bond to the concrete surface.

❖ **SURFACE PREPARATION IS CRITICAL.**

- All oil, grease spots, and stains must be removed with a commercial or industrial cleaner/ greaser.
- Bare concrete requires a commercial/ industrial etching solution as part of the preparation process.

If your concrete surface is not prepared properly the concrete stain/ sealer that you apply will not adhere properly and will bubble and peel. If this happens the normal Compliance procedure will be followed.

Please sign and date acknowledging that you have read these conditions:

Homeowner signature

Date

Approved Stains:

H&C Concrete Inspired (Can be found at any Sherwin Williams store)
Color top Stain & Sealer are:

HC156 - Hint of Gray

HC135- White- Washed Terracotta

HC 140- Gray Horizons

HC125- Neutral Balance Tan

HC141- Cemented Deal

**Ultra-paver clear sealer /
Clear stain sealer**

Walkways from the driveway to the front door, must be the same color as the driveway. These properties will be regularly checked. Painted/ stained /sealed concrete surfaces must be maintained. Painted/ stained / sealed concrete driveway or walkway surfaces will be re-visited and reviewed by the ARC among other Westminster Committees.

Neighborhood Association (if applicable):

Date: _____ Approved: _____ Denied: _____ Tabled _____

Signature: _____

Architectural Review Committee

Date: _____ Approved: _____ Denied: _____ Tabled _____

ARC Response/Comments:

Signature of ARC Chairperson

or Signature of acting Chairperson

Ladies Luncheon

There are a few changes to the Ladies Luncheon get-togethers. Please mark your calendars so we can see you there.

First of all it is still being held the First Thursday of each Month.

Second - Time has been changed to 11:30 am. The ladies who were at the May Luncheon voted for the change of time, so we can get in the restaurant before the golfers arrive for their lunch.

Third - This is a big part, Your Reservations to eat, I need a head count so I can tell the kitchen how many to expect, so they can have enough food and waitresses to serve us.

Reservations can be made the following two ways-- 1. Call Donna Roberts at (239)369-5925 or
2. Email me at Billdonnar@aol.com

There **will not** be a sign-up sheet in the Community Center due to the lack of use.

If at all possible could you get your reservations to me by the Wednesday before the Thursday Luncheon or before.

I would like to invite everyone who is a new resident or one who has never attended the Luncheons before . The Ladies have a good time getting acquainted and making new friends.

THE NEXT LUNCHEON IS : JUNE 7, 2018 AT 11:30 AM

Hope to see you there

Donna Roberts

Board Meeting- May 15

7 pm

Community Center



Please send pictures of all of the events to share in the following crier.

The Crier is your newsletter. IF you have a new neighbor, please have them e mail the crier so they can be added to our listing. IF you have moved and no longer wish to receive the Crier, please e mail the Crier to be taken off the list.

Please forward items or pictures to westminstercrier@gmail.com at least 2 weeks ahead of time for publication. This address is just for submitting items to the crier. Concerns about information appearing in the crier should be addressed at the office.

The next regular crier will be published the week of May 30

Photos of Derby Day at the Club

Submitted by Jack McManus







From Lee County Sheriff's Office

Are you planning to use a classified advertisement website or online vacation rental marketplace to book your summer vacation? If so, the Lee County Sheriff's Office encourages you to do your homework before committing your hard-earned dollars for that dream vacation in the mountains, beachfront condo, or timeshare travel.

- 1. Never pay with cash, prepaid card, check or wire transfer.** Instead, pay with a credit card or PayPal. If something goes wrong, you can dispute the charges.
- 2. Beware of low pricing for premium vacation property.** Scammers will lure their victims into action by offering below market rent on property that "won't last long". Most likely, the property is for sale and the ad has been cloned from a legitimate real estate listing.
- 3. Use a reputable company that specializes in vacation rentals.** Although well-known rental sites have occasionally been the target of fraudulent activities, they typically have staff who can help you validate whether a listing is legitimate or not.

Sheriff's Office Continued

4. Conduct an online search of the property you are interested in renting. Use Google Street View or another mapping application to verify that the property really exists. Search for the owner's name, photos, reviews of the property, or copy and paste the first one or two sentences of the ad in a Google search to see if the same posting shows up on another website.

For more information about vacation rental scams, call the Lee County Sheriff's Office fraud line at 258-3292.

Happy Mother's Day

