

# Reminders on home maintenance, irrigation, storm drains, recycling

As the summer months start to become a memory and we prepare for the fall (my favorite time of year), I can't help but think of how the time has flown by this summer.

In the spring, I could not wait for the summer to arrive and it seemed as if it was taking forever. I am not fond of the hot summer months, but our son and daughter-in-law were expecting our fourth grandchild and second granddaughter in July.

Needless to say, my husband and I could not wait for July to arrive and, although she was due July 5, Miss Blakely Addison Tucker decided to say hello to the world July 14. There is something about a having a newborn baby in the family that warms your heart.

Now that we have what is expected to be our last grandchild, we will settle down and move forward with our household projects that were placed on hold while we were having fun shopping and decorating for Miss Blakely.

If you are anticipating a household or landscaping project, now or in the future, there are several reminders I would like to discuss.

If you are anticipating external improvements to your home, your restrictive covenants require approval from the Architectural Review Committee prior to beginning the improvement.

The ARC meets every Wednesday to review applications. The process takes approximately two weeks at the most if the required information has been submitted with the application.

If you have any questions regarding the architectural



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process or the required information that must be submitted with the application, call the Community Standards office at 751-3912 or visit the community standards page on the District website at [districtgov.org](http://districtgov.org).

We have received a considerable amount of rain this summer that has resulted in a lot of growth in the landscaped areas. If you are anticipating trimming back your shrubs or other landscape items and placing the items curbside for pickup, remember that tree limbs or branches may not exceed 4 feet in length and they must be bundled and tied. Lawn clippings and similar yard waste should be placed in biodegradable bags.

Considering the amount of rain we have received, it also is important to remember that you do not need to irrigate just because it is your scheduled day. Irrigation systems should be operated only when the lawn begins to show signs of stress.

This will encourage deeper root growth, which will help to develop more drought tolerant lawns and landscaping. It also will save water, which protects our water resources and provides savings on water bills.

Signs of stress include:

- Lingering footprints or mower tracks
- Grass blades or leaf blades beginning to close lengthwise
- The top few inches of soil

feeling dry

Lawns generally will need water before landscape plants (excluding flowers). Therefore, if the lawn is being irrigated when it shows signs of stress, the landscape plants will be adequately irrigated.

Flower beds should be hand watered with a hose using an automatic shutoff nozzle. Also, if the lawn has dry spots, use a hose with an automatic shutoff.

Another reminder is that only storm water should enter into the storm drains. We have received an increasing number of phone calls this summer related to residential landscaping contractors blowing grass clippings into the storm drains and residents disposing of their plastic bags containing pet waste into the storm drains.

If your lawn is maintained by a landscape contractor, take the time to inform him or her that only storm water should go into the storm drains. And pet owners, after picking up your pets' waste, take it home and properly dispose of it.

Community Development Districts are required by the Clean Water Act to comply with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit program. This program is administered by the State of Florida with a goal to reduce the amount of pollution that enters storm drain systems.

We also have a District policy that prohibits unauthorized discharges of any kind and prohibits illicit connections to the storm drain system. An illicit connection is any connection that allows non-storm water discharge to enter the storm drain system.

An example of an illicit

connection is pumping pool water into the storm drain. When draining your swimming pool, the water should be discharged without impacting your neighbor's property and over a vegetated surface so that some level of filtration can occur.

As described in the Districts' policy, pollutants include, but are not limited to: paints, varnishes, solvents, oil and other automotive fluid, nonhazardous liquid and solid waste, yard waste, refuse, rubbish, garbage, litter or other discarded or abandoned objects, pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, hazardous substances, animal waste, and waste or residue that result

from constructing a building or structure.

Basically, a pollutant is anything that isn't storm water that enters the storm drain. For additional information on how to keep our community environmentally safe, go to [districtgov.org](http://districtgov.org) and click on The Villages Water Wisdom.

The last item I would like to mention is that there has been some misunderstanding

in regard to recyclables being placed in clear bags.

Several of our local stores offer the bags for recyclables that has a blue tint. While it is preferred that the clear bags are used, Sumter Sanitation will pick up the bags with the blue tint as long as you can see what is in the bag.

The sanitation hauler must be able to see what is in the bag to ensure that the items

are recycling items and not regular household garbage.

Enjoy the final month of summer, continue to stay cool and hydrate yourself when you are outside in the brutal heat until next time, here at Our Place.

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