Seneca Forest

Community Newsletter
Summer 2020 Edition

Anyone ready for 2021?

2020 has been quite a year….COVID-19, Riots, and elections coming up. Hold on tight.

As we have been isolating ourselves at home, in quarantine, it is a good time to look around and see how pleasant Seneca Forest is – mature trees, quiet streets, friendly neighbors and well kept homes, for the most part. As such, it is also a good time to consider cleaning up and sprucing up your house, inside and out. Here are some ideas that improve the appearance of your property and the community in general. You may also find that they add a little happiness and feeling of accomplishment to brighten your day.

- Put away shovels, tools or other items left in front of your home.
- Clean up your front and back yard. Remember, anything that holds standing water for any period of time is a breeding ground for mosquitoes.
- Power wash green algae/black mildew off siding/brick.
- Have damaged fencing & roofs fixed.
- Replace rotten wood and/or repaint trim.

The *annual inspection* of all community homes and yards has been completed, as it has been for the past several years. About 200 'violation' letters were issued this round. If you did not receive one congratulations, and THANK YOU, for taking care of your property.

As per the Seneca Forest governing documents, each homeowner has a general "duty to maintain" their homes and yards, and to follow the architectural control approval process!

Another big plus is to store *recycling* bins and *trash* cans **out-of-view** on non-collection days, which means in your home or in the backyard as they are not permitted in public view.

Remember, trash is picked up on Mondays and Thursdays and recycling pickup is on Tuesdays. PLEASE, place trash out no earlier than the evening before collection.
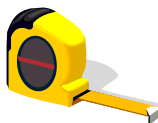
Really, who wants to live in a community that looks like this?

The above is a result of residents placing trash out prior to the permitted time and/or placing trash out in flimsy or even unsealed bags.

The HOA plans to re-double efforts to determine who is responsible for trash being placed out early and for bulk trash dumping outside of the 1st Thursday collections. **Violators will be charged for removal.**

Planning an Exterior Change?

<u>Any</u> changes to the exterior of your home need to be approved ***in advance*** by the community.

This includes changes to the color of your home, siding or entry door, window replacement, and major landscaping projects. For your convenience, an Architectural Change Request Form can be requested by calling TMGA at **(301) 948-6666** or by visiting our website at **www.sfcahomeowners.org** (click on "What's New" then "Forms and Newsletters" and look for "SFCA Architectural Change Request Form") or go to **www.tmgainc.com** and click on "My Community" to print one there.

Reopening Montgomery County

Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich and County Health Officer Dr. Travis Gayles announced critical benchmarks to reduce the spread of COVID-19 have been achieved, allowing the County to begin a gradual reopening, making it easier for some businesses to restart operations while protecting public health. Learn more about what's open, and what's not, here.

The County also created a new website that provides resources and guidelines for businesses about reopening. The website includes helpful information as well as frequently asked questions.

Montgomery County Pet Laws

At Large: Any dog or cat is at large if it is outside the owner's premises and not leashed. The HOA common areas are not the owner's premises.
Penalty for Violation: $100 for first offense, $500 for each subsequent violation.

Animal Defecation: Montgomery County Code, Sec.5-203(a) (2): An owner must not allow an animal to damage or defecate on property outside of the owner's property. An animal may defecate ... if the owner immediately removes and disposes of the feces by a sanitary method approved by the Director (Animal Services Division, Department of Police).

Feces may be picked up in a plastic bag. If this bag is placed inside another plastic bag, it may be put out for disposal in your normal household trash.
Penalty for Violation - $100

Animal Noise: Montgomery County Code, Sec. 5-203(a) (6): An owner must not allow an animal to cause noise that is loud enough and persistent enough to disturb another person's quiet enjoyment.
Penalty for Violation - $100

For further information, or to report an animal bite or a violation of animal control laws, call the Animal Services Division at **(240) 773-5925** and for after-hours emergencies **(240) 773-5900.**

2020 Community Calendar

July	**Summer Newsletter**
July 15	**Board Meeting**
August 19	**Board Meeting**
September 16	**Board Meeting**
October	**Fall Newsletter**
October 21	**Board Meeting**

Changes to the community calendar and additional details regarding the events will be sent in future flyers and/or mailings.

Thinking of Selling YourHome?

I   If you are planning to sell your home, please remember that you are responsible for providing the purchaser with the legal Documents, rules, and financial information for the HOA.

Resale packages can be purchased from the management office by visiting www.tmgainc.com, select "**Resident Services**," select "**Order a Resale Package**."

Seneca Forest Board of Directors Meetings

Your Board of Directors meets on a monthly basis on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.. Since March the meetings have been held by web videoconference due to the stay-home orders and the restrictions on gatherings. This is being evaluated monthly by the Board and Management. Meetings are always open to residents. Meeting dates are posted on the community's entrance signs.

If you plan to attend a meeting, please contact TMGA at **(301) 948-6666** to confirm the date and time of the meeting. Meetings are sometimes rescheduled or cancelled due to a lack of quorum.

The Association's 2020 Annual Meeting has not been held yet due to COVID-19. Owners will be notified once the Annual Meeting is scheduled.

Every meeting is a chance to get involved, meet your neighbors, and learn about what is going on in the community.

Reporting Repairs & Outages to Pole Lights

Association Pole Lights - The street lights within the community are owned and operated by Seneca Forest Homeowners Association.

Report pole lights that are damaged, cycling or out as follows:

- **You may call the management office at (301) 948-6666.** Ask for the Assistant for Seneca Forest HOA.

Recycling:
Scrap Metal (FREE) - Call Ahead

Montgomery County will collect certain types of scrap metal from the curb FOR FREE on **Tuesday** mornings if you call **240-777-0311** by 11:00 a.m. on Monday, or fill out an online form at

www.montgomerycountymd.gov/scrapmetal

Items include: washers and dryers, refrigerators (*doors must be removed*), bikes, sewing machines, grills, and other large metal items, swing sets (*disassembled*), lawn mowers (*no riding mowers, drain the oil and gas, remove batteries – you can take oil and batteries to the Shady Grove Transfer Station. Visit www.mcrecycles.org then click on Facilities for Transfer Station hours*).

NO Automotive Parts will be accepted at the curb!

- Order a free new recycling bin from Montgomery County at **(240) 777-0311** or via their web site at

www.mcrecycles.org

Click on: Trash & Recycling then Order a Blue Bin and follow the directions

Community Portal:

For complete information and forms, visit the *New Community Portal* at **www.tmgainc.com.** Sign up for email blasts to automatically receive these Newsletters and other announcements.

- ➢ **Click: My Community**
- ➢ **Enter: Seneca Forest**
- ➢ **Click: Seneca Forest HOA**

Report a Vacant Property

Vacant homes create potential problems for the neighborhood such as vandalism, broken pipes and unwanted wildlife as new neighbors, just to name a few.

If you suspect or know that a property in your neighborhood is vacant and not being properly monitored or maintained by the owner or his/her agent, please report this to DHCA by calling (**240) 777-0311**. Let TMGA know as well.

For the hearing impaired the TDD number is **(240) 773-3556 for DHCA**.

Your identity *can* be kept confidential if you request it when calling in.

Community Safety First

SPEED LIMIT 25

There are many children playing and walking home from school throughout the community.

Please show that you care by slowing down to 25 mph or less when driving in the community. The extra few seconds you save by driving too fast is not worth the risk to our residents, their children and their pets.

Employ the security measures listed below to help protect yourself and your home, car and valuables.

@Comcastcares   Service issues

Crime Prevention Tips

1. When going out of town, place several interior lights in your home on timers. Also be sure to turn on exterior lights at night.

2. Lock your cars at all times! Keep valuables like garage remotes, GPS devices, iPods, keys, and wallets and briefcases out of sight.

3. Lock all windows and doors *(even on the second story)*. Thieves sometimes disguise themselves as painters, window washers or roofers to enter homes through unlocked second floor windows.

4. If a security system is available, activate it at night and when away from home.

5. Always keep your doors closed, day and night – even when you are at home. Open doors are invitations to criminals to remove items from garages (if you have one) and access your home.

Help to DETER CRIME IN SENECA FOREST by reporting suspicious activities, people, vehicles -- be sure to note dates, times, car tag numbers, and descriptions.

   a. Always report suspicious activity to Police Non-Emergency at (301) 279-8000

   b. Always report emergency issues to Police/Fire/Rescue at 911

Contact Utilities using Twitter!

Did you know that you may use Twitter to report emergencies to or view timely updates regarding important events and/or incidents for the following utilities and/or County agencies?

@WSSCWATERNEWS	Report emergencies
@PepcoConnect	Report emergencies
@mcpnews	Police Non-Emergency/updates
@mcfrs	Fire Non-Emergency/updates
@Washingtongas	Report emergencies
@MontgomeryCoMD	Mont. County Government
@Verizon	General information
@verizonSupport	Service issues (Not Wireless)
@Comcast	General information

PAPERLESS NEWLETTERS

All (quarterly) editions of the NEWSLETTER are only distributed in electronic version and WILL NOT BE MAILED.

Newsletters will be EMAILED to all email addresses on file at TMGA and will be posted to the HOA website. PLEASE CALL ANGEL BROWN AT 301-948-6666 OR SEND AN EMAIL TO abrown@tmgainc.com TO PROVIDE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS.

Montgomery County 2020 Census

A full and accurate count of everyone in Montgomery County will help assure our communities receive a fair share of funding for public services, hospitals, schools, roads and more. It is estimated that Montgomery County will lose $18,250 in federal funds for every person not counted over ten years! Please share this information with everyone in your community.

Take ten minutes to complete the Census online, by phone, or by mail. It's safe, confidential, easy and important. Remember, there is NO citizenship question on the 2020 Census. If your household didn't receive an invitation from Census (or can't find it) you can still complete the Census by going online https://2020census.gov or by calling 844-330-2020.

Together, we can put the "count" in Montgomery County.