

# Apalachee Plantation Homeowners' Association Newsletter

## *What's Going On With Garbage Pickup?*

*The following is an update from Gwinnett County on the garbage pickup issue:*

**I**N RESPONSE to the injunction against the County's new solid waste plan that would have taken effect the first of the year, on December 23, Gwinnett officials have agreed to extend service agreements with current trash service providers to ensure that citizens will continue to receive garbage service.

"The County's first order of business is to make sure that a group of approved private waste haulers is in place and working in January," said County Administrator Jock Connell. "Gwinnett is back to a multi-provider approach with residents choosing their trash haulers based on their ability to provide service as authorized by county government."

Residents have the opportunity to extend trash service with their current haulers or choose one of the nine haulers who have agreed to provide services in the County. (Ed. Note: See our website for local hauler info.)

Trash haulers will continue to pick up the following recyclables once a week with residents' curbside garbage service: newspapers and inserts, plastic drink and detergent bottles, aluminum cans, steel cans, glass bottles and jars.

Residents who paid to activate service with Advanced Disposal in 2009 will receive a refund and notifications of when they will expect to have the trash carts removed. Residents with Waste Pro carts will need to contact Waste Pro to discuss cart retrieval and refund information. Contact Advanced Disposal at 678.684.1493 or Waste Pro at 770. 295.0800 or 770.451.9395 for more information.

"Residents need to understand that the underlying court case is ongoing and will take several months to resolve, at a minimum. The County will revisit the solid waste ordinance in 2009 to determine the best plan to ensure that we reduce waste and increase recycling opportunities while providing the best possible plan for our residents," Connell said. "We appreciate our residents' and the current waste haulers' patience as we navigate through this process."

Gwinnett officials advise residents to contact their prospective trash hauler with questions about setting up or continuing their service. A call center has been set up at County offices to assist with general questions about the solid waste plan. If you have questions, please call 770.822.7141 between 8:00am and 5:00pm. Please note that: Gwinnett County offices will be closed December 24 – 25 and January 1. The call center will be operable as this process continues.

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## *Slow Down, Enjoy the Moment*

Drivers, there have been an increasing number of complaints about speeding vehicles. We have many children out waiting at and walking to and from bus stops throughout the day, and outside playing on the weekends. Please, slow down. The extra minute or two it takes you to get to get to the main road may save a life.

## *Break-ins on the Rise in Our Neighborhood*

**A**T LEAST four homes in our neighborhood have been robbed in the past few months, with one of those occurring with the home owner in the house. We all need to increase our vigilance in protecting ourselves, our neighbors and our neighborhood.

**Buying a gun NOT the answer.** Statistically, you are in more danger of being shot and injured or killed if you keep a gun in your home. In many cases where residents have been injured or killed by a gun, the gun was the homeowner's own weapon.

**Install a home security system.** While this is an additional expense, a home alarm, especially one that connects to a call center, is a much better option. It protects your home even when you are not there, and should be on at all times. Research carefully to find the system that will work for you, and that has a good reputation.

**Make your home hard to approach.** Keeping your outside lights on can deter potential thieves as neighbors may see them. Motion detector lights are excellent choices as they can be turned on completely when needed, then put to motion detection the rest of the time.

Keep all bushes cut lower than waist height near windows and doors and in walking areas. Do not give attackers hiding places.

**Keep doors and windows locked.** Never open a door to someone you don't know, nor allow children to answer the door. Check identity of all repair or delivery persons. If a stranger comes to your home asking for help, inform to wait outside. You will contact the police in their behalf.

Invest in quality locks and deadbolts, and install a safety chain to allow you to open the door with a measure of security.

**Make your home look lived in.** Even when away, set your lights to go on and off, have your papers and mail brought in. Ask a friend or neighbor to keep an eye on things for you.

Most important: if in doubt, call the police.

## Community Contact Information

- **Police non-emergency number: 770-513-5100.** The citizens of Gwinnett County may call the Non-emergency number 770-513-5100 to report non-urgent incidents that require a police response such as loud music, lost wallets, cell phones, and passports, non-violent animal complaints, etc. Be patient. 911 calls will be answered first then the non-emergency phone.
- **Police: 770-513-5000** for information of towed vehicles, obtaining copies of reports, traffic ticket information, follow-up on reports or to speak with a specific officer or detective.
- **Sheriff: 770-619-6500** For information on information on prisoners, warrants, and the civil process.
- **Fire/EMS: Contact Gwinnett County Fire Department at 678-518-4800** when requesting information on burning permits, inspections and billing questions, and educational presentations.
- **Call before you dig: 770.623.4344** Before you dig on your property you are required by State Law to notify the Utilities Protection Center. They will contact all utilities for you.
- **Quality of Life Violations: [www.gwinnettcountry.com](http://www.gwinnettcountry.com).** For the 24 Hour Code Violation Reporting Hotline, call 770.417.3434 extension 52. For the 24 Hour Erosion Control Violation Reporting Hotline, call 678.518.6099. Violations can be reported online at [www.gwinnettcountry.com](http://www.gwinnettcountry.com). NOTE: Georgia's Open Records Act requires disclosure upon request of any information about a complaint.
- **Animal Control:** To report an animal bite: Call 911 for medical attention first. The 911 operator will call Animal Control about the animal. To report cruelty cases or an injured, sick, or vicious animal call 770.513.5100. To file a complaint (barking dogs, etc.) call 770.339.3200
- **Home-buying education, counseling, and mortgage assistance [www.theimpactgroup.org](http://www.theimpactgroup.org).** Gwinnett County contributes to The Impact Group, a non-profit, community development corporation that arranges emergency and transitional shelter for homeless people, helps revitalize low-income neighborhoods, and offers home-buying education, counseling, and mortgage assistance.

## Don't Dump it: Recycling Made Easy

**G**ETTING rid of useless items is getting more difficult. Most of us have old computers, cell phones, hazardous chemicals and household items that we don't need and can't get rid of. Here are a few suggestions for recycling them.

### *Computers and Cell Phones, Batteries*

- **Hewlett-Packard Recycling Program** <http://www.hp.com/hpinfo/globalcitizenship/environment/recycle/index.html>

To see FAQs: <http://www.hp.com/hpinfo/globalcitizenship/environment/faq/index.html#20>

Order the recycling service online and take your computer to a shipper. HP will charge you a small fee to recycle it.

YES: They will take old hardware, ink cartridges and laserjet supplies. INK cartridges must be manufactured by HP. Computer components do NOT have to be an HP product. NO monitors with broken glass. NO: Other electronics such as tv's, vcr's, etc.

- **Hewlett-Packard Battery Recycling Program** <http://h30151.www3.hp.com/>

Accepts laptop and notebook batteries for recycling. Does NOT have to be HP product. Order the service online and take your computer battery to a shipper. They charge you a small fee to recycle it.

- **ReBOOT**: 4508 Bibb Blvd., Suite B-10, Tucker GA 30084. Ph: 770-934-8432

Monday - Friday 9am-3pm for drop off. Call first.

YES: \$10 per computer component that is NON-WORKING. Accepts all cell phones.

For large donations (40 computers or more) they will arrange a pick-up.

### *Paint Disposal*

For paint disposal, open cans and fill with a mix of kitty litter and /or sawdust. Allow to absorb then throw into the trash.

### *Clothing and Household Items*

- **American Kidney Fund:** [www.akfpickup.com](http://www.akfpickup.com) Ph: 770.441.2220

Will pick up. Call to give your address and they will tell you when they are in your area next.

YES: They LOVE small household items - must be small enough for a driver to handle by himself. NO: Furniture, Large items or mattresses.

- **Atlanta Alliance on Developmental Disabilities:** 404-761-6247 [www.aadd.org](http://www.aadd.org)

Will pick up depending on your zip code. To donate either FURNITURE or TEN BOXES OR MORE, you must CALL for a pickup. Otherwise, you can schedule a pick-up ONLINE. They do not go to Cumming or above.

NO: Carpeting, large appliances, sinks, building materials, water heaters, a/c, mattresses, box springs.

YES: Clothing, household goods, shoes, glassware and dishes, tools, furniture.

- **Family Violence Council:** (Women & Children's support group) 770.603.2233

Will pick up. Call and give zip code to find out the days they are in your area.

YES: Clothing, shoes, bedding, draperies, house-wares, usable furniture, small appliances, washer/dryer, refrigerators, stoves, microwaves, toys, books, pots, pans, glassware. NO: Nothing needing repair or reupholstered. No console tv's or dishwashers.

- **Freecycle** : [www.freecycle.org](http://www.freecycle.org)

Just list your items for FREE and let people know to come pick them up at your house. Easy as that.

- **Habitat Re-Store**, Atlanta Habitat for Humanity, <http://www.atlanta-habitat.org/restore.asp>. 519 Memorial Drive SE, Atlanta, GA 30312. Ph: 404-525-2114

NEW or excellent condition building materials. They do NOT pick up.

Appliances, architectural items, area rugs, cabinets and countertops ceiling, floor, and window fans, doors, flooring materials, gardening equipment hardware, home accessories, lighting, paint supplies, plumbing fixtures and faucets, rugs, shutters and blinds, tile, tools, windows.

- **United Way:** 211 Information hotline: <http://www.unitedwayatlanta.org>

They will give you the names and numbers of agencies and charities that will take the kind of donations you have to give. They do not directly receive donations of items.

## Noisy Neighbors?

Occasionally we receive complaints about noisy or disruptive neighbors. Your HOA has no authority to dispute such matters. Please contact the appropriate authority using the list on this page. Contact your HOA for permissions or regarding covenant violations.

## Monthly Gardening Advice from the Gwinnett County Extension Service

### January

- Continue renewing mulch around plant beds and composting fallen leaves.
- Plant shrubs and trees.
- Begin working on next years garden plan.
- Plant or transplant woody plants such as trees or shrubs. Now, while it is cool and plants are somewhat dormant, is one of the best times of the year for planting. Newly planted or transplanted material will still need water through the winter. January is also a good time to plant fruit trees.
- Bare root roses and many of the spring flowering bulbs can also be planted in January. Tulips and hyacinths should be pre-chilled for 6-8 weeks in your refrigerator before planting.
- If you have not already done so, don't forget to take soil samples for your garden and lawn areas.

### February

- February is an excellent time for pruning. Fruit trees, grape vines, roses, and crape myrtles should be pruned. Most evergreen plants can also be pruned. For spring flowering plants, such as azaleas, wait until after they bloom before pruning as pruning now can reduce flower production.
- Pre-emergence herbicides for weed problems in turf can be applied at this time. Be sure to follow label directions.
- Most fruit trees and pecan trees can be fertilized in early to mid-February. Do not apply fertilizers to warm season lawns or ornamental plants at this time.

### March

- Repot houseplants where needed.
- If you have not already done so, prune crape myrtles and overgrown evergreen shrubs. Mulch around shrubs and trees and replace existing mulch as needed.
- Prepare a plan for planting spring and summer annuals. You can continue to plant new shrubs and trees in the warm spring weather. The sooner in spring you plant, the better, so plants will face less heat stress.
- Fertilize trees and shrubs as needed. Roses will need monthly fertilization through spring and summer. Fertilize fescue lawns only at this time. For other lawns, wait until two weeks after the grass has greened up before fertilizing warm season grasses.

- If lawn areas are compacted, now is a good time to aerate the lawn using a core-type lawn aerator to help improve drainage and loosen soils.

## Dogs in Our Neighborhood

THE HOLIDAY season is frequently a time when families add a new dog to their household. For new pet owners, there are a number of online and printed resources available for help in training in addition to dog training classes. One important aspect of dog care is providing sufficient exercise. A brisk walk morning and evening will leave your dog happier and less destructive during the day. Please keep in mind that county ordinances, and common courtesy, require that you pick up after your dog. Always carry a couple of plastic bags. The common areas are not exempt. Always clean up after your dog.

**Dog safety:** Dogs that feel threatened will bite. Never go up to a strange dog without asking permission from the owner. If you see a dog running lose contact animal control. Do not try to subdue it yourself.

If you keep a dog for protection, remember, a barking dog can deter criminals. An aggressive dog may attack and severely harm or kill a neighbor's child.

Ads can be placed for \$15 per year for homeowners and \$25 per year for non-homeowners.

Contact the HOA

## HOA Dues

INVOICES for your 2009 HOA dues will be mailed out soon. They will stay at \$150 for the coming year. In these difficult economic times everyone needs to do their part in maintaining our neighborhood. Please remember that your dues are mandatory. Monthly late fees will be added after April. If you would like to make arrangements to pay in installments, please contact the HOA via email.

We will continue to place liens on non-compliant homes. This has worked well and ensures that all carry their load.

Our homeowners have done an outstanding job of caring for their homes. Our neighborhood has received a number of compliments on its attractiveness. A drive through similar neighborhoods in our area will show that we live in a neighborhood to be proud of. Keep up the good work!



## ASBERRY SCHOOL OF MUSIC

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## Fireplace Safety

**M**ORE than one-third of Americans use fireplaces, wood stoves and other fuel-fired appliances as primary heat sources in their homes. Unfortunately, many people are unaware of the fire risks when heating with wood and solid fuels.

Heating fires account for 36% of residential home fires in rural areas every year. Often these fires are due to creosote buildup in chimneys and stovepipes. All home heating systems require regular maintenance to function safely and efficiently.

The United States Fire Administration (USFA) encourages you to practice the following fire safety steps to keep those home fires safely burning. Remember, fire safety is your personal responsibility ...Fire Stops With You!

### Keep Fireplaces and Wood Stoves Clean

- Have your chimney or wood stove inspected and cleaned annually by a certified chimney specialist.
- Clear the area around the hearth of debris, decorations and flammable materials.
- Always use a metal mesh screen with fireplaces. Leave glass doors open while burning a fire.
- Install stovepipe thermometers to help monitor flue temperatures.
- Keep air inlets on wood stoves open, and never restrict air supply to fireplaces. Otherwise you may cause creosote buildup that could lead to a chimney fire.
- Use fire-resistant materials on walls around wood stoves.

### Safely Burn Fuels

- Never use flammable liquids to start a fire.
- Use only seasoned hardwood. Soft, moist wood accelerates creosote buildup.
- Build small fires that burn completely and produce less smoke.
- Never burn cardboard boxes, trash or debris in your fireplace or wood stove.
- When building a fire, place logs at the rear of the fireplace on an adequate supporting grate.
- Never leave a fire in the fireplace unattended. Extinguish the fire before going to bed or leaving the house.
- Soak hot ashes in water and place them in a metal container outside your home.

### Protect the Outside of Your Home

- Stack firewood outdoors at least 30 feet away from your home.
- Keep the roof clear of leaves, pine needles and other debris.
- Cover the chimney with a mesh screen spark arrester.
- Remove branches hanging above the chimney, flues or vents.

### Protect the Inside of Your Home

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home. Test them monthly and change the batteries at least once a year. Consider installing the new long life smoke alarms.
- Provide proper venting systems for all heating equipment.
- Extend all vent pipes at least three feet above the roof.

## Is Your Home Energy Efficient?

We're all looking for ways to cut costs these days. An energy efficient house can drastically cut heating and cooling expenses. Here are a few money-saving tips.

- Seal air leaks throughout the home to stop drafts.

Many air leaks and drafts are easy to find because they are easy to feel — like those around windows and doors. But holes hidden in attics, basements, and crawlspaces are usually bigger problems. Sealing these leaks with caulk, spray foam, or weather stripping will have a great impact on improving your comfort and reducing utility bills.

In a typical house about 20 percent of the air that moves through the duct system is lost due to leaks and poorly sealed connections. Exposed ducts in attics, basements, crawlspaces, and garages can be repaired by sealing the leaks with duct sealant (also called duct mastic).

- Add insulation to block heat loss in winter and heat gain in summer.

To get the biggest savings, the easiest place to add insulation is usually in the attic. A quick way to see if you need more insulation is to look across your uncovered attic floor. If your insulation is level with or below the attic floor joists, you probably need to add more insulation. The recommended insulation level for most attics is R-38 (or about 12–15 inches, depending on the insulation type). In the coldest climates, insulating up to R-49 is recommended. In addition, insulating ducts that run through spaces that get hot in summer or cold in winter (like attics, garages, or crawlspaces) can save significant energy.

- Choose ENERGY STAR qualified windows when replacing windows.

For more information visit: <http://www.energystar.gov/>

## Annual Home Owners' Meeting

- Watch our website for details of our upcoming Home Owners' Meeting. It is tentatively scheduled for 7 p.m., April 22 at Mill Creek High School. NOTE the new location!

## Board Members and Contact Information

President: Lee Adkins

Vice President: Ren Burnette

Secretary: Carolyn Neira

Treasurer: Madeline Andrade

Member-at-large: Salvador Fuentes

E-mail: Contact Any HOA Board Member at: [apalacheeplantation@yahoo.com](mailto:apalacheeplantation@yahoo.com)

Mailing address: PO Box 923; Dacula, GA 30019

Website: [www.apalacheeplantation.com](http://www.apalacheeplantation.com)