

ROCK SPRINGS

Homeowners Association Newsletter

Project Updates

Landscaping

The Board, in an effort to save neighborhood funds, has elected to have Aphix cut out any dead portions of common landscaping instead of replacing all of the damaged plants. Anything that Aphix believes to be un-salvageable will be replaced in the fall.

Speed Study

We have submitted a request for a speed study to be conducted to determine if we should install speed bump/humps in the neighborhood. We have also requested the city install a crosswalk at the playground corner. We have been advised there is a long backlog and these items have been added to the list.

Uneven Sidewalks

Not much to update on this issue. We are simply waiting for the city to get around to our work tickets.

(Continued on next page)



The Dreaded Brown Lawn

As we enter the heat of summer, there are a few things you should be aware of when taking care of your lawn. First, as stated in previous newsletters, homeowners are required by the CC&Rs to keep their yards “cut...weed free...and attractive”. The easiest way to do this is to apply a weed and feed with pre-emergent in the spring, feed and water at regular intervals, and aerate and over-seed in the fall. Even after completing those steps without fault (or paying a company to do it), your lawn still turns brownish in the summer. Should you water more, put down “green-up” fertilizers, fire your lawn care company, etc? Continue reading on the next page to find out why this happens and what to do about it (and what not to)!



Playground Mulch

We have decided to get quotes on the removal of the degraded wood mulch and replace it with rubber mulch. This should save us money in the long run and will create a safer and cleaner play space for our young residents. The playground will need to be closed temporarily for this work to be done. We will send an e-blast out if/when we have it scheduled.

Ground's Maintenance

We are currently requesting proposals from landscaping companies. This is done occasionally to make sure we are getting the best service for our money. If you know of any landscaping company that may be interested feel free to inform them that we are currently looking and they are free to submit questions and proposals directly to Paragon.

Dog Waste Stations

The Board has decided to table discussions on this for the time being. There are many logistical concerns that need to be addressed. As we move forward on awarding a landscaping contract, the maintenance of such stations will be discussed. In the meantime, thank you for picking up after your pets and utilizing YOUR OWN bin for waste.

Weed killers

If you have many different types of weeds growing use an all purpose product. If you have a specific type of weed problem try a more focused approach (no need to use a shotgun to kill a fly). The more reserved you are, the better for you lawn and our ground water. Many weed products make weeds grow much faster than the roots can keep up with and thus kill the plant. Let the product do its job and follow the directions for subsequent applications. Most products restrict use above certain temperatures which limits their use in the summer so the best time to use these products is in the spring when weeds are actively growing. Applying these chemicals during hotter temperatures will harm your lawn, so resist the urge! The best way to keep weeds from popping up is to have healthy, thick turf cut to the proper height (-3.5")

Food and Water

Every living thing needs food and water. Too little of either could kill your turf. Too much is unhealthy for your lawn as well. During the summer heat, your lawn will go semi-dormant to save its energy. This is why it grows slower and turns brown. Brown grass is NOT dead grass (as long as it has food and water) and it will bounce back in cooler temperatures. Most of us have tall fescue lawns and tall fescue is a cool season grass. You can put as much water as you want on your lawn and it will remain brown if the temperature is too high. Don't fret and just keep your lawn fed and watered. Your brown grass is using its energy to develop a better, deeper root structure. Resist the urge to overfeed or use "green-up" fertilizers during high temperature months. Forcing cool season grasses to green up through high nitrogen fertilizers will stress your grass and while it looks nice and green and healthy, you are actually harming your turf by pulling energy out of the roots to produce the green blades. Additionally, too much water is not only wasteful, but could lead to a fungal infection (seen as persistent brown patches). Use of a rain sensor on your irrigation system will help keep you from overwatering. Also, use a shallow dish placed in different areas of your yard to determine how long your system needs to run to provide the recommended 1" per watering. Make sure to adjust your sprinkler heads each season to make sure you aren't wasting water by watering the street.

Aeration and Over-seeding

With our heavy clay soil, **core** aeration is an extremely beneficial process for creating a healthy lawn. During aeration, a machine is used to remove plugs of grass and dirt from your lawn and deposits these plugs on top of your turf. While the plugs are not exactly pleasing to look at, it has very real benefits for our soil. The plugs will deteriorate and leave a looser top soil behind which can help new grass seedlings establish their roots. Aeration also helps break down thatch. The removal of the plugs allows water, oxygen, and nutrients to get deeper in the soil where grass roots can more efficiently utilize them. The holes left behind also create a good environment for grass seed to germinate. The seed will have good soil contact, be protected from the sun, and will be less likely to be carried away by birds. For this reason, over-seeding should be done after aeration, in the fall, after the last of the hot summer days. Water your lawn frequently and shallow for the first week to get the seed to germinate. Slowly, week-by-week, increase the depth of your watering as the roots grow. Over-seeding should be accomplished at least 45 days prior to the first frost so that the roots can develop enough to withstand the winter. Using a pre-emergent the following spring will help your new grass establish itself above ground without having to compete with faster growing weed seeds.



The Board would like to find some volunteers to help plan an event for our residents to come together and build bird and bat houses to be put up in the neighborhood's nature areas. Attracting these two types of animals will help naturally control insects in our community including mosquitos, which cause more deaths than any other animal or insect on the planet! Bats alone can consume 6,000-8,000 insects each night. We will need residents that can operate power tools to cut, route, and sand the wood needed to make these homes. We will also need volunteers that can help with assembly. We hope to make this an educational event for our younger residents who will be able to help assemble.

Contact TheBoard@RockSpringsHOA.com if interested.

Architectural Review Process

We continue to have issues with residents not filling out Architectural Review Forms or not filling them out completely with all the required documentation. We understand a big part of this is the system that Paragon uses to record requests. Our plan is to take back the process from Paragon so that we can have a more customized, easy to navigate system. While we work on making this a better, more user friendly process, please continue to use Paragons system and remember to be as thorough as possible in descriptions and **always** submit a plat showing the location of any proposed changes in relation to your residence. Any pool request must also contain a landscaping plan. If available, please submit renderings, pictures or brochures as needed for us to have a clear understanding of the proposal.

Board and Committee Members Still Needed

Another Board member has moved away and had to vacate their spot. We now have 5/7 positions filled. Additionally, we are still looking for help on committees. Please let us know if you are interested in helping out by emailing us at: theboard@rockspringshoa.com