

# St. Charles Hills Subdivision

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Greetings and Salutations from the St. Charles Hills Trustees! For those of you who are new to the subdivision, welcome! We are glad you are here. For those who have lived here for many years, thank you for making this your community of choice.

There are 1,159 homes in our subdivision and only three trustees. As you can imagine, we receive a lot of requests. This past year was particularly challenging as many people were doing home remodeling projects while on lockdown. We humbly ask your forgiveness for the tardiness of our responses. Please know we are doing our best to keep up. The website listed at the top of this newsletter has many resources for homeowners, including our current indentures. You can also send us an email. We are happy to assist with questions you may have.

We recently met with the subdivision attorney and have a fresh draft of indentures for homeowners to review. We would like to update specifications to give homeowners more impunity with their properties. In most cases we have loosened rules to match the St. Charles County ordinances. Please watch your mailboxes for a copy of the draft which will be up for a vote in late Spring. Homeowners, please keep us apprised of your current address if you are not currently living in your property in the subdivision so you receive a ballot to vote.

## **Open Trustee Position**

Saint Charles Hills subdivision is a legal entity run by a small group of trustees. These volunteers not only work with residents to maintain the beauty of the subdivision, they work with our management company to collect dues, pay for electricity, sewer, and any other issues that arise. It is a big job! If you are interested in the position, please contact the trustees by phone or email. Our current indentures have guidelines for voting, and we hope to have a meeting this year to approve candidates.

## **Trash Services**

You have several options for waste removal services in the subdivision. We have contracted rates with two companies. Please feel free to reach out to them directly for the rates listed below and reference "Saint Charles Hills subdivision":

### **Republic Services: 636-947-5959**

- Trash 1x per week (includes cart) \$11.02 per month. Additional cart is \$5 per month.
- Recycling 1x per week (includes cart) \$7.96 per month.
- Yard waste 1x per week is \$9.24 per month (the customer must enroll for 3 consecutive months. (cart available for \$3.00 per month).
- Annual increase of no more than 3%. We are in our 2<sup>nd</sup> year. Monthly charge not to exceed 11.69.
- Two free bulk items picked up at no charge per month. \$11.50 per item thereafter.

### **Grace Hauling: 636-398-8060**

- Trash service 1x per week w/95-gallon cart \$11.00 per month. Additional carts (trash, recycle, YW) \$3.00 per cart
- Recycling 1x per week w/95-gallon cart \$7.75 per month.
- Yard waste 1x per week March-November \$9.00 per month.
- Yard waste 1x per week year-round \$8.00 per month
- Yard waste call-in: \$2.00 per bag/bundle
- Senior discount 60+ \$1.00 per month
- Two bulk items per month at no charge & \$10.00 per additional item.

## **Property Maintenance**

Contrary to popular belief, the trustees don't patrol the neighborhood looking for neighbors who don't maintain curb appeal. St. Charles County makes periodic assessments of properties and sends out notices to comply. We do, however, get a lot of complaints from neighbors who are frustrated by irresponsible behavior. Here are a couple of things to keep in mind about your property:

- Yard Waste: please don't blow leaves in the street or down the storm drains. It causes problems with the utility system. Remember, you own the tree and therefore the leaves. Please don't give them to others.
- Renters: if you rent to others, please check on your property to ensure it is up to code and inform your renters of their obligations to maintain curb appeal. Curb appeal starts with the owner. This includes (but it not limited to) torn screens blowing in the wind, trash carts sitting at curbs for extended periods of time, and noise control. Please utilize background checks and references.
- It is illegal to burn leaves and trash in St. Charles County and in the subdivision. The smoke from these fires are a concern for those with health issues.
- Please don't speed in the subdivision. Many streets do not have sidewalks and we have an abundance of adults and children who walk and ride bicycles throughout. Please keep them safe!
- Please maintain your fence line on both sides. There are many properties that abut common grounds that are unseemly. Please make a positive contribution to the property values of our subdivision.
- Privacy fences are not allowed in the subdivision. We hope the passage of the new indentures will correct this.

### **Common Grounds**

You may have noticed some of our common ground parks got a little makeover. We gave a fresh coat of paint to some of the swing sets (Orton, Fleet and Lyme) and replaced broken parts—making them safer and more fun for children. We also contracted with a company to replace aged storm drain pipes at Ipswich and Lyme Parks. This came at quite an expense to the subdivision; \$60,000! We have more of this type of work to do considering the sinkholes around the common grounds. Please contact us if your property abuts a common ground and you observe erosion or sinkholes that need to be addressed.

We had an incident last year where someone drove an ATV through our common ground park and caused extensive damage to the grounds. These vehicles are not allowed in our common ground parks. If you are caught, we will ask you to repair the damage to the grounds.

Please be responsible for your pets. We ask that you abide by local leash laws and clean up after them.

The trustees continue to be concerned about dumping in our common ground areas. The accumulation of trash and debris is disturbing. Please do not dump waste in our common grounds! If you see someone dumping, please contact the trustees so we can address the situation. This includes yard waste. Since everyone in the subdivision pays to have this trash removed, it would be wise to eliminate this expense. Also, please know this is a prosecutable offense. If you see criminal activity, please contact the St. Charles County Police.

We would like to schedule several park clean-up days this year. Please call or email us to volunteer. A big deterrent to crime would be the focused removal of brush around the creeks. A lot of volunteers will minimize the amount of elbow grease. Let's make our community stronger by bonding together toward a common goal.

### **Neighborhood Watch & Crime**

The Trustees would like to reinstate neighborhood watch meetings. We last conducted meetings in 2019 and are interested in scheduling more in 2021. We understand the pandemic has put a damper on meeting in person, but it has not put a damper on crime. For those who try to stay connected through Nextdoor ([www.nextdoor.com](http://www.nextdoor.com)), we have seen an increase in car break-ins and property poaching. Criminals are looking for anything not nailed down on your property! We work in conjunction with the St. Charles County Police. The trustees strongly believe more focused participation would facilitate a safer neighborhood. We need NW captains for every street and the time commitment is minimal. Please contact us to get on our email distribution list and stay tuned for announcements for upcoming meetings.

### **Delinquent Dues**

The trustees have been actively pursuing homeowners who refuse to pay their subdivision dues. Our management company, in conjunction with our subdivision attorney, helped bring many homeowners current. Please note that St. Charles Hills Subdivision is a legal entity and the very low annual rate of \$50 helps pay for electricity for our streetlights, maintenance for our common grounds, signage, liability insurance and garage sale notices. Please keep in mind that the subdivision trustees are not paid and do not profit from the work they do to serve the community. We do this work

because we care deeply about the people who live in our neighborhood and we seek to improve their lives. \$50 a year is roughly \$4.17 a month and will ensure we are able to maintain our beautiful subdivision.

### **Subdivision Garage Sales & Yard of the Month**

Our subdivision garage sales will take place on May 15<sup>th</sup> and October 9<sup>th</sup>. We will also continue to take nominations for Yard of the Month and winners will have a sign placed in their yard during the months of May through October.

### **Responsible Pet Ownership**

We have received numerous complaints over the past year about barking dogs, loose dogs, and neighbors who do not clean up after their pets. If you have a dog, please clean up their waste weekly so your yard does not become a nuisance to your neighbors. Also, please do not dump pet waste in the common grounds.

### **Vehicles & Trailers**

There are specific rules around derelict vehicles, work trucks, trailers and boats. St. Charles County enforcement conducts periodic assessment of properties in our subdivision and you may receive notice from them to comply with regulations. If you have questions, please see their website: <https://www.sccmo.org/234/Property-Maintenance-Code>.

### **Volunteers needed**

- Welcome Wagon: send a welcome package to new residents
- Chairperson for Yard of the Month
- Web author to monitor/modify the subdivision website
- Neighborhood watch chairperson to work with the trustees to get info out to the captains and create a website

Yours respectfully,

The Trustees of St. Charles Hills

February 6, 2021