



# Habitat Happenings

NW Metro Atlanta Habitat for Humanity

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**Daylight Savings Time ends November 7th. Don't forget to set your clocks back**



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## Neighborhood Watch

A Neighborhood Watch is an organized group of citizens devoted to crime and vandalism prevention within a neighborhood. Many of our Habitat Neighborhoods have Watch Groups established including Hillcrest West and Whispering Glen. Our Beggs Court subdivision is in the process of setting up a Neighborhood Watch program. If you would like to start a watch in your community, begin by contacting your local police department:



Cobb County: (770) 499-4134  
 City of Marietta: (770) 794-5300  
 City of Powder Springs: (770) 943-1616  
 City of Smyrna: (770) 434-9481

Each individual police department can give you the specifics of what your community can do to establish a Neighborhood Watch Program.

In the meantime, you can always help keep your neighborhood safer by reporting any suspicious activity. Some people fail to call the police because they are not aware of what might be suspicious. Some may be hesitant to call because they might seem like a “nosey neighbor” and others may think someone else has already called. Don't worry about bothering the police. Don't worry about being embarrassed if your suspicions prove unfounded. Think instead what could happen if you don't act. Call 9-1-1 to report anything that does not appear right. When you call 9-1-1 try to provide the following information: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?

You can be a great neighbor by reporting anything that seems out of place in your community. If you have any other questions about Neighborhood Watch contact Family Resources at the Habitat Office, (770) 432-7954.

## Home and Yard Maintenance

Did you realize that something as simple as keeping your grass mowed and keeping shrubbery trimmed actually helps the value of your home and your neighborhood? Did you also realize that maintaining your lawn and home are part of the covenants that you signed when you purchased your Habitat Home? Did you know that Cobb County and all the city municipalities also enforce lawn maintenance covenants?

On August 1, 2010 NW Metro Atlanta Habitat began surveying all homes

and neighborhoods to ensure that Habitat, county and city covenants are being followed. A covenant violation will be issued if we find that; your lawn is not mowed and shrubs are severely overgrown, an inoperative vehicle is parked in a driveway, there is exterior porch or yard clutter or if there are clogged gutters or damaged siding. You will have seven days to correct the problem if you receive a violation notice. If no action is taken to resolve the problem your escrow account will be billed \$80 and

NWMAH will take action to correct the violation. Unfortunately, Habitat will report the violation to the county or city if the homeowner is in violation of a county or city covenant.

Be a good homeowner and neighbor by maintaining your home and yard.

*For all the latest news, check out the NWMA Habitat Family Blog at:*  
<http://cobbhabitatfamilies.wordpress.com>

# Halloween Safety

Kids love Halloween! They get to dress up and get free candy! What a perfect holiday! Give your kids some precious Halloween memories that they'll have for life.

Some of your kids already know things that you can do to be safe, like how to cross the street, not to talk to or go with strangers and things like that. But we adults know how exciting Halloween can be and that can make you forget to be careful.

Here are some tips that we have just for you kids, to help keep you safe on Halloween night! Some of these ideas are called "common sense" ideas, that means that they are things that you should know and use every day in life. You are never too young to learn!

- Never, ever go into a strangers house or even ring their door for treats unless your parents are with you and say that it's okay. There are some people in life that aren't very nice to kids and you have to be careful. Always make sure that your mom or dad is within sight when you go out trick-or-treating.
- Be careful when you cross a street. Make sure to look in both directions and make sure that there are no cars coming. If you have a little brother or sister with you, take their hand and help them get across the street, too. If the street has a stop light, wait

until the cross walk light tells you that it's okay to cross now, but still check before you cross, look both ways.

- If you are an older kid or young teen, and going out with friends, make sure that your parents know where you are going and who you are going with. This may seem like a pain but they are your parents and they love you. They just want you to be safe.
- If you can drive and are taking a bunch of friends to a party, make sure that you have enough gas to get there. You don't want to run out on a dark street, all alone, like a bad horror movie!
- If your parents give you a curfew, be home when they say. It builds trust between you and them and they are doing it for your own safety. If you are going to be late, call them and let them know.
- Vandalism is never cool! Throwing eggs at cars and houses is not cool. Someone has to clean it up and it could be you, if you get caught. You can also be arrested and punished as



*Halloween can be more fun if you are careful in what you do.*

a juvenile. So, don't think that it's fun only if you can get away with it. It's never the right thing to do! Think about how you would feel if someone did that to your house and how bad it would make you feel.

- Hurting animals is never acceptable behavior! Some people use Halloween as an excuse to hurt cats and that is just wrong! Not only is it illegal in most places to hurt or torture animals and punishable by law, you should never hurt a helpless living thing.

Have fun on Halloween but keep it safe, have some good, clean fun and your parents will trust you for many Halloweens to come! Showing them how responsible you can be will give you a feeling of pride and make them see just how adult you really are.

The Halloween Safety website © copyright Halloween Online™ 2000 - 2009  
[http://www.halloween-safety.com/halloween\\_safety\\_kids.html](http://www.halloween-safety.com/halloween_safety_kids.html)

*"There are hundreds of languages in the world, but a smile speaks them all"*  
- ANONYMOUS

# Timely Mortgage Payments

Please pay your mortgage on-time. All monthly payments are due on the first day of each month. Payments made in advance are appreciated. However, if the monthly payment is made on or before the close of business on the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month, no late fee will be charged.

Any payment received *after the close of business* on the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month, will be considered delinquent. Delinquent payments are due immediately including a \$20 late fee.

Payments may be made in the form of a personal check or money order. NWMA Habitat does not accept cash. Money

orders will be required if a check is returned by the bank.

If the bank returns a check, a \$25.00 fee will be assessed in addition to the late fee of \$20.00. Homeowners will be notified and payment will be due immediately. If two checks are returned, payment must be made with money order or cashier checks from that point forward.

Homeowners should notify the Habitat finance office if circumstances affect their ability to meet mortgage payments. We will do our best to work with you.

If for some reason you fall behind three months in making your mortgage payments, your account will be referred to the Board of Directors for additional action, up to and including foreclosure and the loss of your home.

For question or concerns regarding your Habitat mortgage payment, contact Bobbie Kight or Bill Alexander in the Habitat office at 770-432-7954.

## Lawn Care Opportunity

Habitat for Humanity of NW Metro Atlanta began working with Arbor-NomicsTurf, Inc., during this build season. All new homeowners have the opportunity to start a lawn care program. We would like to offer the same opportunity to our existing homeowners. Arbor-NomicsTurf, Inc., is a local lawn care company and has been serving the Atlanta area for over 25 years. Their website is [www.arbornomics.com](http://www.arbornomics.com). Brandon Stegall is our contact person at Arbor-Nomics. His contact number is 770-447-6037 ext. 1154 and his email is: [brandon@arbor-nomics.com](mailto:brandon@arbor-nomics.com).

Arbor-Nomics offers three program options, while the basic cost is between

\$35 to \$40 per treatment, they can give you a free quote. The silver programs are for the lawn only and include seven treatments/applications in a calendar year. (Jan/Feb, March/April, May/June, July/Aug, a lime treatment will be in Aug/Sept, Sept/Oct, and Nov/Dec.)



*Get a quote for lawn care from Arbor-Nomics.*

They also offer a number of other treatment options.

If you are interested in getting a quote for service, please contact Brandon Stegall and identify yourself as a Habitat for Humanity homeowner.

## Home Maintenance Reminder

The state of Georgia follows daylight savings time which means we set our clocks back one hour in the fall and forward one hour in the spring. Changing your clocks every year can also serve as a reminder to do some home maintenance.

Your air filters need to be changed at least two times per year. Fresh filters can significantly reduce operating costs and will prolong the life of your heating and air system. Why not make a habit of doing it in the fall and spring when you change your clocks?

It is also a great time to change the

batteries in your smoke detectors. Test your detectors to make sure they are working properly and replace the batteries.

These small maintenance steps can help save you money but could also save your life.



*Don't forget to fall back!*

## Home Safety Tips

Officer Smith of the Marietta police department recommends the following:

- Trim bushes below three feet and keep trees trimmed so no one can hide behind them.
- Light up the four exterior corners of your home.
- Keep doors and windows locked at all times.
- Put your interior lights on timers if you are going to come in late and while you are out of town.
- Let your neighbors know if you will be gone for an extended period so they can watch out for your home.

## Homestead Exemption

Have you ever filed your Homestead Exemption? Most of you have received a copy of your 2010 tax bill. If you look at the bill in the second column of the "county general" section if you have filed for exemption you should see 10,000 in that column. If you don't see the 10,000 you are costing yourself money every year. Anyone who owns a home in Cobb County can file for homestead exemption. To apply you need to complete the exemption forms and include a copy of your limited warranty

deed and current registration or receipt of motor vehicle taxes paid in Cobb County. Homeowners can apply for most exemptions by mail, or in person at 736 Whitlock Avenue, Suite 100, Marietta, GA. The mailing address for the Cobb County Tax office is: P O Box 649, Marietta, GA 30061-0649. Applications can also be completed at the East and South Cobb Government Service Centers located at 4400 Lower Roswell Road and 4700 Austell Road. If you are not a United States citizen you must pro-

vide legal documentation from the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service in order to apply. To obtain forms or for more information on the homestead exemption visit Cobb County's website at: <http://www.cobbtax.org/forms/htmlframe.aspx?mode=content/exemptions.htm&LMparent=189>.

You may also contact Joyia Hull in Family Resources at 770-432-7954.

## Code Enforcement

Cobb County and its surrounding city municipalities have various code enforcements that the residents of the county and city must follow. Some of these include lawn maintenance, junk cars, home businesses, door-to-door solicitations, home upkeep, storage units, temporary signs and yard sales.

If you feel that someone is in violation of a County or City Code in your neighborhood or if you have questions to ensure that you are following the codes for your area, contact the following code enforcement offices:

Cobb County: (770) 528-2180

City of Marietta: (770) 794-5439

City of Powder Springs: (770) 943-8001 ext. 359

City of Smyrna: (770) 319-5387

These agencies are set up for your benefit and for the benefit of keeping Cobb County and the surrounding municipalities beautiful.

## Be Smart Do A Home Survey

Help prevent yourself from becoming another crime statistic by conducting a home identification/survey program.

Items needed:

- Camera
- Video recorder
- Permanent marker
- Engraver (if available)
- Paper for inventory

The steps include:

- Take pictures of your most valuable possessions
- Walk through your home with a video recorder recording furniture and possessions in each room
- Mark items that can be easily removed from your home with an electric engraver or permanent marker (TVs, DVD players, VCRs etc.)
- Inventory serial numbers to all items annually. If there is not a number

*available make an engraving or permanent mark on the item with a symbol or initials*

- Store all serial numbers and photographs in a fire safe or bank safe deposit box
- If you own a firearm, PLEASE record serial numbers and all identifying traits

*By performing this simple survey you can help yourself in the event of a burglary or if a fire, flood or other disaster occurred in your home.*

### **IF YOU ARE BURGLARIZED:**

- Do not enter your house, go to a neighbor's and call the police.
- Do not touch anything or move anything around. Give the police a chance to gather evidence.
- Try to determine what was taken to assist police in their investigation.

Never leave doors and windows open, even if you are only planning to be gone for a short time.

## NIXLE



## PENS

Check out what crime is happening in your area.

The **P**olice **E**mail **N**otification **S**ystem is maintained by Cobb Police to enhance communication between our five police precincts and the communities they serve.

The objective of the program is the establishment of e-mail contact with official representatives of Cobb's homeowners associations (HOA's) and business leaders on matters of safety and security.

- Public Information Releases as they pertain to each precinct
- BOLO (Be On Look Out) information
- Crime Updates
- Information on Crime Trends and Crime Prevention
- Rumor Control
- Observed suspicious persons or activity information
- Questions on Safety, Security and Crime Prevention
- To establish geographical location of the HOA's and businesses for dissemination of crime information specific to their area.
- To establish regular meetings between Precincts and PENS representatives to discuss this project, crime prevention and crime trends.
- To promote and coordinate this project with the **CCPD Neighborhood Watch Program**.

Go on-line to:

<http://police.cobbcountyga.gov/pens/>

Locate your precinct and then sign up to receive emails about crime trends in your area.