

Sierra los Piños

Property Owners' Association
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April 2012
NEWS IN BRIEF

CURBSIDE CHIPPING - MAY 14TH – FIRE STATION SLASH PIT CLOSED

In an effort to help property owners prepare for the upcoming fire season, the Greater Eastern Jemez Wildland Urban Interface Corp (your local FireWise Community organization) is arranging for curb side chipping of your slash in your neighborhood. A chipping crew will be in Sierra los Piños on May 14th.

How you can participate

Contact Sandy Partridge, 829-3094 or mtnpartridge@msn.com, our local contact for GEJWUIC and register. She will take your contact information and explain the process, or you can find the form (Curb Side Chipping - 2012) on line at SLPPOA.org. Please fill in the form and send it in with your payment to GEJWUIC, P.O. Box 677, Los Alamos, NM 87544. The cost to chip is \$35.00/pile estimated on being able to chip roughly a 5 ft. x 5 ft. pile as viewed from its front profile area in 15 minutes. If your pile is excessively large (double the size), tangled, or contains material that has to be sorted out and takes in excess of 15 minutes/pile to chip – we will contact you and ask for additional funds to offset the costs.

Cut and Pile your Slash

Once registered and between now and May 14th, neatly pile slash at the edge of the road. All cut ends should be less than 5 inches in diameter pointed toward the road, for efficient loading of the chipper. Do Not Block the Roads – try to choose a location on your property that is easy to access from the road. Please, no loose pine needle piles (they contain rocks, don't chip & mat up in the machine), no construction waste (it contains nails and screws which will damage the chipper and injure operators), and minimize vine type plants such as willow, rose bush wood or New Mexican locus (they bind up in the chipper). Your green waste slash will be chipped and broadcast or piled. Then, please give us feedback and let us know whether we should make this an annual event or do it more often within the year.

WE'RE LOOKING FOR MEMBER INPUT

With so much that needs to be accomplished, the Board has decided to start having two meetings a month. We will continue with our regularly scheduled Board meeting the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7:15 p.m. where we will go through the full officer and committee reports. We have added a strategic planning meeting to be held the 4th Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. Member participation is strongly encouraged. This meeting will focus on project planning and path forward. At the first strategic planning meeting we will discuss meter installation project planning. You are encouraged to attend these meetings and bring your ideas and help with the planning.

WATER SYSTEM PATH FORWARD

As most of you may know, we had several leaks to track down this winter. One leak on System 2 was on private residence and water was turned off. Another leak on System 2 required digging about six test holes, only to find an elusive leak yet to be located. After two days, another leak surfaced in a different location on System 2 and was repaired. The last, and by far the most difficult and costly leak on System 1 took 16 days before it finally surfaced. (You'll find a detailed daily log attached to the February minutes.) The majority of the resources used to locate and repair these leaks have been by the relentless diligence of volunteers. We paid for our water operator, backhoe work, the electric co-op, and electric line location with costs totaling \$2,822.37. We had volunteers who were searching for this leak every day (except one) for over two weeks, in the cold and during snow storms. The tank meter-loop was used to isolate the leak to the Unit 3 section fairly quickly. It was also beneficial to use the electronic pressure data logger and acoustic leak listening device in helping to diagnose the leaks. All the tools and techniques SLP owns

were used for locating this leak. One of the volunteers reported to the Board that “if we had radio-read meters, this would have been located in one day.” As a result, the Board has voted to start installing meters assemblies, as operating funds permit. The meter assemblies will be installed in the road easement where water lines connect to each property. These assemblies will be owned and maintained by the Association and will be used as a tool to identify leaks. We will start with properties that do not have shut-off valves or that have defective shut-off valves, as these properties present the most problems for the Association. If a leak occurred on these properties most likely a large section would be isolated and water turned off until a shut-off valve could be installed, which means several days without water for more than one household. Starting this month, the water operator and other Board members will work to identify properties that do not have water shut-off valves, starting with System 1, Unit 1. In the meantime, the Board is researching meter-assembly cost and installation.

Are You Willing to Pay for your Meter Assembly Up Front?

The Board has limited funds to begin the meter assembly project. Many Board members have indicated a willingness to pay up front for their meter assembly and installation. Any Association member who would like a meter assembly installed and is willing to pay up front is encouraged. We are working out the details to reimburse anyone who pays out-of pocket for their assembly. This reimbursement would most likely be over a period of a few years due to budget constraints.

LEGAL INTERPRETATION OF THE BYLAWS REGARDING ANNUAL DUES PAYMENT

Almost every year, the Board struggles with the interpretation of the bylaws and when to start charging interest on past due accounts. We asked for legal interpretation from our attorney, Mr. Hays, of Article X, Section 8 *Effect of Nonpayment of Assessments: Remedies of the Association* which reads “Any assessment not paid with thirty (30) days after the due date shall bear interest at 1.5% per month (18% per annum) with a minimum interest charge of \$5.00 per month being charged to accounts considered to be “past due.” Assessments shall be considered “past due” three (3) months from the original due date.” Assessments are due January 1st of each year and are considered late on the 31st day. Payments are considered “past due” if not paid by March 31st. If dues are not paid in full by March 31st, interest will be charged beginning April 1st retroactive to January at a rate of 1.5% per month. We understand that this may create a hardship for some, but our bylaws do not allow a provision for payment plans. If you must pay your dues in payments, please understand that we must adhere to the bylaws as written and charge the required interest.

CALLING ALL CAMERAS!!

Members, do you have a great photo or something related to life in the Jemez or here in SLP? We want to see it! Each month, we'd like to feature a “photo of the month” on our web page or in the newsletter, with credit given to you, the photographer of course. Wildlife, seasons, weather, skies, scenery - or even family or pets – these are all welcome subjects. E-mail your submissions to board@slppoa.org by the end of the month, for possible inclusion in the next newsletter and/or web page. C'mon – we want to see your great shots!

ARE YOU LEAVING YOUR HOME FOR SEVERAL DAYS OR MONTHS? PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR WATER!

Even though it is not winter, leaks can still surface. Every year there are water leaks found in homes that have left the water on. Even in the warmer months, leaving your water on can be problematic. There have been several homes with extensive water damage because they didn't turn the water off to their property. Please don't let that happen to your home. If you are unsure about turning off your water, please contact a board member or send an e-mail to water@slppoa.org.