

Old Chatham Cluster Association (OCCA)

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MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Updated October 28, 2019

The Board of Directors of OCCA has updated and expanded the Member Responsibilities document which applies to all members of the cluster association (i.e. property owners) as well as residents, renters, guests and visitors.

This document contains information on the following topics as a general point of reference for policies and procedures applicable to all members of our Cluster.

1. Animals/Pets
2. Home Maintenance and Sales – Old Chatham
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Old Chatham Cluster Association

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The common property within Old Chatham Cluster is owned collectively by all of the Old Chatham homeowners (members) in the Cluster Association. The property exists primarily for the use and benefit of the members and their guests. The Cluster Association is responsible for the maintenance and repair of the common property.

Use of the street, sidewalks, path, traffic islands and other common property for recreation, while not prohibited, is accepted entirely at the risk of the individual members and/or their guests. Should the common property be used for recreation, any equipment and/or playthings should be removed when the activity is completed.

The physical condition and overall appearance of the Old Chatham community are of the utmost importance in maintaining consistently high property values for homes within the cluster. In order to promote the most attractive aspects of the neighborhood, each homeowner is responsible for following and abiding by the Member Responsibilities as part of their ownership obligations of membership in the Old Chatham Cluster Association. The Board of Directors in turn has accepted the same obligations for managing the common property within the cluster.

1. Animals/Pets

- All Members are expected to clean up after their dogs/pets anywhere within the cluster.
- Fairfax County has a leash, curb and pick-up after your dog law. Dog bags (“Mutt Mitts”) are provided on Reston Association (RA’s) pathways. Dog walkers are reminded that picking up after their dogs should be done year- round and the trash disposed of in their own resident containers or in the waste receptacles provided by RA.
- Lamplighter is a popular street for dog walkers and with the placement of Private Property signs at the entrance and on the RA path, we hope to minimize traffic. Residents of Lamplighter should always feel responsible to politely ask any dog walker to pick up after their dog.
- Residents are requested to use the RA area in the woods or cluster common areas when walking or letting their dogs/pets out. Out of respect to all, residents’ yards are not considered common areas of use for this purpose.

2. Home Maintenance and Sales

Old Chatham is one of the loveliest neighborhoods in Reston and the OCCA guidelines are meant to maintain that status.

- Members are expected to proactively maintain the exterior appearance of their homes, including paint, siding, trim, roofs, fences, decks, lamp posts, lanterns and mailboxes. Necessary painting and repairs should be made in a timely manner.

- Members/Residents are not permitted to store any of the following in front, rear or side yards including in driveways: paint cans, lumber, wood, screens, doors, windows, yard tools, equipment, garbage cans, recycle bins or any other receptacles.
- Window treatments that are inside the home (including garage areas) and visible to the outside must be in good condition and should be secure, hung level and straight. i.e. no broken slats, rips/tears, holes, etc.

The Board will appropriately notify members if it believes that repairs or maintenance are required.

Home Sales: If you are selling your home, you are required to provide the new owners with a set of Disclosure Documents that contain information about the association, including current financials.

Disclosure Documents should be requested from the OCCA Secretary, (email address) who will coordinate their preparation and issuance. The cost to obtain these documents is \$200, paid by the seller directly to OCCA. The OCCA Secretary will provide contact information when the document process starts.

3. Old Chatham Cluster Standards

The Board of OCCA maintains the Cluster Standards in accordance with the Reston Association (RA) Guidelines and each homeowner receives a copy. These standards govern the look, feel and use for our neighborhood. This includes paint colors, lamp fixtures, lampposts, fences, driveways, and much more.

Prior to a home sale, the RA will visit each property and determine if the home has been maintained according to RA and OCCA standards. If the RA identifies something that is not in compliance, they will advise the homeowner and require that the item/issue be corrected prior to closing at the expense of the selling homeowner.

Especially for new members of OCCA, it is critical to review the standards before undertaking any and all major – or what may seem minor – exterior work.

Certain exterior work requires homeowners obtain approval from adjacent neighbors as well as a member of the Board of Directors prior to undertaking work and certain requests require advance approval by the Reston Association’s Design Review Board. Board members are always available to assist homeowners if there are questions about OCCA or Reston Association standards.

4. Home Maintenance – Reston Association

Beyond OCCA guidelines, Reston Association has clear covenants governing property use and maintenance, primarily seeking to preserve the architectural integrity of the entire community. Ultimately, the aim is to ensure properties are kept in good repair, acceptable in appearance and substantially similar to their original condition. The Covenants require that all property, and any improvement or alteration, be kept in good condition so that it does not have a detrimental or adverse effect on other properties in the community.

These considerations become even more important as Reston properties age and require more frequent maintenance. The Use and Maintenance Covenants provide both a reminder of property owners’ responsibilities and a process through which the community can protect its physical wellbeing. This is the link on the Reston Association website that details Reston guidelines and requirements.

<https://www.reston.org/PropertyOwnerResources/PropertyUseMaintenance/Default.aspx?qenc=HzT9ACzZbNs%3d&fqenc=jcr%2bk4Bi8oRQjGI%2b5ckFJw%3d%3d>

OCCA residents should be aware that there are consequences if a property does not comply with Reston's Use and Maintenance Covenants:

- Violations will be reported in Disclosure Documents related to the sale of the property
- If the violation is not corrected, a Notice of Claimed Violation of Use of Property Covenants can be filed in the Fairfax County Land records
- In addition, violations can be referred to the Legal Committee of the RA for further action that could result in legal action against the property owner.

5. Individual Yards and Common Area Maintenance

One of the reasons Lamplighter Way is considered a lovely neighborhood is because of the landscaping, yards and general up keep of many of our homes.

- Members are expected to maintain their lawns to a standard consistent with the rest of the community. Regular mowing to the lip of the street curb, edging, trimming along sidewalks, driveways, flower beds, and house, and periodic surface treatment/fertilizer and treatment for weeds and crabgrass are basic obligations. Mowing during the growing season must be done weekly.
- Members are expected to maintain their landscaping on a regular basis and to periodically prune/trim trees, bushes and shrubs and to weed and mulch all beds regularly as needed. Dead vegetation should be removed immediately.
- Members are expected to retrieve newspapers, mail, packages, flyers and similar items from their lawns, driveways, mailboxes and front doorways at least once a day. On occasions when a home is to be unoccupied for multiple days, members are expected to make arrangements with friends and/or neighbors to collect these items in the homeowner's absence.
- OCCA contracts with a landscaping company (currently Happy Trails) on an annual basis to maintain the common areas – the three islands, the area at the top of the street near the Old Chatham sign, the grassy area on the left as you enter the street, and the area at the bottom of the street surrounding the path into the RA property and the woods.

6. Neighborhood Watch and Security

This is our neighborhood and we each have a responsibility to contribute to its safety and well being. You should never question whether to report something that does not look right.

Old Chatham's Neighborhood Watch Coordinator is George Shaffer at 1245 Lamplighter. Neighborhood Watch signs are posted at the top of the street and at the entrance from the RA trail at the bottom of the street, indicating our participation in this program. *Members are strongly urged to contact the Fairfax County Police Department non-emergency number 703-691-2131 if you see any unusual or suspicious activity, and you should never hesitate to call.*

Fairfax County Police
Non-emergency number
703-691-2131

If you do make a report to the police, please contact a board member to communicate the incident and the board will determine further communication to the members. Also, you may post on the OCCA website to inform other residents of any issues.

Lighting on Lamplighter Way

Since there are no street lights on our street, it is up to individual homeowners to provide lighting for safety and security by keeping their lampposts and lanterns turned on.

Automatic light sensors can be purchased inexpensively to ensure that lampposts, garage and front door lights are turned on when it is dark outside. Porch lights should be kept on during evening hours for security and members are encouraged to provide sufficient lighting on the rear of their homes, using sensors and/or motion detectors.

All members are requested to keep individual lamppost lights and garage lanterns on all night, every night.

Street Parking

Fire lanes (yellow painted curbs) along Lamplighter Way have been identified by the county fire marshal and are posted and painted on the curbs. Parking in a posted fire lane is prohibited by law. Cars parked in these areas may be ticketed without notice by Fairfax County Police.

Especially in the narrow islands, please do not park or have your visitors park in the yellow lanes or you may be ticketed and/or towed at owner's expense.

Speed Limit

Vehicular traffic on Lamplighter Way is expected to observe a maximum speed limit of 15 mph.

If you see someone driving too fast, you should not hesitate to give them a signal to slow down (lowering hands in a repeated motion). This includes UPS, FEDEX, pizza deliveries and/or visitors.

Cars and Garage Doors

Members are reminded to lock cars that are parked on the street or in driveways and to not leave valuables in cars. The police say most thefts happen when cars are not locked – thieves are less likely to break in: they will look for cars that are unlocked.

Garage doors should be kept closed/locked for security and safety and it is strongly suggested that the door between the garage and the house should be kept locked.

Extra caution: Please be aware if you keep a garage door opener in your car, and your car is burglarized, access can be gained to your home.

7. Trash, Recycling, Yard Debris Pickup

Your annual homeowner assessment includes pickup of trash, recycling and yard debris and OCCA has negotiated a very competitive contract with Republic Services, **703-818-8222**.

- Trash is picked up every Monday and Thursday.
- Recycling is picked up every Monday.
- Yard debris is picked up Wednesday starting in the early spring through late fall. The schedule for holiday pickups of Christmas trees will be published each year.
- Special pickup of furniture and oversized household items can be scheduled by calling Republic and **members are expected to set trash containers, refuse and yard debris at the curb no earlier than 4:00 p.m. the afternoon before scheduled collection.**

Trash should be placed by the curb after 4:00 p.m. the night before scheduled pickups.

Members are requested not to place trash out earlier.

Once emptied, trash containers are expected to be removed from the curb by the end of the collection day and stored completely out of sight from the street.

Trash containers should not be kept in driveways or yards after trash has been collected. They should be placed inside the garage or in a place that is not visible from the street.

8. Snow Removal

Currently, OCCA uses Hemax Construction Services & Landscaping to clear snow on Lamplighter Way. Snow plowing will occur following a 2" accumulation of snow and/or as approved by the Board of Directors. Our service also includes pre-treatment of the street before anticipated storms. OCCA is responsible for clearing the path at the bottom of the street to the RA paths.

Individual Homeowners are responsible for clearing their own driveways and in front of their mailbox for access/delivery. Homeowners who have sidewalks in front of their homes are also responsible for clearing the sidewalks following a snowfall.

9. OCCA Administration

OCCA is a non-profit corporation registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia. It is managed by a group of volunteers who serve on the Board and on committees. The Board of Directors is elected annually and serves for staggered three-year terms. Officers are elected by the Board of Directors for one-year terms at the Annual Meeting. Board meetings are generally held quarterly and the annual meeting is held in December. Announcements and updates are sent out periodically via email (through website registration) and specific communications are sent out as needed. If a special meeting is needed, members are notified in advance.

OCCA has a website which can be accessed at: <https://www.occareston.com/> All members are required to register on this site as this will be the primary vehicle for the OCCA Board to communicate with all members. The website references all pertinent documents, contact information and community announcements.

The following standing committees exist: Finance and Architectural Review, in addition there is a Neighborhood Watch Coordinator.

OCCA complies with all reporting and governance requirements. A complaint procedure, required by the Virginia Property Owner's Association Act, was adopted in 2012 and is available on request from the board.

OCCA invoices members twice a year for the annual assessment (50% payments due in March and September). The assessment is determined by the annual budget and future projections. Payments are due on March 15 and September 15 with late fees applied if received after the due dates. Invoices are typically sent out a month in advance.

Please send all inquiries and questions to boardofdirectors@occareston.com