

SKY MOUNTAIN HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION Spring Newsletter 2022

Spring Cleanup

Spring is here! We encourage homeowners to do a “walk around” of your property to inspect for damaged branches and other needed maintenance. Please remember that neighbors look at the side and back yards of your homes, as well as the front. It is helpful to get a neighbor’s perspective in deciding what to clean up and spruce up. Hedges and mature plantings need pruning and trimming on at least an annual, and sometimes semi-annual basis. Remember that our CCR’s require that “The owner or occupant of each residential site shall maintain their hedges, plants, shrubs, trees and lawns in a neat and trim condition at all times.” Keeping our neighborhood looking neat and tidy keeps our property values high and benefits us all.

Spring Cleanup Debris Pickup Day May 23

Mark your calendars for our Annual Debris cleanup. Please use this as an opportunity to do major pruning of trees, shrubs and overgrown plants that might be impacting your neighbor’s views. Branches and cuttings cannot exceed 6-inches diameter, or approximately 12-14 inches circumference. No root balls are allowed. Place your larger branches at the curb (but not on the sidewalk) the evening before pick-up day.

Weeds are Unattractive and Spread

Weeds on sidewalks, curbs and beds look bad, and their seeds spread to other homes. Weeds can easily be controlled with a quick spray of undiluted white vinegar, sprayed on a dry, sunny day. Results are seen overnight! You can use a pump sprayer or a household spray bottle. Vinegar is inexpensive (try Costco!) and completely safe for the environment. Our Covenants state that all homeowners maintain their landscaping, which includes regular weeding.

Summer Is Home Maintenance and Project Season

Major home projects require approval from the Architectural Control Committee. If you are planning on a fence, a new roof, a new exterior paint color or front landscaping you must submit your plans to the ACC. Contact information for the Sky Mountain ACC can be found on our website at <https://skymtn.net/>.

Cracked Sidewalk?

If you have cracked sidewalks that appear to cause a risk to walkers, you can report this to the city of Bellevue at (425) 452-7840. They will temporarily patch the area, and overtime replace the concrete section.

Ants Anyone?

Several members on the Board have reported a problem with ants in the house. So we assume there might be others with the same problem. This article can provide some helpful information on how to deal with ants. It is best to use a solution that will ultimately wipe out the ant colony, and this solution favors gel baits. One member on the board has had really good luck with Terro liquid ant bait stations. Sprays with odors that ants don't like can help keep them away. Consider peppermint, eucalyptus, vinegar, etc. <https://ants.com/11-tiny-ants-you-can-find-in-your-house/> More info... <https://www.thespruce.com/how-to-get-rid-of-ants-2656468> . You can find lots of additional information online.

More on Rats

Our last newsletter mentioned the problem with bird feeders attracting rats and bears. Rats also feed on fruit fallen from trees. If you have fruit trees in your yard, please regularly pick up dropped fruit, as this provides a lush feeding ground for rats.

And BATS!

As our neighborhood has matured, we have all seen an increase in wildlife near our homes. Bats are very common in the Northwest, and several homeowners have reported having bats in their home and crawl space. While bats are good for the environment, it is not safe to have them in our homes, as they carry diseases, including rabies. Most often, the bat came in through an open door, but if you find more than one bat, this suggests a bigger problem that may require help from a critter control service. If you have a bat(s) in your home, please follow these guidelines from King County Health Department.

<https://kingcounty.gov/depts/health/communicable-diseases/health-care-providers/rabies-assessment/bats.aspx>

City of Bellevue Sidewalk Ordinance

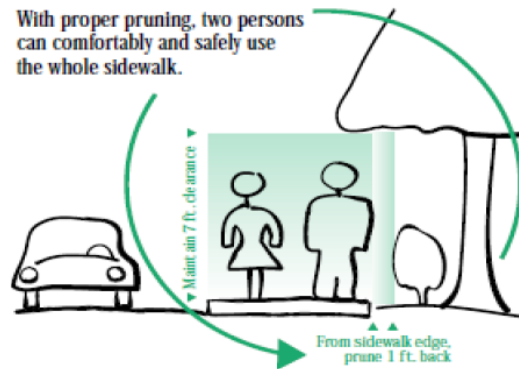
Bellevue requires that sidewalks remain free from trash cans, parked cars and overhanging vegetation. **Plants should not protrude into the sidewalk at all.** And trees hanging over sidewalks need to be trimmed at least 7 feet above the sidewalk. **People should not have to duck to walk under a tree** that overhangs the sidewalk. Below is a flyer that helps illustrate the city's policy. Please inspect your property for any vegetation that affect's sidewalk safety. Also, please be sure that your sidewalks are clear of other debris. Fallen tree needles, leaves and other debris create a slippery sidewalk and can cause someone to fall and injure themselves.

City of Bellevue Sidewalk Ordinance:

Sidewalks are to be free from weeds and grass, protruding shrubs and trees and other debris, as their presence limits the use of the sidewalk, and the hazards can cause people to injure themselves.

City ordinance requires vertical vegetation be trimmed back at least 7 feet above ground. Shrubs and other lower vegetation should be pruned back 1 foot from the sidewalk edge.

The diagram below illustrates the required 7 foot minimum vertical clearance and 1 foot side clearance.



Thank you for your cooperation!

The following picture is an example of an “overhanging” shrub that needs to be trimmed. Please walk the sidewalks in front of and/or beside your homes to make sure that you are in compliance. Let’s keep our neighborhood safe.

