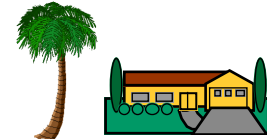




# Cypress Isles News



The official newsletter of the Cypress Isles Homeowners Association

**February 2016 Edition – Published Quarterly since 2001**

<http://www.CypressIsles.org>



*HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY*



## Welcome to Cypress Isles!



*Go over and say, "Hi!"*

Welcome to our new neighbors at  
719 Divine Circle

If we've missed anyone else who recently moved in, please let us know so we can mention you in our next newsletter.

*Sandy Horazak, Editor*

**Groundhog  
Day**



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## Protecting Your Home

*Spoiler alert: This is who is responsible for your safety and security:*

1. You
2. The Orange County Sheriff's Office (OCSO)

*Cookie Symons and Sandy Horazak, Neighborhood Watch Coordinators*

We are all angry and frustrated about the recent burglaries and wish someone would do something to stop them. The reality, however, is that individual homeowners' actions are the best defenses against property crime.

### **Homeowners Prevent Crime Best**

Retired NJ police chief Harold Engold offers the following advice: Criminals need desire, ability, and opportunity in order to operate. Homeowners can't do much about the first two, but they can reduce or eliminate opportunities by following crime-prevention practices, such as these:

- Use outdoor lighting to deter criminals.
- Know your next door neighbors on each side and across the street, and know your Block Captains
- Trim shrubs away from windows to deny burglars a hiding place.
- Close and lock garage doors and doors between garage and home.
- Lock your vehicle if left outside, and do not leave anything of value, such as a wallet or a garage door opener, in the vehicle. In Waterford Place a thief broke into a locked car in the driveway, used the garage door opener in the car to get into the garage, walked into the house through the unlocked door in the garage, took keys from the counter, and stole the new car from the garage. Don't be that homeowner.

The Orange County Sheriff's Office offers free security checks for homeowners, and they are willing to discuss safety and crime prevention at neighborhood board meetings. If interested, contact Harold Engold @ LTHEJHPD@aol.com or 407-491-5233

### **Protection in Layers**

Our homes are equipped with various types of security systems that can be activated and monitored. We want to stress the importance of a monitored alarm system WITH GLASS BREAK DETECTORS! A thief can break and remove glass from a window and then enter the home without disturbing the window frame or its alarm sensors. The lack of glass break detectors seems to be a weak point in all our homes here in Cypress Isles and the person breaking in knows this. Setting your alarm system without this next layer of protection will leave you vulnerable to this method of burglary.

Camera systems are a great next layer of protection. You do not have to go overboard; a system with four night vision cameras and a DVR that records continuously for 31 days can be purchased for about \$300. Stores such as Best Buy, Amazon, Home Depot and Lowe's all have nice selections. Some of these systems have smartphone capability so you can connect your Wi-Fi, download the app and monitor your cameras from your phone anytime anywhere. It will also send you alerts when motion is detected. Place the cameras either outside or inside your home. Do your homework and get what works best for you!

We can't stress enough the more layers you have the less likely you are to be burglarized! If you have any questions you can also contact your alarm company about glass break detectors and camera monitoring.

And now back to that spoiler alert of who is responsible for your safety and security... it's not your HOA; it's you.

## **Gating Cypress Isles? Don't Fence Me In!**

*Converting Cypress Isles into a gated community would be very difficult, expensive, and unrewarding*

*Dennis Horazak, Research Nerd*

In the wake of recent burglaries one homeowner thinks individuals should not have to take on the burden of protecting personal belongs, but that the solution lies with gating the community; and believes that the board should review the budget and make this a top priority.

If only it were as simple as the board reviewing our modest budget, which is a tiny fraction of the amount of funds it would take to gate Cypress Isles. More about that later in this article.

Perhaps others feel the same way, so hopefully this article will answer any burning questions y'all might have.

### ***Gating doesn't prevent most crimes***

Gated communities seem to provide a feeling of increased security by separating "us" from "them." However, data collected over two decades indicate that they do not perform as advertised.

Security expert Jordan Frankel (2016) writes about gated neighborhoods, "whether or not they are safer than properties without fencing continues to be debated." But much of the debate seems to be between developers selling the concept and researchers checking the results. For example, in their study "Putting up the Gates" (1997), Blakely and Snyder "found no firm evidence of any general permanent reductions of crime in fully gated communities or in the barricaded streets of the Security Zone."

Gating a community does not guarantee a crime-free neighborhood and gives a false sense of security. The bad guys will figure out how to get around the barriers and enter a gated community. An article in the *Wall Street Journal* (Fletcher, 2013) concluded "numerous studies over the years have shown that security in gated communities is more a matter of perception than reality." The WSJ survey found that rates of burglaries and stolen cars were the same in gated and un-gated communities.

*"... in 2005, the Orlando Sentinel looked at sheriff's reports over a four-year period on 1,400 Florida homes in both gated and ungated communities that were similar in price and location. The newspaper found nearly identical rates of burglaries and stolen cars in each. Only minor crimes, such as smash-and-grab thefts and vandalism, were lower in gated communities. Speeding was less of a problem, too, since cars had to slow at the entrances.*

*"The gates weren't much of a deterrent because they were often easy to get around or were left unlocked; and burglaries and thefts occurred even in communities where gates were manned. In some cases, access codes were widely known because residents regularly gave them to guests and workers who cut lawns, killed pests, walked dogs, cleaned houses and delivered pizza. Similarly, an analysis of national crime statistics done last year by University*

*of Florida criminology student Nicholas Branich (2012) found that living in a gated community does not significantly influence a person's likelihood of victimization."*

### ***Retro-gating is legally difficult***

Converting an open neighborhood into a gated neighborhood requires a challenging legal process. Richard Spears (2000) noted that gating an existing community requires either a 100-percent affirmative vote by the neighborhood or by "applying to the local jurisdiction for the creation of a Property Owners Safe Neighborhood Improvement District and getting subsequent approval from Florida's attorney general for an overall security plan, which would include certain "modifications of the right-of-way" that presumably could be construed to mean gates."

Both of these processes are formidable:

*"[Former] Attorney General Bob Butterworth... required that all such plans must contain actual, verifiable statistics quantifying a high and increasing rate of criminal activity in the applicant neighborhood," but in recent years "it has become even more difficult to establish the required proof of danger to residents in view of statistics showing a reduction in crime throughout the nation.*

*"At the same time, the possibility of achieving a 100 percent agreement to buy back the streets became a formidable objective. Surveys of residents in some communities resulted in returns of favorable reactions to the prospect of 3 to 1 or higher, but nowhere near 100 percent."*

In the case of Cypress Isles, gating is not an option. Orange County nixed that idea back in 2007 when gating was a topic addressed by the Traffic Control Committee trying to slow down speeders and eliminate the cut-through traffic. Orange County considers Cypress Isles to be a connecting neighborhood that provides access streets to other neighborhoods.

Also, getting 100% of our residents to agree to buy the streets and maintain them in perpetuity has approximately 0% of happening.

### ***Gating is very expensive***

Even if gating were an option, it would be cost-prohibitive and a logistic nightmare to retrofit. There are four entrances -- Spring Island Way (front), Lakes Way, Crystal River Drive, and Spring Island Way (rear). Gated entrances need extra space for lines of cars to wait before going through the gates -- especially during rush hours. Setting up vehicle buffer space at all four entrances would require significant alterations to the 8 or 12 homeowner properties at those entrances -- alterations that the current owners would likely resist with expensive litigation. Buying those 8-12 properties outright would cost about \$300,000 apiece or \$2.4-3.6 million -- a special assessment of \$17,000 to \$25,000 per homeowner! This does not include the costs of the gates themselves or the cost of more than two miles of 8-foot walls to protect the rest of Cypress Isles from access through the woods, estimated to cost about \$2 million or about \$15,000 per homeowner. For comparison, the current Cypress Isles annual budget is \$28,840, or \$206 per homeowner per year.

### ***Other Problems with Gating***

The concerns listed below can be added to the major issues described above.

- Homeowners pay to maintain the roads.
- Homeowners pay to maintain gate hardware and software.

- Homeowners pay for trash collection.
- The end of recycle collection. Thatcher's Landing and The Crest each explored this option and concluded that it was prohibitively expensive, so neither neighborhood recycles.
- Inconvenience to residents, especially during rush hours. You think it's tough getting in and out of Cypress Isles now? Imagine the back-up of cars waiting for a gate to open to allow entrance from Lake Underhill to get in, and on Spring Island Way to get out!
- Inconvenience to visitors.
- No real protection against tailgating, the practice of following an authorized resident vehicle through the open gates before it closes. McGoey (2015) notes that "tailgating is common practice at all gated communities and the cause of some of the damage to the gate systems. Tailgating is most common during rush hours."
- If there are security guards, homeowners pay their salaries. Gated communities are considered private property, so police answer calls but do not patrol.
- Risk of cyber-penetration. An Internet article called "Hacking into Gated Communities" by Murder Mouse <http://www.scribd.com/doc/3323089/Hacking-into-Gated-Communities> gives detailed instructions for defeating various electronic (keypad) gate systems including Door King, AAS, AeGIS, Elite, Linear, and Multicode.
- Increased legal exposure. City-Data.com (2016) mentions another risk to members of a gated community. "Your HOA, and ultimately you as a member of the HOA, are liable for any injuries and deaths on those streets. The big pockets of the city coffers will not be available to pay for the injury. Further, if some creative lawyer can attach some quality of the roadway to the injury or death of his client, big \$\$\$ come to mind. Your HOA insurance policy, and ultimately you, will be paying for the deferred maintenance that created the pothole in the street."

In summary, gating a community has few advantages and many disadvantages, and converting an existing neighborhood to a gated neighborhood has additional legal obstacles, so gating is not a good idea for Cypress Isles.

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## **So How Are Those New Trash Cans Working Out?**

*Two suggestions: (1) be patient; (2) follow directions.*

*Dennis Horazak, Waste & Recycle Correspondent*

It's been three months since the County gave everyone those 95-gallon waste bins, and the reviews have been mixed.

1. "The spatial requirements of the new refuse containers were a fun puzzle to solve. I modeled my garage layout on Excel® and was able to optimize a new arrangement to accommodate everything" -- Sheldon
2. These [censored] cans are a [redacted] pain in the [deleted] and a [really deleted]!! Orange County can just [censored activity] and the trucks they came in on!" -- Name withheld by request
3. "Cans? What cans?" - Gomer

Collection truck drivers and residents are apparently still in the "shake-out" period when the new larger-than-life cans are warily placed near the curb where they are harvested by trucks that attack them like mechanical insects from a sci-fi B-movie. (But at least they are collecting in Cypress Isles, a welcome contrast to the forgotten mounds of refuse piling up in the less fortunate neighborhoods shown on TV.)

Here at home, waste and recycle collection are going smoothly and more residents are learning the correct days to put out trash and garbage (Friday), yard waste (Monday), and bulk pickup (call the Solid Waste Hotline at 407-836-6601 for pickup). Last week only a few homes had their stuff at the curb on the wrong day, fewer than the week before. You might think that knowing your trash day is as obvious as knowing not to stop your vehicle on railroad tracks, but then, this is Florida, so... ☺

So the only real remaining issue is where to stash the trashcans on the off days. Our covenant documents say to keep them out of sight, and most of us who are not hoarders can find space in our garages, but for some there is still no room in the inn. Lack of space is also an issue throughout Waterford Lakes, especially in Crossroads where the homes were built with one-car garages. So the WLCA Board and ARC put their heads together and settled on a set of preliminary guidelines, and the Cypress Isles Board adopted those guidelines as policy in January. The policy, called "Orange County Garbage and Recycling Container Storage," is presented below and also on the Cypress Isles web site.

So here is the "takeaway" (pun intended):

1. Remember your trash days -- Monday for yard waste, Friday for trash and recycle, call ahead for bulk pickup.
2. On Fridays set your trash and recycle bins at least 36 inches apart, but it's better if you place them at opposite sides of your driveway apron, so you can drive between them .

3. Try to fit the bins in your garage, but if you can't do that, hide them behind L-shaped fences or hedges, following the policy below.
4. And don't forget that a one time size change (from 95 gal to 65 gal) at no charge can be arranged by calling the Solid Waste Hotline at 407-836-6601 between April 1, 2016 and May 31, 2016. Roll cart size changes after May 31, 2016 will incur a charge equivalent to the cost of a cart. Here's everything you always wanted to know about the new trash cans: <http://www.orangecountyfl.net/Portals/0/Library/Water-Garbage-Recycle/docs/Automated%20Collection%20FAQs.pdf>

## **Garbage and Recycling Container Storage Policy**

*Approved by Board of Directors, January 21, 2016*

In keeping with our governing documents, the new trash and recycle containers must be stored so they cannot be seen from surrounding properties. Many residents will store them in their garages. Others may prefer to store them outside. The following ideas are ways to meet the requirements of our governing documents.

Enforcement of the documents requirements is the responsibility of each neighborhood within Waterford Lakes. Neighborhoods may establish requirements that are stricter than what is listed below. Please contact your neighborhood board or property manager for additional information.

1. Store within a fenced yard.
2. Store behind a fenced area large enough for both containers. If this option is used:
  - The general shape will be an 'L' shape,
  - Homes with a pond view will need to have a barrier on the back of the 'L' as well,
  - Fencing should be at least 54" tall
  - The WLCA Fence Guidelines apply regarding materials and setback from the front of the home, and
  - Since this would be an external modification to the property, an Architectural Change Application should be submitted to the Architectural Control Committee (ARC) with all required documentation for fencing
3. Store behind plant materials
  - The general shape of the planting will be an 'L' shape,
  - Homes with a pond view need to have a barrier on the back of the 'L' as well,
  - Initial plant height should be at least 30" using plants expected to grow to at least 60", and
  - Since this would be an external modification to the property, an Architectural Change Application should be submitted to the Architectural Control Committee (ARC) with all required documentation for landscaping
  -



## **Financial Statements Available**

*Ryan Kerlin, Community Association Manager*

If you would like a copy of the Cypress Isles year-end financial or income and expenses statement, please send your request via e-mail to [rkerlin@community-mgmt.com](mailto:rkerlin@community-mgmt.com). The requested document(s) will be sent as soon as available.

Due to the rising cost of postage, we are always looking for ways to cut HOA costs to you by utilizing email or fax rather than snail-mail. You can help in this effort by requesting that your copy of the Cypress Isles year-end financial or income and expenses statement be emailed to you rather than mailed.

If e-mail is not an option, please mail, FAX (407-903-9234) or call (407-455-5950) Association Community Management Professionals. Please specify whether you want delivery by mail or fax and include your address and/or FAX number.

A copy of the current year's budget is also available upon request, or from the Cypress Isles website at [www.cypressisles.org](http://www.cypressisles.org) > Archives.

## **Save the Date, Save the Daylight!**



Daylight Saving Time in the United States will begin at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday March 13<sup>th</sup>. Set your clocks ahead 1 hour so you won't be late for stuff. If you do it on Saturday, you won't have to stay up until 2:00 AM to make the change. ☺

You can recover that hour of sleep when Daylight Saving Time ends on Sunday November 6<sup>th</sup> - unless if you have children or pets. ☺





## **Woodbury/Underhill Project Specifics**

*Let's cut to the chase. Here's what you need to know about construction at the intersection of Lake Underhill and Woodbury.*

The intersection of Lake Underhill and Woodbury will be a construction site for the next six months, but only at night Sunday through Thursday. Here are specific details about the project based on the minutes of a Pre-Construction Conference.

### **General Information**

- Project Name: Lake Underhill Road at Woodbury Road Intersection Improvements
- Contract Number: Y15-787
- Work hours are 9pm to 6am Sunday through Thursday. Request to work outside these hours must be submitted and approved 72 hours in advance of work.
- Work before 9pm or after 6am or on weekends will require the contractor to reimburse Public Works for inspection staff.

### **Important Dates**

- Notice to Proceed date: Sunday January 10, 2016.
- Substantial Completion: 180 days from date of NTP: July 7, 2016.
- Final Completion: 210 days from date of NTP: August 6, 2016.

### **Project Description**

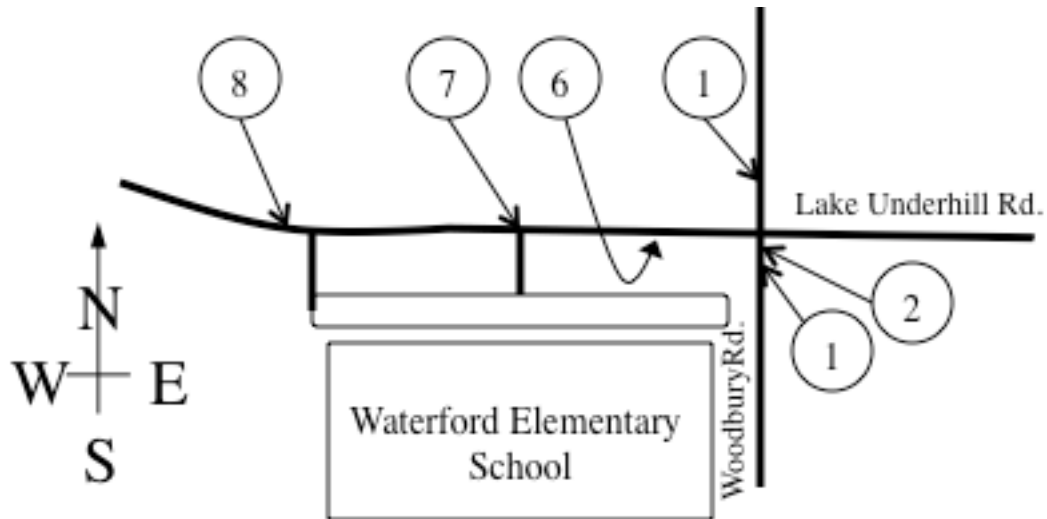
#### Woodbury Road

1. Construct additional northbound and southbound left turn lane.
2. Restripe the existing northbound right turn lane as a shared thru/right lane.
3. Reconstruct sidewalks and ramps.
4. Milling and resurfacing of pavement as a result of work.
5. Replacement of existing and/or add additional signal heads, loops, and detectors.

#### Lake Underhill Road

6. Removal of 1 of the 2 eastbound left turn lanes with extension of the remaining eastbound left turn lane.

7. Removal of westbound left turn lane into east entrance of Waterford Elementary School and closure of the median opening.
8. Construct an additional westbound left turn lane into the west entrance of Waterford Elementary School.
9. Milling and resurfacing of pavement as a result of work.
10. Replacement of existing and/or add additional signal heads, loops, and detectors.



**Lake Underhill Road at Woodbury Road Intersection Improvements**

## Annual Meeting in the New Building

*Closer building, bigger room, better pizza.*

*Dennis Horazak, Building Watcher*

We have reserved a room for our May 17<sup>th</sup> annual meeting in WLCA's new Community Building at the Recreation Center by the pool. The building is closer than Connect Realty and the larger room will be able to handle more homeowners than in previous years.

The WLCA building is almost ready for occupancy. As WLCA General Manager Ken Zook wrote in his February 8<sup>th</sup> e-blast, "Crews are getting the parking area in front of the new building ready for sealing and restriping for the needed handicapped spots that are required. There is still a lot of work to be done over the next couple of weeks and it appears we are still on schedule for getting the keys by the end of the month."

WLCA broadcasts current news such as traffic construction and building updates using eBlasts. If you are not already registered for WLCA eBlasts, you can register on the new, more user-friendly Waterford Lakes web site at <http://www.mywaterfordlakes.org> > Login > Login Resident Form. Your information is not used for anything except eBlasts, and registration includes protection against being spammed.

In any case, we hope to see you at the Cypress Isles annual meeting.

By the way, we also plan to have all future board meetings in the new building. Here are the dates:

Tuesday, March 15<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30 PM

Tuesday, May 17<sup>th</sup> @ 7 PM (Annual Members Meeting)

Tuesday, July 19<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30 PM

Tuesday, September 20<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30 PM

Tuesday, November 15<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30 PM

Oh, and just kidding about the pizza. No food is allowed in the new building. ☹

## Whatcha Gonna Click?

[www.ocso.com](http://www.ocso.com) - Click on "E-Reporting" - to report certain types of crime online, such as lost property, theft, vandalism, and vehicle burglary.

[www.ocso.com](http://www.ocso.com) - Click on "Property Crimes and Robberies in Your Zone" - to find out crimes in your area.

[www.cfcrimelinewarrants.com](http://www.cfcrimelinewarrants.com) - to check individuals for warrants.

Duke Energy Streetlight Repair or Power Outage [www.progress-energy.com](http://www.progress-energy.com) > Report an Outage  
or sign up for power outage alerts and notifications by text or voice message—free service offered by Duke Energy, but standard rates apply according to your text plan. Check with your mobile carrier.

<http://www.orangecountyfl.net/AnimalsPets/ascForm.aspx#.VNTxUMZ9tiU> - Animal Services complaint

## Who Ya Gonna Call?

WLCA Office 453 Mark Twain Blvd. (answered 24/7) 407-380-3803

Orange County Sheriff's Office Non-emergency 407-836-HELP (4357)

Animal Control (unleashed pets, etc.) call 311 –by CELL phones only or (407) 836-3111.

Call before you dig (Sunshine Network) call 811 [www.call811.com](http://www.call811.com)

Orange County 311--One Call For Almost Anything 311 – CELL phones only or (407) 836-3111

Duke Energy - Report a power outage: 1.800.228.848

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## CIN Subscriptions and Publication Schedule

The *Cypress Isles News* is published quarterly by the Board of Directors for the residents of Cypress Isles. All issues are published on the Cypress Isles website - [www.cypressisles.org](http://www.cypressisles.org) - and email subscriptions are available by request.

Copy deadlines are February 1 for the February issue, May 1 for the May issue, August 1 for the August issue, and November 1 for the November issue. Articles may be edited for length, clarity, or content.

