



Twin Lakes Owners' Association
 P.O. Box 128
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Twin Lakes Newsletter

Summer 2012 Edition



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Twin Lakes Homeowners' Association

Corporately known as Twin Lakes Owners' Association (TLOA)

From the Editor...

Since joining the board this past November, I have had the opportunity to read a few emails and converse in person with Twin Lakes residents. Many residents expressed their dissatisfaction, frustration, and their perception on the state of affairs in Twin Lakes. Many of the concerns brought forth I also previously had issues with; in fact, they were the reason I joined the Board. However, now having had the opportunity to get a peek behind the curtain, I've learned that as with many other aspects of life, the situation is more complicated than many residents may perceive. So I would like to share with the HOA what I've learned, because I know for every email I've read or resident I've talked to, there are a dozen more residents with the same questions and concerns. The following are my personal comments and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Board as a whole or of other board members. I will warn the reader upfront, I am going to be blunt and may even offend or annoy a few readers - this is not my intent. I'm only being honest and calling it like it is. To those who may be offended, I offer this advice: you are not obligated to continue reading, this is my soap box and you may walk away at any time.

First and foremost, to those who want to point a finger at the Board and blame it for everything you think is wrong with the HOA, remember you have three fingers pointing right back at you. I was

one of those who pointed a finger; heck, I was even shaking it and wouldn't hesitate to get on a soap box when in the presence of other finger pointers. But, and I say this humbly, I decided to get off my rear and do something about it. The reality is the HOA is governed by a board comprising nine members - the Board is currently short two board members. Even worse, there are no non-board members serving on the committees, resulting in each committee being only one person deep, meaning the entire weight of administering the HOA falls onto the shoulders of SEVEN VOLUNTEERS (which equates to 1% of Twin Lakes households, and unfortunately we aren't "THE 1%" with money). Board members are not paid. We have families. We have jobs. In fact, half of the Board members travel for a living, so what time we do have off, we often spend more time than we would like working on HOA issues. Take a guess at how many property owners, especially those with the gripes, have attended one of the last seven board meetings - the math isn't hard, you have more hands and feet than those who have attended. I recently had a conversation with a resident who stated he didn't believe his opinion counted. I respond with this: the only time a resident's opinion doesn't count is when he/she doesn't voice it, doesn't become involved, or doesn't exercise his/her right to vote on HOA issues.

From the Editor...

Getting involved in the HOA doesn't necessarily require a huge time commitment; remember, "many hands make light work." Where the Board needs the greatest help is for property owners and residents to serve on the various committees and help complete the associated tasks or research ideas brought forward. Many ideas have died before they were really even born because the reality is, with committees of only one, there just isn't enough time for that individual to get new ideas researched and implemented when more pressing and significant tasks are at hand (i.e. roads, lakes and dams, finances, etc.). Serving on a committee doesn't require regular attendance at the monthly board meetings. For those who say they just don't have the time, I honestly have no sympathy - I have a full time job that requires me to travel several days of each month, I have a family, I serve in the military reserves, and I volunteer my time elsewhere. So will you join in the American political culture of deciding to let others carry the burden of governing, but not exercise your voice or right to vote, and then sit back and complain they aren't doing what you want? Or will you join in the American tradition of rolling up your sleeves, working hard as a team to improve our community? To those who have served and participated in the governance and improvement of the HOA in the past, I sincerely thank you because it is a thankless job.

More than one resident has brought up the issue of dues and what exactly are we getting for our money. Again, prior to joining the board, I too blindly complained at what I saw as a lack of tangible benefits other than our roads. Many have pointed out that Forest Lakes pays \$780 in dues, but has all kinds of recreational amenities and even sidewalks. Well, did you know most of the road system in Forest Lakes is maintained by VDOT? Our roads are private roads - we have to bear the cost of paving, maintenance, and snow removal. For those who have ever had their driveway paved,

you know paving is not cheap. Also, take into consideration Forest Lakes was a planned subdivision development; it is also much more restrictive as a HOA, governing even mailboxes. So, Twin Lakes could easily and quickly add some recreational facilities and pave our roads faster if we doubled our dues. Unfortunately, we already have property owners who have selfishly and deliberately withheld payment of dues (I'm not referring to those honestly impacted by the economy), which only perpetuates the problem - the HOA can't make improvements without funds.

Enough with the honest negativism. There are ideas and plans being developed for incremental improvements within Twin Lakes. The HOA has a new website (www.twinlakeshoa.org if you haven't visited yet) aimed at increasing interaction between the Board and residents and keeping residents better informed; ideas on how to effectively install a new playground, as well as various community events, are being developed. Again, it's not just a matter of funds, but also the manpower needed to actually transform an idea into a plan for implementation. The Board would love to meet each month just to discuss the next new improvement or recreational amenity, but unfortunately, we have to deal with the unglamorous tasks such as dam and road maintenance/repairs, foreclosures where the banks don't want to cut the grass, property owners who don't want to comply with the established by-laws, and the like.

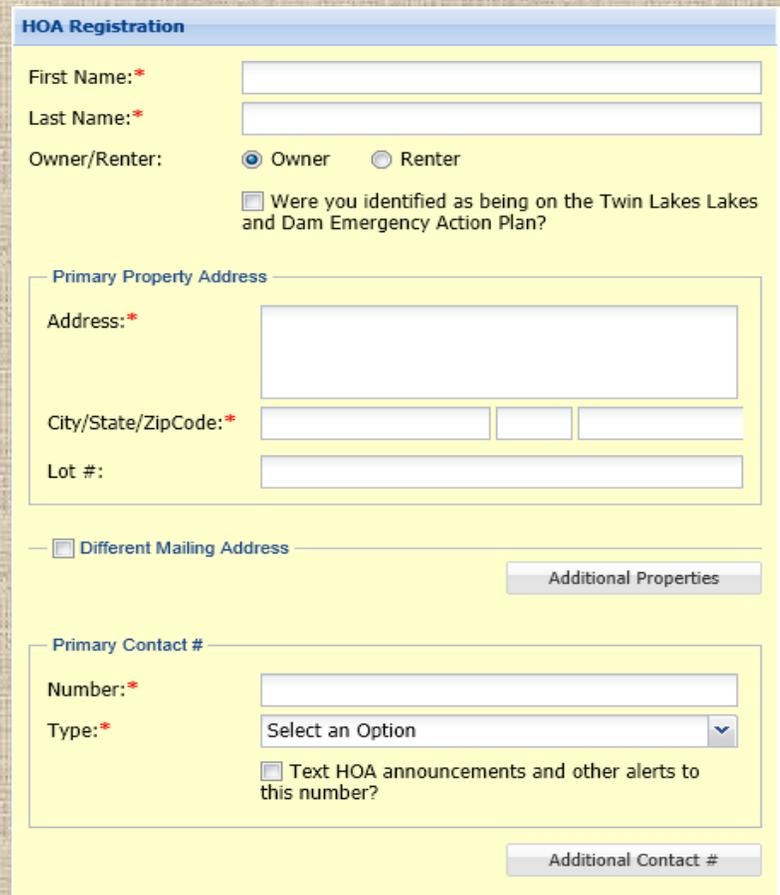
So as I end my ranting, please understand that this was my personal plea requesting help from the residents of Twin Lakes to join the Board in improving our community. United we stand - divided we fall; we can either work together to move the ship forward, or let the Board work just to keep it from sinking.

-Jared Templeton

WANT TO STAY UPDATED ON WHAT'S HAPPENING IN TWIN LAKES??

Property owners and renters now have the opportunity to register with the HOA via the web. What are the benefits of registering with the HOA?

1. By registering your contact information with the HOA, you can elect to receive electronic updates or alerts (such as water/utility outages) via email or text message. Providing a primary phone number will also allow the HOA to contact you in the event of an emergency situation affecting your home/property.
2. You can elect to receive the quarterly newsletter via email, reducing postage costs for the HOA, freeing up funds that can be used for developing and maintaining recreational facilities.
3. You create a username and password, which can facilitate future electronic/proxy voting. It will also make updating records or registering for community events easier.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "HOA Registration" with a light blue header. The form is set against a light yellow background. It includes the following fields and options:

- First Name:** * (text input)
- Last Name:** * (text input)
- Owner/Renter:** Radio buttons for Owner and Renter.
- Were you identified as being on the Twin Lakes Lakes and Dam Emergency Action Plan?
- Primary Property Address:**
 - Address:** * (text input)
 - City/State/ZipCode:** * (three separate text input fields)
 - Lot #:** (text input)
- Different Mailing Address (with a button for "Additional Properties")
- Primary Contact #:**
 - Number:** * (text input)
 - Type:** * (dropdown menu with "Select an Option")
 - Text HOA announcements and other alerts to this number? (with a button for "Additional Contact #")

The information collected by the HOA will not be provided or sold to third parties and is intended solely to facilitate communication within Twin Lakes, especially to alert residents/property owners of utility outages and emergency situations.

For additional information and to register today, visit the Twin Lakes website at www.twinlakeshoa.org, and select "HOA Registration."

Register by 15 July '12 to be entered into a drawing for a gift basket!!

(One entry per household/property owner)

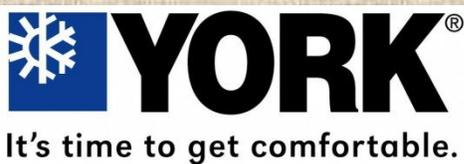


Calling all Twin Lakes mommas...On Thursday, July 12, we will be starting a Twin Lakes Mom's Group. Our first get-together will be at the Greene County Park at 10 AM. Please bring your kids and join us! If you have questions or can't attend this meeting but want to join in later, please email amanda.templeton@yahoo.com.



Did You Know?

- According to the EPA, indoor air pollution is a top 5 U.S. health risk
- Most Homes have one or more of these issues:
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From the Roads Committee

Beginning the week of July 4th, the HOA's paving for 2012 will begin. The streets designated to be repaired/paved this year are:

| | | |
|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Carnation | Sweet Pea | Petunia |
| Begonia | Gardenia | |

Residents along these streets are strongly encouraged to ensure their ditches are cleared and that all brush/vegetation is cut back a minimum of 3 ft from the edge of the existing roadway for a height of 12 ft. This will facilitate the paving crew to do a quality job.

All residents/property owners are reminded to keep the edge of their property along the roadways trimmed to the above specifications. The Board will be serving notices of violation in the upcoming weeks – remedy now before you get fined!

Questions? Comments?

You can contact the HOA via the following email addresses. Don't forget to visit www.twinlakeshoa.org

General: twinlakeshoa@twinlakeshoa.org

Committees:

Roads: roads@twinlakeshoa.org

Architectural: arch@twinlakeshoa.org

Lakes & Dams: lakesanddams@twinlakeshoa.org

Newsletter: newsletter@twinlakeshoa.org

Home Security Tips

School is out, summer is upon us, and many Twin Lakes residents are probably planning vacations and weekend getaways. But with fun in the sun also comes vulnerabilities of an empty home — statistically, most residential burglaries occur during the day and during the summer months of July and August. Below are some tips on how you can help protect your home and valuables this summer while on vacation.

1. Create the illusion that someone is at your house if you're away for an **extended period of time**. Your house should appear occupied at all times. Use timers to switch lights and radios on and off when you're not at home. Leave a TV or stereo on in a room where a burglar would most likely break in. Use exterior lighting and motion detectors to minimize burglar concealment.
2. Make sure all **exterior doors** have good proper locks. Install 1-inch deadbolt locks on all exterior doors.
3. Don't leave **extra keys** under doormats, potted plants or any other obvious outdoor location. Thieves will generally find them. Find an inconspicuous place to hide the keys, or give a set to a neighbor you can trust.
4. Burglar-proof your glass **patio doors** by setting a pipe or metal bar in the middle bottom track of the door slide. The pipe should be the same length as the track.
5. Keep **garage doors** closed at all times – any empty garage is a sign no one is home. If you frost or cover your garage windows, burglars won't be able to tell if your car is gone. If the garage door lifts on a track, a C-clamp can provide extra security since the door cannot be opened if you tighten the C-clamp on the track next to the roller.
6. Keep drapes and blinds shut - especially in rooms where there is expensive equipment. **Don't advertise** the items in your home.
7. Don't leave **notes on the door** for service people or family members when you're not there. These alert the burglar that you are not home.
8. Adjust your **telephone ring** to its lowest volume setting, if you're going to be away from home for a few days. An unanswered phone may tip off a burglar that no one is home. Also, have a neighbor or friend collect your newspaper and mail. Alternatively, arrange to have the newspaper and mail held until your return – however, cancelling or holding delivery carries certain risks as - you don't know who will get that information.
9. Arrange to have your lawn mowed (or driveway snow shoveled) while you're away. Ask a neighbor to set out your trash on collection day and then retrieve empty cans and recycling bins the same day.
10. Let a trusted neighbor know you will be away and have them keep an eye on your home. It's a good idea to leave your vacation address and telephone number with a neighbor so you can be reached in case of an emergency.

In addition to the above tips, you can also request for additional security patrols/home property checks from the Green County Sheriff's Department by completing their "[Home Checks Form](#)" on their website at www.greencountysheriffva.com and selecting "Home Property Checks" from the menu.

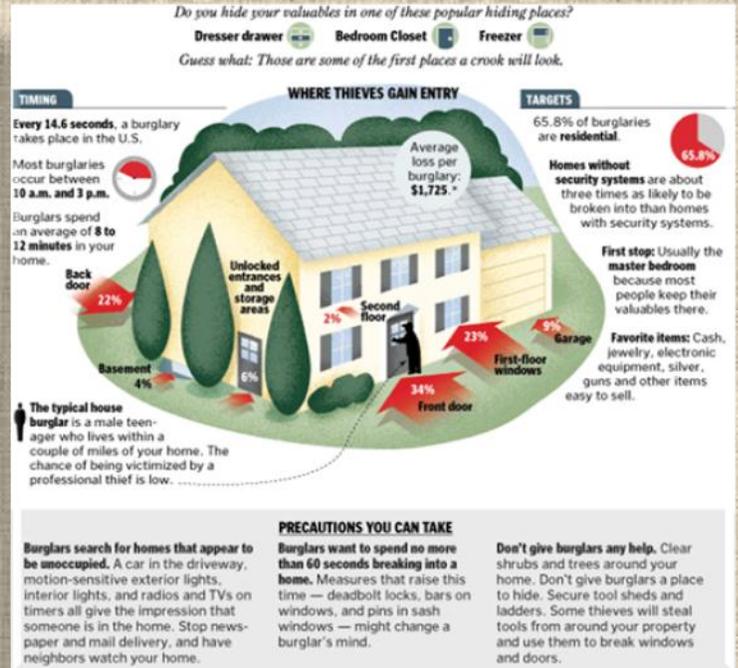


Image source: [Washington Post, Anatomy of a Home Burglary](#)

- Sources: [Safeguard the World: Security Statistics](#); [ADT Home Safety Tips](#); [Travelers Insurance Vacation Checklist](#); [How Stuff Works: Home-Security Tips](#)

From the Lakes & Dams Committee

Can you remember where you were in 1977? How old were you then? Has the time since then gone by faster than you can believe? For some, the past 35 years has probably aged them more than they would care to admit. It was in 1977 that the dams at Twin Lakes were constructed, and though they may just seem like huge mounds of dirt holding back some water, our dams have aged along with the rest of us, and now require more upkeep than before.

Undoubtedly, many Twin Lakes residents probably wonder just exactly what their dues are being used for – road improvement is a primary recipient, but dam maintenance and repair is a less obvious, but significant expense. Did you know that the HOA has to have routine inspections by a professional engineer as part of state requirements and the HOA must apply for certification, for each dam, from the state in order to operate our lakes and dams? The state classifies dams under three categories: high hazard, medium hazard, and low hazard, based on the potential damage to personal and public property, as well as potential for economic damage, in the event a dam fails. Due to the way our lakes are situated, the fact that a public road and public utilities lie within the assessed flood zone if a dam were to break, and other factors, each of Twin Lakes three dams is classified as a high hazard dam. This classification doesn't mean one of the dams may fail tomorrow, but rather that the state has more stringent requirements for maintaining and operating such dams. These requirements include, but are not limited to, more frequent inspections and stricter spillway design specifications to prevent potential failure during a very severe storm or periods of prolonged, intense rainfall.

As highlighted above, our dams are now in their 35th year of operation and our primary spillways (the large pipes protruding vertically from the lake near the center of each dam) were constructed of corrugated metal pipe, or CMP.

While CMP was a standard practice for spillway construction 35 years ago, CMP has since been determined to only have a lifespan of 25-50 years. A few years ago, the HOA employed engineers to evaluate the condition of our CMP spillways – the findings noted the protective coating inside the spillway pipes had started to deteriorate and that each of our pipes need to be slip-lined in the next couple of years. Accordingly, the HOA began researching the costs and repair timelines associated with slip-lining each of our primary spillways – the cost of which is significant.

Additionally, due to changes in state regulation in 2010, our secondary, or emergency, spillways (the gradually sloping areas to the far end of each dam) have had to be re-evaluated by a professional engineer and redesign plans drafted so that contractors can be hired to make the modifications necessary to bring our secondary spillways to the revised state codes. Again, expenses for employing an engineer and required modification work are significant.

To help offset the HOA's cost in conducting these necessary and extremely important repairs and modifications, the board recently submitted four separate proposals to the state agency overseeing dams, for reimbursement grants totaling over \$24,000. If the HOA should be awarded all four grants, this money is dedicated solely for dam repair.

As with owning a vehicle or home, even with the best routine maintenance, age brings with it the need for those costly, but necessary repairs that we all hate to pay, but which continue to allow us many more years of enjoyment, and a lot less headache than simply trying to apply a Band-Aid in the hopes it just goes away (which of course, never does). By properly maintaining and repairing our dams, we are not only working to prevent a catastrophic failure, but invest in many more years of enjoying our lakes.

Gone Fishin'!

"You grab a line, I'll grab a pole, we'll go down to the fishin' hole!"

The HOA recently received an inquiry about the possibility of stocking our lakes with grass carp to address the growth of hydrilla, as well as sport fish such as largemouth bass, catfish, and perch. The Board agrees this is a great idea and the Newsletter/Recreation Committee is researching and preparing a couple of stocking options and associated costs. However, as the 2012 operating budget has already been established and funds already limited for this year, the HOA is restricted on the extent to which the lakes can be stocked. For those anglers in Twin Lakes who would greatly enjoy our lakes being stocked this summer, an available option is for residents to make a dedicated contribution to the stocking

fund - multiple residents have already stated to the HOA they are willing to do exactly that. Any monies contributed to the fund would be used solely for stocking the lakes; furthermore, if so desired, contributors can specify which lake they are contributing towards. If you are interested in either contributing to the stocking fund and/or assist in developing a stocking plan, please send an email to newsletter@twinlakeshoa.org stating your interest. There is no need to indicate an amount you might be willing to contribute. At this time the HOA only needs to gauge interest in this option to assist in developing a reasonable stocking proposal.



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