

EFPOA SPRING/SUMMER 2015

Welcome to summer 2015 in our wonderful community of Elk Falls. We are all still drying out from the long May and June of rains, which are a mixed blessing, lowering the risk of wildfires and eroding road surfaces at the same time. The grasses are growing quickly and the area is a beautiful green. Let's hope summer brings a nice moderation to the weather conditions.

EFPOA ANNUAL MEETING

Be sure to mark the date and plan to attend the annual membership meeting on Sunday, July 12 at 2:00 pm at the Elk Creek Fire station on Hwy 285 at Richmond hill Road. This is your best chance to learn about issues that pertain to our community and discuss concerns that you have. Learn about plans for next year, State Park activities, Firewise events, road care and upgrades, consolidation of trash services and much more. I can't stress enough how important it is to attend this once a year gathering. We'll provide snacks and beverages. If you can't attend, fill out and return your proxy.

STAUNTON STATE PARK

The park has a new manager, Zach Taylor. Members of the EFPOA board have met with Zach, and we have invited him to attend the annual membership meeting. We expect to learn much about the next phase of development of the Staunton State Park, what new activities will be allowed there and possible effects on the Elk Falls community.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF EFPOA'S ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE

Often the first thing that comes to mind when considering EFPOA's purpose is its responsibility for arranging community services, such as road maintenance and snow plowing, that neither the State nor counties provide. However, the primary responsibility of the EFPOA is to protect homeowners' property values and their quality of living in the beautiful surroundings we all enjoy. The EFPOA tries to fulfill this responsibility through its Board of Directors, Architectural Committee, who administers a set of covenants containing rules of conduct for homeowners and provisions involving construction of new and existing structures. The covenants may be found at <http://www.elkfallspoa.org/index-2.html>. The EFPOA's Architectural Committee member, Bob Wallace, is the Boards contact. He can be reached at (303) 838-2297 or emailed at bbwlinear@wispertel.net.

Nobody likes to be told they what they can or cannot do with their property. However, protecting homeowners' interests may require enforcing covenants that prevent individual property owners from doing what they want or require them to take action they find disagreeable. EFPOA tries to balance individual freedom with protecting neighbors' interests. Our covenants are far less prescriptive than those found in some neighborhoods, which may dictate the color a house may be painted or the style of shutters that are acceptable. However, EFPOA's covenants do contain prohibitions and mandates, such as minimum square footage requirements for new homes. Also, the covenants require homeowners to submit plans to the Board for review and approval of a variety of projects including new construction, additions to existing homes, new outbuildings, decks, garages, tree clearing, roads and fences.

Problems arise when projects are in progress before Board's approval has been sought. Please remember the Board is small and staffed by volunteers that have other commitments. In the recent past, Elk Falls struggled with a declining housing market and other recession-related woes, as did the Nation. However, economic recovery has been accompanied by a surge in requests for approval of new construction and existing property improvements throughout the community. Consequently, it is important to contact the Board's representative at early as possible, to avoid delays in obtaining approval.

Early in the process, a project should be discussed with all neighbors on whom it may have an impact and EFPOA's Architectural Committee member. It is also a good idea to discuss the project with Jefferson Or Park County planning department and determine whether a permit is necessary, what will be required to obtain a permit and if there are special provisions that must be satisfied. Assuming issues are resolved, plans should be submitted for the Board's review and approval. Plans submitted to the EFPOA should identify the proposed structures position in relation to property lines, setbacks and existing roads. Often simple projects do not require professionally engineered plans or a building permit. However, more complex projects may, as mandated by the State or by county building departments.

If a project does not conform to the covenants, a homeowner may petition the Board for a variance with the covenants. **However, Board approval does not supplant State or county permit and inspection processes or homeowners responsibilities under state or county requirements.** Homeowners or their contractors must obtain necessary permits and satisfy all State and local land use and building requirements.

ELK FALLS DIRECTORY

The board of directors has printed a directory of the subdivision property owners for many years. It has provided important contact information and described the area's history and data about the properties in Elk Falls. New rules governing privacy have made it necessary to have explicit permission from property owners to have their information listed in directories. The Elk Falls directory is a printed document only and none of the information is ever listed on our website. If you are ok with having your address, phone# and email included in the directory, please fill out the form included here and return it to the EFPOA via mail or delivery to any board member. Current email address is important when it is necessary to notify the community about emergencies or community issues. This data is not shared with anyone. Every property will be listed in the next directory. You can choose to exclude specific information. I encourage everyone to allow us to include them in the directory.

ROAD REPORT

It's been an interesting spring so far in Elk Falls. After a month of continuous late snowstorms and relentless rain, we seem to be drying out a little. The road grading and clearing of the ditches is ongoing. Road base will be added as needed as spring grading is completed.

The paving at the intersection of Elk Creek Road and Juniper is not yet scheduled. Because of the wet conditions, our contractor's schedule has been pushed way back. So, we are on the schedule, just have not been notified when it will be done. We will post the schedule and send an email out to everyone once the dates have been determined. According to our contractor, they must have dry weather to pave. Our snowplowing contractor is retiring, so I am currently taking bids for next winter's snow season.

Please make sure your driveway culvert is clear and working. Clogged culverts (as well as the driveways themselves) cause much erosion in the neighborhood. If you need help freeing a culvert or need one installed, please contact me and I can refer you to a reliable contractor in the area.

As always, we appeal to all neighbors who love to drive fast, to please slow down. We have many pedestrians and drivers on the roads. So, not only can it be dangerous, it also deteriorates the roads in record time after costly road maintenance has been done..

Thank you,

Suzy Nelson
ROADS MANAGER
303-838-0317

SPRING FIREWISE UPDATE

Hi Firewise Neighbors:

We are approaching another fire season in our area. Don't be fooled by all the moisture. It may give us a short reprieve, but it will create fire mitigation issues later in the summer. The sooner we begin our seasonal mitigation efforts the safer our area will be. Now is a good time to begin.

REMEMBER:

1. All the rain will cause the weeds around our houses to grow like crazy. Time to get out the "weed wacker" and go to work. A thirty foot perimeter is a minimum.
2. If you have stacked firewood close to your house or under your deck this winter, it is time to relocate it out a safe distance.
3. There is always slash to be cut and removed. Slash collection and disposal will be handled differently this summer. Check our Firewise website for updated information, collection schedules and locations. The site URL is elkfallsfirewise.org.
4. As you work on fire mitigation through the summer, please report your work hours and \$ spent to the Firewise Committee at mthensick@gmail.com. Collection of this community data is essential for Elk Falls to maintain its firewise status each year.
5. Finally, if any of you have questions or are in need of help with your mitigation efforts, please contact your Firewise Committee. We will do our best to assist you in any way we can.

Thank you in advance for all your hard work and have a fun fire safe season.

Firewise Committee

mthensick@gmail.com

(303) 838-5493