

## From The Board:

### Meetings

Meetings are held at:  
Sugar Land First United  
Methodist Church  
431 Eldridge Road  
Sugar Land, TX 77478

Architectural Control  
Committee Meetings are  
held the second Tuesday  
of each month in Room  
608.

Lake Committee  
Meetings are held the  
second Tuesday of each  
month in room 600.

Board of Directors  
Meetings are held the  
third Monday of each  
month in room 600,  
unless otherwise noted.

HOA Annual Meeting is  
held the last Tuesday in  
March of each year.

For more information,  
please contact Terri  
Salter at MASC Austin  
Properties, Inc. at:  
(713) 776-1771 or  
tsalter@mascapi.com.



www.sugarmillhoa.net

Just as September 11, 2001 shook our collective sense of security, the recent activity in our community has shaken the sense of security for some of our neighbors. The SWAT situation in Misty Lakes on August 17th was an event that made some residents question their safety. There have been questions about “what can the Homeowner’s Association do about these situations?” The answer to that question is that the Association can only enforce the provisions of the Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions for the various sections of the subdivision. The Board advocates building a strong community through National Night Out (October 2nd), getting to know your neighbors and calling law enforcement when you are suspicious or feel threatened by activity outside your home. Locking doors, outdoor lights, taking valuables out of parked cars and being aware of your surroundings are the best protection for you and your family.

The days are getting shorter and that means that the holiday season is right around the corner. Now is a good time to check your outdoor lighting and replace any bulbs that may have lost their illumination. Make sure that your walkways are lit so that your guests do not fall as they arrive at your house for festivities. Here is a reminder of what the Minimum Acceptable Standard for Security Lights in Sugar Mill says:

- 1) Mercury Vapor or Metal Halide is not acceptable.
- 2) Flood lights are acceptable up to 100 watts.
- 3) No light may be mounted on front of house or front half of either side of house.
- 4) Under no conditions shall light be a nuisance to adjoining residents.

Here is a summary of the of the Minimum Acceptable Standards for Holiday

Decorations and Decorative Banners:

- 1) Banners and holiday decorations to be displayed only on the following holidays: Easter, Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas.
- 2) Time Frame: Two (2) weeks before holiday, to one (1) week after holiday; Christmas decorations may be displayed after Thanksgiving and removed one (1) week after Christmas.
- 3) Banners shall be limited to 3X5.
- 4) The flagstaff must be mounted to the house, size of pole limited to six (6) feet in length (for banners).
- 5) Decorations must be well maintained at all times.

Please also make sure that your decorations are secured to withstand the brisk winds and rains of the fall/winter season and that there is not excessive noise or light that would be a nuisance to adjoining residents. Guard also against electrical issues and fires by using proper wiring and cords – and that the cords do not pose a tripping hazard. We want everyone to enjoy the season!

Once again we are asking for an additional Board of Directors member and we would also like to have additional members on the Architectural Control Committee – please call or e-mail any of the Director’s if you have an interest in serving our community!

**Lastly, please make a note that the October Board meeting date has changed. For October, the Board will meet on October 22nd, beginning at 7:00pm in room 600 of the Sugar Land First United Methodist Church.**

Thanks,

Sugar Mill’s Board of Directors

# Helpful Tips: How To Stop Your Dog From Digging



We all love our dogs, but our yards don't. Dogs dig up the lawn in a heartbeat, eager to bury a bone or because they are bored, leaving gaping holes and piles of dirt.

Here's how to keep your dog from digging up your yard. (If it's your flower garden instead, here are tips on how to keep dogs out of your flower garden.)

**1. Tire out your dog.** A napping dog is not a digging dog, so exhaust your pet with regular walks and active play.

To activate your animal, try:

- Hiding a favorite indoor toy outdoors so he can hunt for it.
- Playing catch with a ball or Frisbee.
- Taking her on frequent walks.
- Setting up an agility course.

**2. Offer a digging spot of his own.** Dogs dig for thrills, for a cool place to lie down, and for a place to bury bones. It's an instinctive behavior you can't eliminate, but you can redirect it by building your pet a digging box.

It doesn't have to be big – a shaded, 4-by-4-foot space will do. Fill it with sand, cat box filler, or wood chips. Then let your dog watch you bury a toy or treat in the box. When he goes after it, praise his efforts — dogs would rather be rewarded for digging in their box than scolded for digging in your garden.

**3. Nix the bones.** Instead of offering your dog a bone that he'll want to hide in a hole, give your pet rawhide or veggie-based chews that he'll eat rather than bury.

Also, buy your puppy a busy ball (\$10-\$15) that dispenses treats as he bats it around. It's a challenge and exercise, which will keep your dog's body and mind active.

**4. Keep your dog company.** If you know your dog likes to dig or eat outdoors, don't leave him unattended. Let him watch you plant your garden and explain what you're doing and the behavior you expect.

Dogs respond to human conversation, so long as it contains high praise and clear directions, and is followed by a reward for good behavior.

## Lake Committee View of the Month!



Congratulations to Jack and Wilda Kennedy at 1107 Mariner Cove for winning the September Lake View of the Month. They will receive a \$25 gift certificate to Home Depot donated by Vicki Haislup with Weichert, Realtors-Wayne Murray Properties. Congratulations!

## New Flag Display Guidelines



The Board has determined that in connection with maintaining the aesthetics and architectural harmony of the subdivision, and to provide clear and definitive guidance regarding the display of flags in the community, it is appropriate for the Association to adopt guidelines regarding the display of flags within the subdivision. To view the community's new flag guidelines, please visit Sugar Mill's website at [www.sugarmillhoa.net](http://www.sugarmillhoa.net) and click on the Documents tab and then click on "Flag Display Guidelines".

These guidelines were approved by the Board on March 19th, 2012 and are effective upon recording in the Public Records of Real Property of Fort Bend County and supersede any guidelines for the display of flags which may have previously been in effect.

# Marion's Fishing Corner

## The Autumn Transition

Well, we've gotten our first cool snap of the season. The summer heat has been broken, at least for a few days and nights. A lot of bass fishermen are starting to think about their other big obsession, deer hunting. In the coming weeks, a lot of sportsmen will be spending time preparing for opening weekend of deer season. And that's ok by me, because it means less competition on the water. Active fish with less fishing pressure is always a good thing in my book.

As I've said before, fall is my favorite time of the year to fish. It's been my experience that bass become every bit as active during the fall as they do during the spring. Gamefish have a sixth sense that tells them when cold water and harsh conditions are on the way, and it's time to fatten up in preparation. During the heat of summer, fish are more particular about when they will feed. Bass that are in a negative feeding mode will oftentimes let a bait go by, not willing to expel the energy to chase it down. But as the water cools, they become much more opportunistic and seem to display a sense of urgency about gaining weight and body mass that they will need during the cold water winter months. They will most often engulf a baitfish that ventures into their "strike zone", even if they are not particularly hungry at the time.

So changes in the weather and changes in the fish's feeding habits are on the way. I hope all the

hunters have a safe and productive time in the woods. As for me, I'll be out on the water enjoying some of the best fishing of the year. As the saying goes, "To each, his own".

Remember our policy of catch and release, because a bass is too valuable of a resource to catch just once. Good Luck.

Marion

*Article written by Marion Raska who has lived in Sugar Mill and fished on Misty Lake for over 18 years.*

## Dealing With Mosquitoes

Texas is experiencing a higher than usual number of human West Nile cases this year due to the warm winter and recent rains, particularly in North Texas. The Texas Department of State Health Services recommends practicing the "Four Ds":

1. Use insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus.
2. Dress in long sleeves and long pants when you are outside.
3. Stay indoors at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
4. Drain standing water where mosquitoes breed.

## Free Flu Shots To Benefit Santa's Exchange

Methodist Sugar Land Hospital, in collaboration with the Fort Bend and Sugar Land Exchange Clubs and the Sugar Land Rotary, will provide free flu shots on Saturday, November 3 to community members who participate in Santa's Gift Exchange. Fort Bend and surrounding area residents can bring a new, unwrapped toy or clothing item to Methodist Sugar Land Hospital from 8 a.m. to noon in exchange for a free flu shot. The toys and clothing will benefit local children in the Fort Bend area.

"We are proud to partner with the local exchange clubs once again to provide this community offering. This is a great way for the community to stay healthy while also putting smiles on children's faces during the holiday season," said Chris Siebenaler, CEO of Methodist Sugar Land Hospital. In 2011, Santa's Gift Exchange provided toys and clothing to more than 3,000 economically disadvantaged children in Fort Bend County.

If you would like to participate in this community event, please bring an unwrapped, new toy or clothing item to the main lobby of Methodist Sugar Land Hospital between the times of 8:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 3.

The flu vaccine is formulated to provide protection against three different flu viruses – H1N1, H3N2 and influenza B. Methodist Sugar Land Hospital will be distributing a limited supply of the influenza vaccine to persons age 18 and over with no history of egg and/or latex allergy. If you are pregnant, please visit your OB/GYN or primary care physician to have your vaccine administered. For more information please call 281-275-0751.

## Sugar Mill Elementary Sparkler Fair - October 27th

Come join us for our annual Sugar Mill Elementary Sparkler Fair October 27th, from 10am-2pm! Enjoy games, crafts, auctions and tons of family friendly fun. All of the best carnival foods, including funnel cakes, pizza and assorted sweets.

Expect a good time at our opening costume parade, inflatables and so much more. We'll see you there at 13707 Jess Pirtle Sugar Land TX 77498. Thanks in advance for your very appreciated support! Sugar Mill Elementary & PTA - [sugarmillpta@gmail.com](mailto:sugarmillpta@gmail.com).

# Fall Flower Bed Maintenance

Healthy soil grows healthy plants. And fall is a great time to fix any soil problems and get your flower beds ready for next year's growing season. If you wait until spring, you forget what your garden needs.

Before you try to fix your soil, check it with a soil testing kit (\$25), which will reveal soil pH and nutrient levels. Or, ask your local extension agent where to send soil samples for professional testing.

### Soil that's pH-challenged

Flower beds thrive with soil that's not too acidic (low pH) nor too alkaline (high pH). Veer too far from neutral, and gardens will struggle.

To raise soil pH: Spread garden lime pellets — ground limestone — evenly, rake into the top 2 inches of soil, then water. Lime will break down during winter and slowly raise the pH by spring.

To lower soil pH: Add aluminum sulfate (your hydrangeas will bloom bluer) or cottonseed meal.

### Texture troubles

Size matters when it comes to soil particles. If particles are too large (sandy soil) water moves through too quickly and plants dry out; too small (clay soil) and water puddles and roots rot.

Both soil types benefit from generous helpings of organic material — leaf mold, compost, and straw.

You just can't add too much organic matter. It helps retain water and helps aid drainage.

Plant in fall and turn under in spring, 2-3 weeks before planting.

### In need of nutrients

Soil tests reveal what nutrients your soil lacks and what soil amendments it needs. If your soil lacks:

- Nitrogen: Add compost.
- Phosphorous: Add aged manure, rock phosphate (mined from clay deposits), or bone meal.
- Potash: Add seaweed, manure, hardwood ashes, or granite dust.

### Drainage impaired soil

Fall is a good time to change the lay of the land to solve drainage problems. Poor drainage causes root rot and turns your yard into breeding grounds for mosquitoes.

To lead water away from your garden, change the soil grade by building berms or digging a French drain. To prevent puddles within your garden, add topsoil to depressions.



## Community Fitness Challenge

The City of Sugar Land has accepted the Healthy at H-E-B Community Challenge – and a personal contest closer to home.

The Challenge runs through Oct. 31 and allows communities across Texas to face off against each other to see which has what it takes to create the most healthy community.

Sugar Land, a five-time "Fittest City in Texas" winner has a proven track record of healthy living and is ready for the competition, including a recent challenge from the mayor of nearby Missouri City.

From now until the end of October, Texans will use the Healthy at H-E-B Community Challenge website to log activities that earn their community points. At the end of competition, all points will be totaled, and the winning community from each of the community categories (small, medium, and large) will be awarded the title of Healthy at H-E-B Community Challenge Winner.

It's easy to get involved.

· Click "Take the Challenge" at [www.hebcommunitychallenge.com/](http://www.hebcommunitychallenge.com/).

· Start tracking healthy actions as an individual, as a school and as an organization.

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# Important Numbers

## Sugar Mill's Board of Directors:

Name	Position	Contact #	Email Address
Bill Cure	President	281-491-9536	bill.cure@gmail.com
Robert Sheffield	Vice-President	281-242-0453	rsheffield81@comcast.net
Hank Ochel	Treasurer	214-293-4376	hank_ochel@me.com
Debra Blesener	Secretary	713-628-6991	debrablesener@gmail.com
Open	Asst. Secretary		

MASC Austin Properties, Inc.  
13726 Florence Road  
Sugar Land, TX 77498

Terri Salter  
Property Manager  
713-776-1771 / [TSalter@mascapi.com](mailto:TSalter@mascapi.com)

Sugar Land Dispatch	281-275-2525
Sugar Land Police	281-275-2020
Sugar Land Fire Dept	281-275-2851
Sugar Land City Hall	281-275-2700
Sugar Land Library	281-277-8934
Sugar Land Post Office	800-275-8777
Police, Fire, Ambulance	911
Sherriff's Department	281-341-4700
Crime Stoppers	281-342-8477
Kempner High School	281-634-2300
Sugar Land Middle School	281-634-3080
Sugar Mill Elementary	281-634-4440
Fort Bend ISD	281-634-1000
Animal Control	281-275-2596

## Protecting Your Privacy Online

In today's environment where numerous entities collect and store personal information, consumers are increasingly wary about their privacy. You want to be secure in the knowledge that your personal information is secure. There are a few simple steps we can all take to reduce the risk to our private data.

### **Block cookies on your computer's web browser.**

When you surf, hundreds of data points are being collected by the sites you visit. These data get mashed together to form an integral part of your "digital profile," which is then sold without your consent to companies around the world. By blocking cookies, you'll prevent some of the data collection about you. Yes, you'll have to enter passwords more often, but it's a smarter way to surf.

### **Don't put your full birth date on your social-networking profiles.**

Identity thieves use birth dates as cornerstones of their craft. If you want your friends to know your birthday, try just the month and day, and leave off the year.

### **Don't download Facebook apps from outside the United States.**

Apps on social networks can access huge

amounts of personal information. Some unscrupulous or careless entities collect lots of data and then lose, abuse, or sell them. If the app maker is in the U.S., it's probably safer, and at least you have recourse if something should ever go wrong.

### **Use multiple usernames and passwords.**

Keep your usernames and passwords for social networks, online banking, e-mail, and online shopping all separate. Having distinct passwords is not enough nowadays: if you have the same username across different Web sites, your entire personal, professional, and e-commerce life can be mapped and re-created with some simple algorithms.

### **Be cautious about geo-location services.**

Smart phones, apps, and Web services are frequently tagging your location as you move through life. We don't yet know the full privacy implications of these services, and we may not know for some time. For now, be thoughtful about how you use "I just checked in at Restaurant XYZ" features. And if you don't know what geo-location is, you may want to turn it off on your phone for now. As a general rule, you may want to be slow to

allow third parties to collect info about you until you know what kind of information is being collected and how.



### **Shred.**

If you're going to throw away credit-card offers, bank statements, or anything else that might come in hard copy to your house, rip them up into tiny bits first.

### **Opt out of "people search" sites.**

There are many sites across the Web where our personal data are stored, copied, aggregated, and resold. Remove yourself from as many as you can.

### **Max out your privacy settings on social networks.**

Privacy settings are getting harder to fix all the time. Stay on top of them.

### **Close old accounts.**

If you no longer use Friendster or MySpace, shut down your old account. Doing a digital data wipe from time to time is a good way to reduce the amount of old information floating around on the internet.



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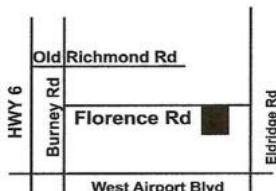
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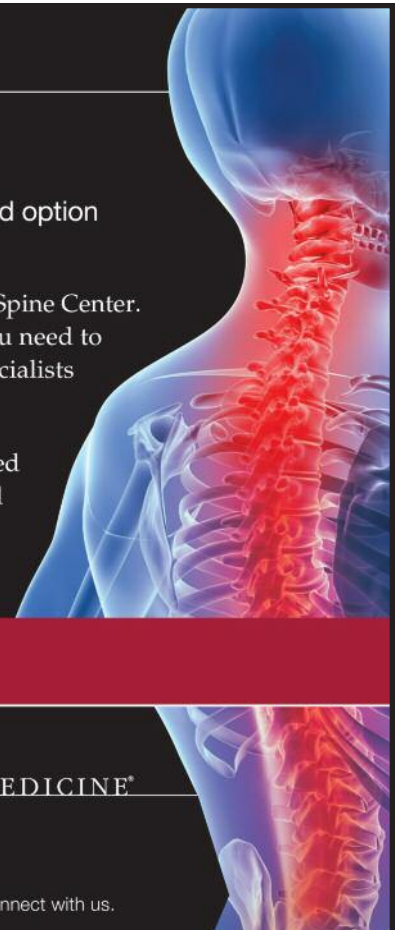
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## MARTHA'S

TIPS AND TRENDS TO HELP  
 MAXIMIZE HOME BUYING AND SELLING

### Water, Water Everywhere?

Drought conditions across the United States have forced a lot of people to start thinking about water conservation and consumption. But that might already be top-of-mind for many homeowners who want to see the amounts on their water bills decrease. It's easier than you think to conserve water. Cut down on your water usage with tips from the Arizona-based "Water—Use It Wisely" campaign.

Your washing machine and dishwasher are major water hogs. No matter how full they are, you use the same amount of water. To save up to 1,000 gallons of water a month, be sure to only run these appliances when they're full. To save more water in the kitchen, consider composting rather than dumping food waste down the garbage disposal with running water.

Simply by decreasing your shower time by one or two minutes, you can save up to 150 gallons of water each month. Boost savings by installing a low-flow showerhead, which



can cut the amount of water you use per shower in half. Another easy conservation trick is to partially fill a plastic container (an old milk jug works fine) with water or pebbles and place it in your toilet tank to reduce the amount of water used per flush; just be sure to keep it away from the operating mechanisms in the tank.

Insulating your hot water pipes is a small step that requires a little extra maintenance but will reap big rewards. For your faucet, consider installing a faucet aerator, which screws on to the bottom of the faucet to automatically reduce water flow without sacrificing water pressure.

Finally, see what's really going down the drain with a professional water audit (or buy a do-it-yourself kit online). Once you know where the losses are coming from, it's even easier to change your habits.



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### Fast Fact

The most popular destination for "leaf-peeping" (observing colorful fall foliage) is Asheville, N.C., according to a recent survey by TripAdvisor.



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If you are currently working with another real estate agent or broker, it is not a solicitation for business.

Sugar Mill Specialist and Waterfront Specialist