



Dear New Neighbor,

Congratulations on the purchase of your new home! On behalf of the Ben Oaks Homeowner's Association (HOA) and your new neighbors, we would like to welcome you to the Ben Oaks. We are glad to have you as a neighbor and look forward to meeting you at community events or just to wave hello as we pass by. Don't be surprised, we really do wave hello in this community!

The Ben Oaks HOA Board of Directors are Ben Oaks residents who volunteer their time and expertise managing the Homeowner's Association for the residents. There are four members on the Ben Oaks HOA Board of Directors. Directors are elected by the Homeowners at each annual meeting, usually occurring in April. Current board members and contact information can be found at: [benoakshoa.com](http://benoakshoa.com)

The board is charged with specific responsibilities and duties as outlined in the Association's Declaration, Articles of Incorporation, and Bylaws. One of those duties is to adopt an annual budget and set assessment rates on an annual basis. Each homeowner is obligated to pay this assessment, which is used to operate the Association. You will receive a statement for the yearly assessment in February with payment due by March 31. Please take the time to read through the Declarations and Bylaws you received during your home purchase process. Copies are available on the community website.

The board's charter and primary duty is to preserve the integrity and maintain the appearance of the neighborhood by managing the following:

1. Provide Financial Management and Neighborhood Planning
2. Common Area Maintenance and Repairs
3. Review and authorize Architectural Change and other Property Improvement
4. Oversee the Declaration of Covenants and Rules Enforcement



There are two Community Lots in the neighborhood. One is located at the corner of Ben Oaks Drive and Claires Drive and the other is toward the end of Ben Oaks Dr. on the right.

### **WEBSITE**

When you closed on your property copies of our governing documents were provided (renters will have to obtain them from property owners/managers or refer to the website). If you have misplaced or simply need additional copies, you will find them on our website, [benoakshoa.com](http://benoakshoa.com) under *Documents*. Please note the majority of future newsletters and community information will be posted on the site.

Our community website is a repository of information regarding Ben Oaks and the surrounding area. Upcoming activities and events, announcements, a community calendar, Declarations and Bylaws, architectural review forms, and volunteer committee information can all be found there. Please take a few minutes to visit and familiarize yourself with this resource and to get to know your community. The website provides ready answers to most of the questions homeowners have.

### **ARCHITCTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE**

As a new homeowner, you may already have some ideas on how you'd like to improve your property. Please keep in mind, the Association has an Architectural Review Committee to help maintain the quality of our neighborhood. Its function is to evaluate the plans for all exterior landscaping, repairs and remodeling (such as painting, decks, fences, trees and bushes, replacement roofs, etc.) in order to ensure compliance with all covenants, restrictions and guidelines. The purpose of this review is to protect our scenic environment and maintain the value of our homes. Modifications to the exterior of your home and property must be submitted to the Architectural Control Committee for approval before any work begins. If



work is started without prior approval, the homeowner may be required to alter or remove the changes.

If you have any questions or concerns relating to the homeowner association and/or the architectural committee, please email the Board of Directors at [directors@benoakshoa.com](mailto:directors@benoakshoa.com) or [ARC@benoakshoa.com](mailto:ARC@benoakshoa.com)

### **BE A GOOD NEIGHBOR**

- The Speed limit in the community is 25 MPH. Please watch out for walkers, joggers, children, pets.
- Please **STOP** at stop signs.
- Please do not park cars along the cul-de-sac as this will create a challenge for buses to turn around.
- Please try your best to keep drainage ditches debris free, to allow good drainage.
- Please keep your pets on leashes and pick up after them.
- Welcome to the neighborhood! We're extremely happy you have joined our community

If you would like to be added to the HOA email distribution list please forward your email to [directors@benoakshoa.com](mailto:directors@benoakshoa.com) for inclusion.

Again, welcome to the Ben Oaks community! We know you'll find this neighborhood is a great place to live and we encourage your participation in our activities and functions.

Sincerely,

Board of Directors  
Ben Oaks Homeowners Association



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **BUS STOPS**

There are currently 5 bus stops in the neighborhood

- 39955 Claires Drive (All levels) (end of Claires Drive)
- 39661 Claires Drive (All levels) (located by the water tower)
- 28467 Ben Oaks Drive (just prior to cul de sac) (Elem Only) (end of Ben Oaks)
- 28290 Ben Oaks Drive (All levels) (community lot on Ben Oaks)
- Ben Oaks Drive & Yanak Court (All levels)

### **COMMUNITY EVENTS**

- Trick or Treating
- Santa
- Clean Up
- Dumpsters
- National Night Out

### **FACEBOOK**

For unofficial news and to share information with your neighbors, to include many recommendations for vendors, please check out the Ben Oaks

Community group on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/129110147477>

### **MAILBOXES**

All Mailboxes throughout the community are required to be standardized to maintain the aesthetic appearance of the neighborhood

- All homes must maintain a mailbox similar in design, size and material as that was originally provided by Marrick
- All mailboxes and posts will be black in color, wooden posts are not permitted.



- Any requested changes will require and approved ARC application.

Mailbox replacement parts can be obtained from the following locations:

- Lusby Motor Company Prince Frederick 410-535-0442.  
<https://www.lusbyhardware.com/>
- <https://gainesdirect.com/collections/keystone-series-parts-accessories>

## **STORM WATER MANAGEMENT**

There are 15 storm-water management areas throughout the community, these area are inspected periodically by the county. Per the provisions from the county and in your deed if a storm water drainage area resides on your property you are responsible for performing the necessary landscaping and trash removal as is appropriate.

- The OWNER(S) covenant and agree with the COUNTY that they shall provide for the maintenance of the storm water management facility to ensure that the facility is and remains in proper working condition in accordance with approved design standards, rules and regulations, and applicable laws.
- The OWNER(S) shall perform necessary landscaping (grass cutting, etc.) and trash removal as part of regular maintenance.

## **TRASH**

Trash pickup is contracted by each individual homeowner or as a St. Mary's County resident you can take your trash to the local convenience center in Charlotte Hall 37707 New Market Turner Rd, Mechanicsville, MD 20659 or transfer station in Oakville 26600 N Sandgates Rd, Mechanicsville, MD 20659

## **UTILITIES**



To make things easier for new members, or members with service disruptions, the following is a list of the utility service providers within the Ben Oaks Community.

Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative (SMECO) (24 Hours a Day/7 Days a Week) – (800) 225-5797

St. Mary's Metropolitan Commission (METCOM) Water – (850) 623-8508

MPI Utilities – many lots within Ben Oaks have deferred water charges that are billed annually by MPI Utilities. This should have been disclosed to you during your home purchase. These are not a part of the HOA, they are billed by and payable to MPI Utilities.



Planning to sell your home, here are a few items that will help the transition run smoothly.

- If you have the original builder binder or any paperwork regarding renovations or replacement systems and appliances, set those aside for the buyers along with contact information for anyone that provided services for your home.
- Make a list of the utilities for your home to include contact information for the vendors and twelve-month averages for the bills.
- Create a quick checklist/timeline for any important items around the house, like shutting off the hose bibs before the first frost and maybe that surprise lily that will pop up to the left of the front walkway if no one mows over it in the spring.
- Place any excess building materials from projects around the house in one location with a note stating what was used where – for example use a Sharpie to write living room on the paint can that matches the living room
- Check with MPI Utilities regarding the annual amount and end date for your deferred water payment if your lot has one. Provide this information to your Realtor when they list your home for sale.
- Visit [benoakshoa.com](http://benoakshoa.com), click on Documents and download the official HOA documents to provide to your Realtor when they list your home for sale.
- Once you decide to sell your home please discuss the HOA requirements with your real estate agent. In most cases your title company will request a certification from the HOA that your dues are paid and your home is not in violation of any covenants. We suggest that you request these items as far in advance as possible. The HOA has a generic form on the website that you are welcome to use as required. Please direct those requests to [directors@benoakshoa.com](mailto:directors@benoakshoa.com) please allow up to 14 days for response, the earlier the submission the better.