

## Spring Upkeep Reminders & Modifications Memo

By purchasing a home in McKinney Greens, residents become members of the McKinney Greens Homeowners Association and assume individual responsibility for upholding our community covenants. This includes adhering to the design guidelines related to home upkeep. We all play a part in creating the cohesive appeal and high property values here in North Texas. These desirable outcomes are not only the responsibility of the Board of Directors, Committee volunteers, or Professional staff, but rather of our collective efforts.

As a homeowner it is your responsibility to be aware of, and understand the community guidelines. The McKinney Greens Homeowners Association has established specific Declaration of Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions which outline these guidelines. The document outlines the expectations of the association as they pertain to your home. The DCCRS can be found in your homeowner portal under the documents tab. If you have questions or require additional assistance in understanding the DCCRS please contact the association manager.

### Spring into Action!

Each owner, at their own expense, must maintain their yard at a level, standard, and appearance that is commensurate with the neighborhood. Owners are expected to maintain attractive ground cover, rocks, bark mulch or lawn on all yards visible from a street, Common Areas or park/greenbelt with consistent watering, bare dirt is not allowed. It is imperative you mow lawns and trim all plant materials at regular intervals and dispose of clippings. Fertilize as required and practice proper weed control. Trees must be maintained in good health. Now is the time to start your spring lawn care. McKinney Greens Compliance Inspectors tour the neighborhood every couple of weeks, please make sure you are staying on top of your lawn maintenance now, as the warmer temps and spring rains will increase weeds and overgrowth.

### Maintaining your Texas Lawn Might Feel Like a Lot of Work

You might be wondering what lawn care steps you really have to take to keep your yard in good shape. Do you have time to give your lawn the care it really needs to look great? What if you mess something up or overlook a critical task? And, do you have time to maintain your lawn as you should? Below we provide some tips provided by local lawn care vendors.

#### **Lawn Care Tip #1 - Fertilize your Texas lawn year-round.**

Consistency is the key! Your lawn needs ongoing nutrition. Consistent, year-round fertilization prevents regression in the lawn.

#### **Lawn Care Tip #2 - Don't wait for weeds to grow before treating them. Preventive and curative weed control works best.**

Pre-emergent weed control is a treatment that is applied to your lawn before you even see the weeds. Pre-emergent applications help prevent weeds, particularly crabgrass, from reaching the soil line. Pre-emergent is a proactive way to manage crabgrass, which is a problem in many Texas lawns. But, pre-emergent is not a stand-alone solution for minimizing weeds, as it mainly addresses crabgrass. Curative treatments are also critical, this is called post-emergent weed control. **The take-away: Pre-emergent and post-emergent applications work together, so both are part of a complete lawn care program.**

**Lawn Care Tip #3 - Follow these mowing best practices.**

Avoid the temptation to cut your grass extra short. You might think this will buy you time in between mowing's, but grass that is mowed too short is more susceptible to damage from harsh environmental conditions. In Texas, grass that's cut too short runs a greater risk of getting damaged by the hot, dry summer weather. Another common mowing error is cutting more than 1/3 of the total grass height at a time. Ideally, you should adjust the mowing frequency based on how fast your grass is growing, so you'll need to mow more often in early spring than in late summer. *Only cut off 1/3 of your grass's total height at a time.* The other problem is, you can damage the lawn if you leave long grass clippings on your property. Those clippings will basically suffocate the healthy grass, preventing nutrients, sun and oxygen from reaching it.

**In Texas, our lawns are one of these three turf types: Zoysia grass, Bermuda grass and St. Augustine grass. Zoysia can be mowed at 1½ to 3 inches. Bermuda grass should be mowed to 2 inches in height. And, St. Augustine grass can be mowed to 2½ to 4 inches.**

**Lawn Care Tip #4 - Provide the right amount of water to your lawn year-round.**

Consistent, year-round watering helps maintain healthy soil and turf. Aim to water once per week in winter and two to three times per week in warm-weather months. But keep in mind, too much of a good thing can be—well, bad. Over-watering can trigger lawn diseases. Also, timing is critical. Be sure to water your Texas lawn in the early morning so whatever moisture is not absorbed by the soil is evaporated by the sun. Water that sits on a lawn during the night can cause fungal lawn diseases, defeating the whole point of watering in the first place: to keep your lawn healthy. **Make sure to follow the City of McKinney water restrictions when watering your lawn. Friday is your watering day; Monday's only when a second day is necessary.**

**Lawn Care Tip #5 - Manage lawn diseases before they become serious lawn problems.**

Take time to notice areas of your lawn that might be struggling. Look for thin or matted turf, brown spots and general indications that the grass is not performing. There is always a reason why. When you identify lawn diseases early, they can be treated effectively so your lawn has the greatest chance of recovering and growing strong.

**Lawn Care Tip #6 - Keep an eye out for lawn pests and address them immediately.**

Monitor your lawn and identify any changes in appearance or vigor. A lawn care professional who visits your property weekly and gets to know your landscape will detect changes that could indicate issues like lawn pests. Again, early identification and treatment is the key to getting your lawn back on track and healthy, and pest issues are often hard for the average homeowner to diagnose. It's best to have a pro on board who is helping you on a consistent basis. Lawn pests aren't necessarily a huge problem—if they are managed right away (or on a proactive basis).

**Lawn Care Tip #7 - Aerate and overseed your lawn annually, or when necessary.**

Aeration pulls up soil plugs, which breaks up thatch and loosens up compacted soil so grass roots have space to grow. Aeration also helps your lawn benefit from fertilizer applications because treatments can actually reach the turf roots once the lawn is “unplugged.” When combined with overseeding—which is applying new, resilient grass seed to your existing lawn—the two best practices revitalize your lawn. Some homeowners look at aeration and overseeding as extras and wonder if they're really necessary. You can apply fertilizers and weed control year in and year out, but if you never address the grass roots and soil, your lawn will not reach its full potential.

## My Lawn Looks Great – Why am I Still Receiving Violation Notices?

The covenants are designed to protect the value of your property. Working together will ensure the overall community will remain visually appealing to you and your neighbors, surrounding subdivisions, and potential future residents. In addition to lawn maintenance, it is your responsibility to maintain all aspects of your homes exterior.

The return of warm weather brings the perfect time to open up windows and reset. Celebrate the renewal of spring by tidying your home. Consider these smart ways to protect your property inside and out, and avoid unwanted violations.

- **Inspect your roof.** Shingles that are cracked, loose, balding, or downright missing need to be replaced. Have a qualified roofer repair flashing around plumbing vents and chimneys.
- **Inspect your fence.** Check individual fence boards, gates and poles, everything should be in proper working order, and nothing should be unsightly or damaged (think latches and hardware, splintering boards, weather damage, etc.).
  - When a backyard fence splits the property lines between neighbors, it is defined as a boundary fence. Unless your HOA documents specify otherwise, every homeowner shares dual ownership of the allotted portion of a boundary fence existing on their respective property (meaning that your neighbors have the same rights to the shared fence as you do), so if you're planning on repairing or replacing the fence, you need to be familiar with your property survey or plat. This way, you can be sure that you don't infringe on your neighbor's property line. Also, you should communicate with your neighbor about your plans well in advance to avoid any issues or confrontations that may occur over the boundary fence. The HOA will not serve as a mediator for neighbor to neighbor disputes.
- **Clean the gutters.** Ensure April showers don't funnel into your crawl space by clearing out dirt, leaves, and trash from your gutters. Downspouts should drain away from your foundation.
- **Fill low areas of your yard.** These can flood and damage your foundation — and become a hot spot for mosquitoes.
- **Sweep the chimney.** Call a certified sweep to inspect and clean your flue.
- **Test outdoor faucets.** Frost can destroy garden hoses and outdoor faucets. To test, place your thumb or finger over faucet openings and turn on the water. If you can't stop the flow, you've got a leak.
- **Schedule an A/C checkup.** Regularly replace interior air filters yourself, but hire an HVAC tech to clean and service your outside unit once a year to **ensure efficiency** and safety.
- **Test smoke detectors.** Swap old batteries with new.
- **Seal windows and doors.** Your energy bill and the planet will thank you for weather-stripping windows and doors so that they're airtight.
- **Store firewood.** At least 18 inches off the ground and 20 feet from your nearest door.
- **Replace worn window screens.** Inspect window screens for winter damage and replace as needed to discourage pests.
- **Check outdoor security lighting.** Replace broken, or dim lit bulbs.
- **Irrigation system check.** If your property has irrigation throughout, now is the time to check your system: Look for damaged, clogged, or sputter sprinkler heads.
  - Check for inconsistent water coverage or low water pressure
  - Leaking lines, sprinkler heads, or pipes.

- Pooling water or dry spots on your lawn.
- Paint
- **Foundation check.** It's always best to use a licensed professional. How to spot potential foundation issues around the house:
  - Test doors and windows
  - Look for sagging floors or ceilings
  - Inspect sources of mold
  - Check for gaps between exterior windows and walls
  - Examine any bowed walls
  - Pay attention to your chimney
  - Look for nails popping out of drywall
  - Diagnose any cracks in the wall or floor

## Spring into Something New - Looking to Update the Exterior of Your Home??

### What is a Modification?

The word **“modifications”** can refer to a wide range of projects. Whether you're hoping to add something new to your home exterior, or you need **to repair, replace, or update** already-existing features, you may need to submit an application and receive Committee approval to do so. By not submitting for approval a violation may be placed on your account. Like the gas company says, *“Call before you Dig”*, that is the ideal mindset when it comes to your home, you do not want to begin costly modifications or updates that may not meet the approval standards.

### I know the Guidelines, How Do I Submit for Approval?

SBB has an online portal for our homeowners where you can access your owner account, contact management, review open items such as violations, pay dues, and submit modification plans for review and approval.

**The next page has a screenshot of what a homeowner account looks like while logged into the portal.**

- On the left hand side there is a tab labeled **“My Items”**, click on it and then the right side of the screen a new page will populate.
- You will then see an option to **“Submit a Request”**, by clicking submit a request this will then populate an option for **“General”** or **“ARC Request”**.
  - **“General”** relates to sending messages internally and populates options like *“billing questions”* or *“work order”*.
  - The **“ARC Request”** tab allows you to enter all information relating to an upcoming modification request.
  - Once you click **“ARC Request”** a new screen will populate where you can enter more detailed information about your upcoming project.
    - Below the ARC Request option there is a PDF link to the McKinney Greens ACC Form, **this form is required when submitting for approval**. You can download and fill out the form and then attach under the ARC Request tab.

When submitting for approval, it is important you include all required documents. Oftentimes the Committee has had to push back a request to a homeowner due to lack of information. The ACC form gives details on what is needed for review and ideally approval.

### Examples of required documentation include one or more of the following:

- A complete materials list for the project, including exact paint samples and/or stain color.
- A picture or drawing of the modification, complete with dimensions (height, width, depth, etc.).
- A site plan complete with dimensions. This plan must show the location of the following in relation to each other: the house, any other structures on the lot, the proposed structure including setbacks, and all property lines. You or your contractor will need to use a tape measure and complete the legwork necessary to supply these figures.

Most contractors are accustomed to working with HOA's and know the items required for submission, however, it is still the responsibility of the homeowner to make sure a thorough detail of work is submitted with the application for review.

### I've Started or Completed Modifications and Did Not Submit for Approval, What Do I Do?

You will need to login to the owner portal and submit for approval, you will follow the steps above. You will also need to contact management so they can place a note on your account that you have already either started modifications or have completed them and you are submitting after the fact for approval.

The image contains two screenshots of a web portal interface. The top screenshot shows the 'My Items' page. On the left is a navigation menu with items: Dashboard, My Contact Info, Billing, My Items (with a red circle containing the number 5), and Calendar & Events. The main content area has a header 'My Items' and a sub-header 'My Items Submit a Request'. A green arrow points to the 'Submit a Request' link. A box highlights the user name 'Your User Name Appears Here' in the top right corner. Below the header is a welcome message: 'Welcome to your My Items page! This page allows you to follow activity on requests submitted through the Submit a Request page and any open tickets, which we refer to as "Action Items." Action items displayed here include all activity for your property or properties over the last 30 days. This can include any resolved or voided activity.' Below this is a note: 'Click on any individual item displayed to see any messages sent to you and recent activity related to that item. After clicking on the item you can send a message to communicate on that topic.'

The bottom screenshot shows the 'Submit a Request' form. The left navigation menu is the same as in the top screenshot. The main content area has a header 'My Items Submit a Request' and a sub-header 'Select the type of request you would like to submit.' There are two radio buttons: 'General Request' and 'ARC Request'. Below this is a text input field containing 'McKinneyGreensACCForm.pdf'. There are several dropdown menus: 'Property', 'Area of work' (with the text '(Choose an Item)'), and 'Subject'. Below these is a large text area labeled 'Work to be done:'. At the bottom, there are two date pickers: 'Estimated Project Start Date' and 'Estimated Project End Date'. Below the date pickers is a section labeled 'Upload ARC Form and other Documents' with a 'Select files...' button and a green 'Submit Form' button.

## **I Have Submitted My Documents, How Long Will the Review Process Take?**

The McKinney Greens ARC Committee has up to 30 days to respond to your Modification Application request. However, they work to respond to applications in a timelier manner. The new owner portal has afforded the Committee the ability to review documents more quickly and provide owners with faster responses.

**If you have not yet signed up to have access to the portal please do so today:**

1. Go to <https://owner.sbbmanagement.com>
2. Click "Sign up" on the right hand side of the page
3. Submit your information (email address, property address, etc.)

You will receive your login credentials via email after 1-2 business days.

The McKinney Greens Board of Directors and ARC Committee thank you for reviewing the 2022 Spring Memo.

Please contact the Association Manager, Angie Beené ([a.beene@sbbmanagement.com](mailto:a.beene@sbbmanagement.com)) if you have any additional questions, you can also submit questions through the homeowner portal.