

# The Vineyards OF SARATOGA

## March 2012

### NEXT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The next meeting is the Annual Meeting on March 8, 2012 at the Clubhouse beginning at 7:00 P.M. **ALL HOMEOWNERS ARE WELCOME AND ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND!**

#### **Your Board of Directors:**

**Jim Foley** –

President and Maintenance

**Frank Hedges** -

VP, Head of Security

**Steve Gillen** –

Treasurer, Landscape and Clubhouse

**Jim Turke** –

Director and Maintenance

**Laurel Stoner** –

Secretary

**Ruut Van Den Hoed** –

Director & Landscape

**John Glass** -

Director

### WEBSITE

Website for Vineyards -

[www.vineyardsofsaratoga.com](http://www.vineyardsofsaratoga.com)

A good source for up-to-date information, copies of monthly newsletters and minutes of the Board of Directors meetings, etc. If you'd like to be included in email reminders, send your name, unit number and email address to [register@vineyardsofsaratoga.com](mailto:register@vineyardsofsaratoga.com).

Both owners and tenants are welcome. Please indicate owner or tenant.

Gary Martiny, Association Manager  
**Community Management Services, Inc.**

Contact number 408-559-1977

Fax number 408-559-1970

E-mail address:

[gmartiny@communitymanagement.com](mailto:gmartiny@communitymanagement.com)

The emergency after hours  
number is 408-975-2840

FOR YOUR INFORMATION: TO REPORT A CRIME OR ANY SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY TO THE LOCAL SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, CALL 299-2311.

### **Thinking of Buying an E-Car? Where Will You Charge It? - by Frank Hedges**

Auto makers are continuing to ramp up the hype about their all-electric or plug-in hybrid vehicles. If you are considering buying one of these, don't forget to consider the potential costs, difficulties, and delays involved with providing a home charging station. That could be especially troublesome here in the Vineyards, as in other condo or multi-family neighborhoods. A recent newspaper article suggested a cost range of \$1400 to \$3000 for a typical home charging station installation.

For starters, you will probably need a Saratoga building permit and Vineyards HOA advance approval to install the charging station. If you are fortunate enough to have your garage integral with your unit, this may be fairly straightforward, requiring only an additional circuit breaker in your electrical panel and wiring to the specialized outlet. However, if your garage is separate from your unit, it may be presently served by one of the common area meters, and these circuits cannot accommodate the additional load of even the smallest charging station. Getting HOA approval for this kind of installation is uncertain, as we presently have no policies allowing you to install an additional electric meter and hookup to your charging station. This would also bump your installation costs way up. It is highly unlikely that the HOA would approve installation of a charging station in the common area parking, as this would amount to a reserved parking space in the common area.

The Board expects to begin discussions on how we will handle any requests that may come our way for a home charging station. At this point, we can only warn you that it may not be easy, quick, or cheap, and it will be especially tedious, perhaps even perilous, for the "early adopters."

### **A Word to the Wise On Wood Smoke**

The main adverse impact of burning wood, manufactured logs or similar products in common fireplaces is **wood smoke**. According to the **Bay Area Air Quality Management District**, "**Wood smoke** from the 1.4 million fireplaces and wood stoves in the Bay Area can trigger asthma attacks making it difficult for people to breathe, especially children, seniors and those with heart or lung conditions. **Wood smoke** is the largest source of wintertime air pollution in the Bay Area and contains **harmful pollutants** such as hazardous soot and carbon monoxide, as well as toxins such as dioxin, which is linked to increased cancer rates in adults." Additionally, the **California Air Resources Board** states that: "**Manufactured fireplace logs**, for instance, are not recommended for burning because they produce **toxic fumes**, including PCBs (polychlorinated biphenals)."

Furthermore, in order to minimize the levels of indoor combustion pollutants emitted from older types of fireplaces, like the original fireplaces installed at the Vineyards, large volumes of indoor air must be exhausted up the chimney during such burning. As a result, furnaces usually have to run longer in order to heat and replace such exhausted air, thus increasing utility bills.

In summary, one of the best ways to **protect** you and your neighbors from the adverse effects of **toxic** air pollutants and possibly save money, is to avoid burning wood, manufactured logs or similar products in any fireplace at the Vineyards. - Anthony R. Fisher. Ph.D.

## HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY



## **WHAT NOT TO PUT DOWN YOUR DRAINS**

Our trash that goes in the can or recycling is waste we have no choice but to face. Whether it's hauling the trash cans to the sidewalk, bringing recycling to a center—it's a mass of garbage that we have to contend with. Liquid waste, on the other hand, simply gets rinsed down the drain and it's "bye-bye never have to think about you again." It's a much more expedient process—one that's hidden from the eyes of any sanitation departments—and one that can wreak waves of environmental chaos, not to mention what it can do to your pipes. We often don't realize the harm we are doing by what we rinse down our kitchen sinks, bath and shower drains, and even what we flush down our toilets.

In a study published in 2002, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) collected and analyzed water samples from 139 streams in 30 states. The goal of the study was to measure concentrations of 95 wastewater-related organic chemicals in water. And guess what? One or more of these chemicals were found in 80 percent of the streams sampled. Half of the streams contained seven or more of these chemicals, and about one-third of the streams contained 10 or more of these chemicals. Pharmaceutical and personal-care products are to blame for many of the chemicals found in the USGS study. Research has shown that there can be effects on aquatic organisms like fish and frogs. Lesson here: don't flush unwanted prescriptions and try to purchase all-natural personal care products.

But another area of concern is kitchen waste—namely fats, oils and greases which can not only clog pipes, but are terrible for sewage systems. According to the Watership Environment Foundation (WEF), sewer overflows and backups can cause health hazards, damage home interiors, and threaten the environment. An increasingly common cause of overflows is sewer pipes blocked by grease—this results in raw sewage overflowing in your home or your neighbor's home; An expensive and unpleasant cleanup that often must be paid for by you, the homeowner; Raw sewage overflowing into parks, yards, and streets; Potential contact with disease-causing organisms; and an increase in operation and maintenance costs for local sewer departments, which causes higher sewer bills for customers. Where does the grease that causes sewer overflows come from? Much of it from the kitchen sink.

Meat fats, Lard, Cooking oil, Shortening, Butter and margarine, Food scraps, Baking goods, Sauces, Dairy products

Grease sticks to the insides of sewer pipes (both on your property and in the streets). Over time, the grease can build up and block the entire pipe. Note that home garbage disposals do not keep grease out of the plumbing system. These units only shred solid material into smaller pieces and do not prevent grease from going down the drain. Commercial additives, including detergents, that claim to dissolve grease may pass grease down the line and cause problems in other areas.

WEF suggests these tips to alleviate pipe blockage and sewer overflows:

- Never pour grease down sink drains or into toilets.
- Scrape grease and food scraps from trays, plates, pots, pans, utensils, and grills and cooking surfaces into a can or the trash for disposal (or recycling where available).
- Do not put grease down garbage disposals. Put baskets/strainers in sink drains to catch food scraps and other solids, and empty the drain baskets/strainers into the trash for disposal.
- Speak with your friends and neighbors about the problem of grease in the sewer system and how to keep it out.
- Call your local sewer system authority if you have any questions.

### **Other Things to Never Wash Down Your Drain:**

Fats, oils or grease from cars or lawnmowers, Coffee grinds, Egg shells, Produce stickers, Chunks of garbage  
Feminine hygiene products, Paper towels, Flushable cat litter, Rags, Condoms, Motor oil, transmission fluids,  
anti-freeze or other toxic chemicals, Solvents, paints, turpentine, nail polish, polish remover, Flammable or  
explosive substances, Corrosive substances that are either acidic or caustic, Prescription and over-the-counter  
medications.

**The HOA will not be responsible for any plumbing charges that must be cleared from within your  
unit.**

### **REMINDER ABOUT FIRE CODE REGULATIONS REGARDING BBQ GRILLES**

Back in 2008, the Santa Clara County Fire Department, as part of a state-wide project, prohibited the use of  
bbq grilles in multi-family dwellings with flammable siding materials and lacking sprinkler systems. A copy of  
the notification from the Fire Department is attached for reference.