

COURTYARD HOMEOWNERS
ASSOCIATION, INC.

COURTYARD CALLER

Official Courtyard Newsletter

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BOARD MESSAGE FOR DECEMBER 2020 CALLER

With the cooler weather, the holiday season has arrived! Although the 2020 holidays may look different with Covid-19 still amongst us, we can choose to be thankful and celebrate life's joys in many small ways. Perhaps we can help a neighbor with lawn care or pick up groceries. Perhaps you can organize a Zoom gathering with extended family members. Whatever way you will be spending the holidays, we want to express our sincere thanks to all of our wonderful neighbors who give selflessly of their time and effort to the Courtyard community, the Austin community, or communities further afield. You ARE making a difference!

As we enter the holiday season, there are a few safety reminders for folks here in the neighborhood for the community Park and your homes. The first reminder is that the Park Gate code may not be given to any person who is not a Courtyard resident, including photographers, friends, or extended relatives. Although you may hire a photographer to take pictures of your family in the Park, photographers may not conduct photo sessions for any non-residents in our Park.

The second reminder is to secure all vehicles parked in driveways and on the street. This is the time when, for the past two years, auto burglaries and theft have spiked in the Courtyard and surrounding neighborhoods. PLEASE, if you cannot squeeze your vehicles into your garage and are parking in the driveway or on the street, make sure you remove all valuables and lock your vehicles. If you do experience any mayhem, please report it immediately to the police AND to our Security Chair Jim Lloyd at jlloyd@austin.rr.com. Jim is able to compile information from both our License Plate Recognition cameras and from neighbor reports and front door cameras which may help in apprehending the criminals. The more reports we file with APD, the more patrols we receive.

Although thefts in progress are definitely a call to 9-1-1, non-emergency reports should be routed to 3-1-1. If you have not downloaded the 3-1-1 app on your smartphone, please do so. It is a simple, quick way to report non-emergency events, and you will receive an email confirming your report. The 3-1-1 app has a GPS locator which makes it extremely helpful to pinpoint the location of the item being reported.

Annual dues statements and proxies for the 2021 Annual Meeting will be arriving soon in your mailbox. Please watch for these and take care of these promptly. The 2021 Annual Meeting will be held in late January, and will likely be a virtual event.

Get outside for a walk, enjoy the cooler temperatures, and always **DRIVE SLOWLY** in the Courtyard!



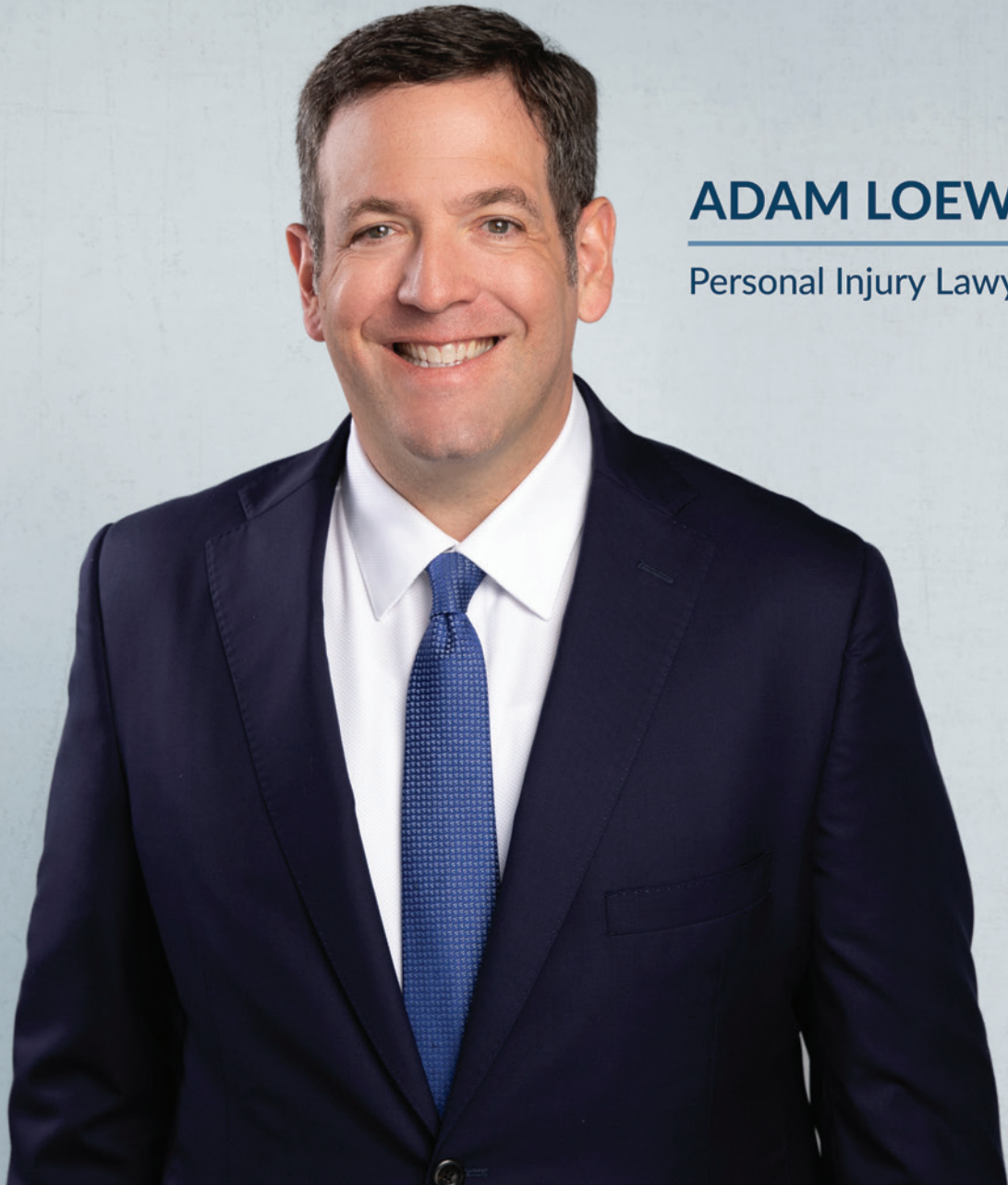
FIREWISE USA™ Residents reducing wildfire risks

There is something about the winter months and curling up with a good book by the fireplace. But did you know that heating equipment is one of the leading causes of home fire deaths? With a few simple safety tips and precautions you can prevent most heating fires from happening. Be warm and safe this winter!

The National Fire Protection Association and the Firewise Association recommends the following tips:

- Keep anything that can burn at least three-feet away from heating equipment, like the furnace, fireplace, wood stove, or portable space heater.
 - Have a three-foot "kid-free zone" around open fires and space heaters.
 - Never use your oven to heat your home.
 - Have a qualified professional install stationary space heating equipment, water heaters or central heating equipment according to the local codes and manufacturer's instructions.
 - Have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional.
 - Remember to turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.
 - Always use the right kind of fuel, specified by the manufacturer, for fuel burning space heaters.
 - Make sure the fireplace has a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying into the room. Ashes should be cool before putting them in a metal container. Keep the container a safe distance away from your home.
 - Test smoke alarms at least once a month.
 - Install wood burning stoves following manufacturer's instructions or have a professional do the installation.
 - All fuel-burning equipment should be vented to the outside to avoid carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning.
 - Install and maintain CO alarms to avoid the risk of CO poisoning.
- If you smell gas in your gas heater, do not light the appliance. Leave the home immediately and call your local fire department or gas company.

Bicycle Accidents | Boating Accidents | Car Accidents | Dog Bites | Drunk Driving Accidents
Injuries to Children | Motorcycle Accidents | Slip and Falls | Truck Accidents | Wrongful Death



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TIME TO TRIM OAKS

Oak Wilt season begins in February. If you intend to trim your oak trees, you may do so up until **January 31, 2021**. If you need to do regular maintenance or trim branches away from your house or roof, NOW is the time. This protects your home from many potential issues, including transfer of embers during wildfire season. If you are planning significant oak limb removal, check the City of Austin website for rules regarding heritage trees AND please communicate with any neighbors who will be affected by your tree limb removal project. ECC approval is required for ANY complete tree removal, but is not required for regular pruning of non-heritage trees. If you have questions, contact Janet Wright at mightywrights@me.com.

Welcome to the Neighborhood

**Ronnie and Ian Schleiss
5504 Courtyard Drive**

Ronnie and Ian have lived in the area for the last 28 years and are happy to be settling into the Courtyard.

Ian enjoys bike riding, golfing, and listening to music when he is not at his day program for adults with developmental disabilities (BiG - Bee Cave). Ian's work at BiG-BeeCave involves making jewelry, dog treats, soap, and wood products. Ian may have some of his dog treats on hand to offer your dog should your paths cross while out walking.

Ronnie enjoys hiking, stand up paddling, cycling, yoga, a little bit of gardening, and volunteering when the opportunity presents. A former tennis player, she is toying with the idea of taking up tennis again.

Note: This is a new feature, and we would like to include all our new neighbors going forward. If we've missed you, please let us know by contacting Erik Maye, erikmaye@gmail.com or Carolyn Brakhage, cbrakhage@gmail.com

COMPLIANCE CORNER

Trash Bin Reminder

Trash bins may be placed on the street no earlier than Thursday evening and must be removed no later than Friday evening. (HOA Declaration, Article VIII, Section 10).

WATER CONSERVATION IN THE WINTER SAVES MONEY YEAR ROUND

by Jacob Johnson, Austin Water

Conserving water during late fall and winter saves you money on two fronts. First, you get a break from those landscape-induced higher summer water bills. Second, and just as important, conserving water during this time can keep your wastewater bills lower for the next 12 months.

There is no meter on your home's wastewater line, so to determine residential wastewater volume Austin Water uses a process called wastewater averaging. Austin Water averages your water use during your three monthly billing periods between mid-November and mid-March. This average sets a cap on the wastewater volume you will be billed for the next 12 month period.

In late fall/winter, the typical landscape rarely needs supplemental water, pools don't usually need to be topped off and slip and slides have been packed away. Without all that outdoor water demand, this timeframe typically gives a good indication of how much water is being used indoors, going down the drain, and ultimately to a wastewater treatment plant. The lower that average water use is, the lower your wastewater charges can be.

Let's say a family of four averages 6,000 gallons of water use monthly during their wastewater averaging period. As summer comes along, and their outdoor water use increases, they use 12,000 gallons per month. The family will be charged for 12,000 gallons of water, but because of their wastewater average, they will continue to only be charged for the 6,000 gallons of wastewater average cap.

Even after the wastewater average is set, wastewater charges can be lowered by using less water than the wastewater average cap. If the family with the 6,000 wastewater average uses 5,000 gallons of water one month, they will only be charged 5,000 gallons for wastewater volume. Wastewater volume is billed at the wastewater average cap or at the same volume as the monthly water usage, whichever is lower.

A higher wastewater average will result when irrigation systems are left on or leaks are present during the 3 month wastewater average period, and can be very costly. Turn off automatic irrigation systems and identify and repair leaks early.

To find your specific waste water averaging period, check out the Utility News section on your utility billing statement. Customers must have at least 60 days of billed water usage during the wastewater averaging period to have a calculated wastewater average. Visit www.austintexas.gov/wastewateraveraging for additional information.

This winter, practice good water conservation behaviors, turn off your irrigation system, and see how low you can go!



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Styrofoam Recycling: The City of Austin styrofoam recycling program is currently on hold during the stay-at-home order. Styrofoam cannot be recycled curbside in your blue receptacles. Please consider saving your styrofoam for drop off at the City recycling center once the center has reopened. Thank you!



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VEHICLE THEFT AND BURGLARY PREVENTION

We often see an uptick in an auto crimes during the holiday season. The best way to prevent auto burglary or theft is to park in your garage. If you cannot park inside your garage, always lock your vehicle. Never store valuables in your vehicle, and hide any belongings if leaving them inside your vehicle.

The Austin Police Department's Auto Theft Interdiction Unit compiles a list of the most popular stolen vehicles. The most recent list from 2017 suggests pickup trucks are the most common target for auto theft:

Rank	Make/Model	Count
1	Ford Trucks	158
2	Chevy and GMC Trucks	128
3	Honda Accord	84
4	Dodge Trucks	68
5	Chevy and GMC SUVs	62
6	Honda Civic	55
7	Nissan Altima	44
8	Jeep SUVs	42
9	Toyota Camry	41
10	Toyota Corolla	32

If you are the victim of an auto crime in the Courtyard, please report it immediately to the police AND to our Security Chair Jim Lloyd at jlloyd@austin.rr.com.





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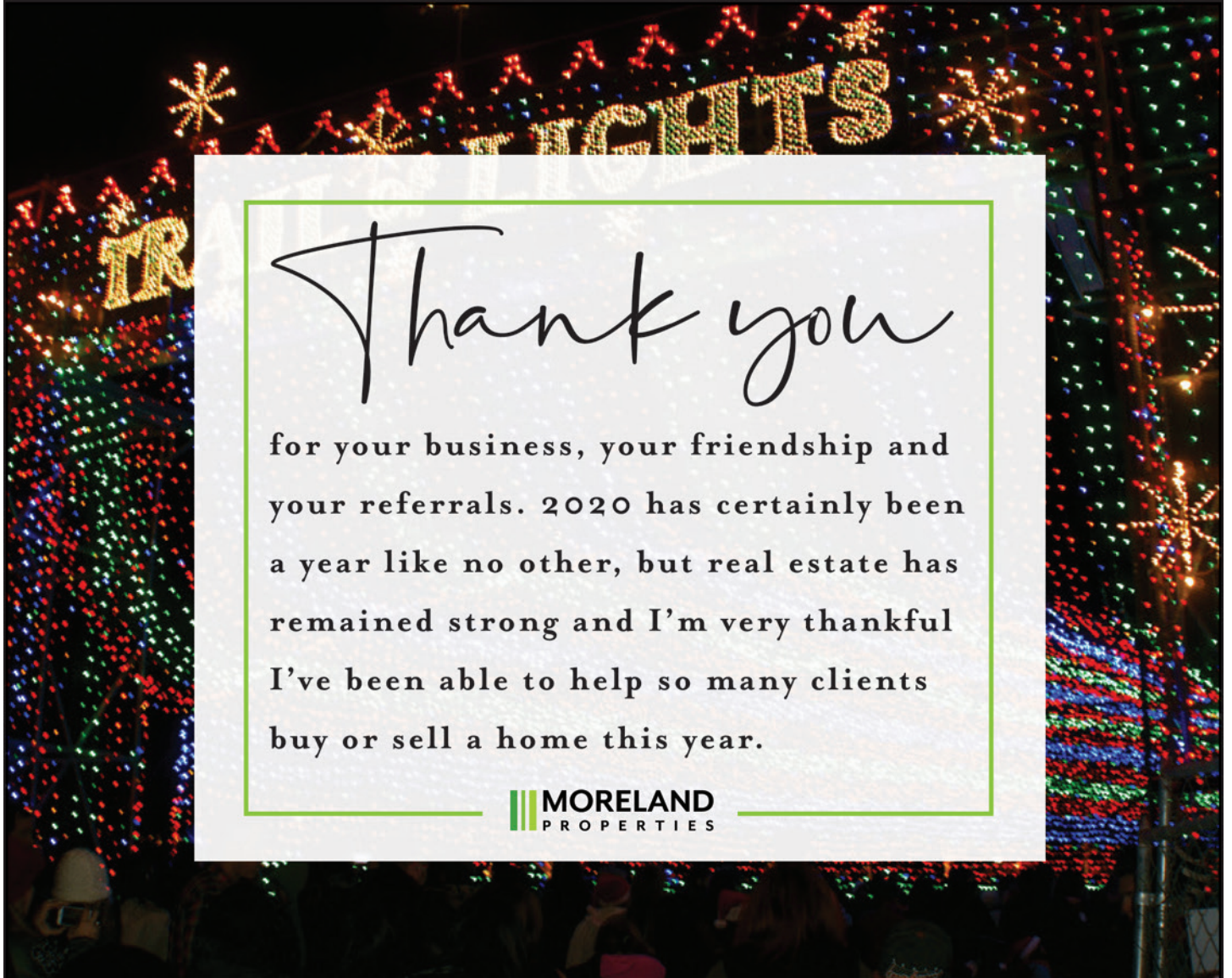


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Thank you

for your business, your friendship and
your referrals. 2020 has certainly been
a year like no other, but real estate has
remained strong and I'm very thankful
I've been able to help so many clients
buy or sell a home this year.



If you are thinking about a new home for the holidays, contact me.
I'll put my 40+ years of experience to work for you.

Jo Carol
Snowden

Broker Associate, ABR



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