



SOUTH PASADENA NEIGHBORS

The Official Community Newsletter ♦ Volume 4, No. 2 ♦ Autumn 1999

For Your Information

You'll notice that this issue of "Neighbors" has a different look! Residents and businesses frequently call or write to various City departments requesting information on a wide variety of issues. For this issue, City employees put together a comprehensive list of some of these questions and, of course, provided the answers you seek.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION:

When does the City Council meet?

The City Council meets on the first and third Wednesday of every month at 7:30 p.m. in the City Council chambers.

Do I need a business license to operate a home business/office?

Yes, the approval process can take up to two weeks. The initial cost is \$161.00.

Can a post office box be used as a business location?

No, you must have a residential or commercial location for the business. However you can use a P.O. box as your mailing address.



1] City employees are always available to answer questions and process requests. 2] Facilities like the Senior Center and War Memorial Building can accommodate large banquets and small gatherings. 3] Community Services offers a wide variety of programs for kids of all ages. 4] Contact the City's Building Department to find out more about construction permits and working on your house. 5] Seniors enjoy a leisurely game at the Center. 6] Amédee Richards, president of the Mission West Association, and City officials open Farmers' Market at a recent dedication ceremony. 7] At your service 8] Businesses adjacent to Farmers' Market stay open later on the first Thursday of every month.

Can I use my credit card for payment?

Yes, we now accept Visa and MasterCard payments for business licenses, day care, leisure classes, dog licenses and permits.

Can I choose a different disposal company?

No, the City has an exclusive contract with Athens Disposal Company.

COMMUNITY SERVICES:

How do I reserve a park picnic area for a family gathering?

Garfield, Orange Grove and Arroyo Parks have picnic areas that can be reserved for a fee of \$35 for four hours of use. Applications for reserved use can be completed at the Recreation Center at 815 Mission Street, from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. For more information call (626) 403-7380.

Does the city have facilities that can be rented to the community for banquets and parties?

Yes. The Senior Center (1102 Oxley St.) and War Memorial Building (435 Fair Oaks Ave.) can accommodate both large banquets (up to 200 persons for dining) and small gatherings. For information call (626) 403-7321.

Do you offer the new form of aerobics called Tae Bo?

Yes, Tae Bo is offered through the Leisure Classes Program under the Community Services Department. Currently two classes are offered on Sunday mornings. The first class begins at 8:30 a.m. and the second at 9:30 a.m. The fee to participate is \$8 per class for walk-ins or \$24 for four weeks. For more information call (626) 403-7360.

Do you know how I can find low-income housing or emergency shelter?

You can call the INFO Line of Los Angeles County. Someone is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to assist with referrals. Call the County Info Line at (800) 339-6993.

Do you have to be a member to attend classes or trips offered by the Senior Center?

No, you do not have to be a member to participate in the fee-based activities. However, membership to the Center is available for \$12 year. Membership entitles persons to participate in more than 20-25 free classes and receive a monthly newsletter.

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DEVELOPMENT & PUBLIC WORKS:

Do I need a permit to build a fence?

No. However, you can't exceed the maximum allowable fence height of six feet in the rear and side yard areas, and three feet in the front yard area. The three-foot maximum height also applies to side yard areas on corner lots. A building permit is required for all retaining walls that retain more than three feet of earth. A City Planner can assist you in determining what parts of your property are considered front, side, and rear yard areas. Please call the planning staff at (626) 403-7220.

What are the Cultural Heritage Commission and the Design Review Board?

The Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) and the Design Review Board (DRB) are review bodies made up of volunteers in the community and appointed by the City Council. The CHC is responsible for reviewing proposed modifications to buildings and homes that are listed on the City's inventory of historical resources. The CHC plays an integral role in protecting and preserving the City's historical housing stock. The DRB is responsible for reviewing new construction of and proposed modifications to all buildings and homes, as well as commercial signs. If you are planning to make changes to your home or to put up a new sign for your business, check with planning staff to determine if your project must be presented to one or both of these boards. You can speak to a city planner by calling (626) 403-7220.

Do I need a permit to work on my house?

This depends on the type of work you are doing. Examples of work that does not require a permit include painting your house, installing carpet and flooring, installing counters and cabinetry, and installing rain gutters. Examples of work that does require a permit include roof repairs, water heater installation, air conditioning and heating system installation, plumbing work, electrical work, room additions, foundation retrofitting, and window change outs. If you are in doubt about whether your proposed work requires a permit, call a member of the City's Building Department staff at (626) 403-7220.

Can I run my business from my home?

The City's Zoning Code allows residents to operate a business from their home as long as it does not affect the residential character of the neighborhood. For example, you cannot employ anyone other than resident members of the family, you cannot generate pedestrian or vehicular traffic, and commercial vehicles cannot deliver materials to or from the premises. In addition, the garage area cannot be used for business use, and the home occupation must be conducted indoors. The appearance of the home cannot be altered in any way so as to be recognizable as serving a nonresidential use. If you are considering operating a business from your home, call the planning staff at (626) 403-7220.

Can I convert my garage into habitable living space?

This is permissible only under very limited cir-

cumstances. Planning approval and building permits must be received before attempting to convert your garage to living space. Alternative covered parking must be provided and the maximum floor area ratio permissible for your property cannot be exceeded. If your garage has been illegally converted into living space, you may be required to convert it back into a garage. To determine if your garage can be converted to habitable living space, consult with a member of the City's planning staff at (626) 403-7220.

How do I get construction permits?

If you are hiring a contractor to work on your house, it is best to allow him/her to apply for the permits. The contractor must have a business license and workers' compensation insurance. If you are going to complete the work on your own, you can apply for an owner-builder permit at the City's Community Development Department.

Do I need a permit to remove the tree in my front yard?

Yes, a permit is required for the removal of any mature tree in your front yard or for the removal of a native California species or oak tree anywhere on private property. The fee for a Private Property Tree Removal/Replacement Permit is \$60.00, plus \$10.00 per tree for inspection. As a condition of the permit, a replacement tree must be planted within 90 days of the issuance date on the permit. The replacement tree may be planted anywhere on private property, in the City's parkway or in a local park upon approval of the Park Supervisor.

A permit is also required for the trimming of a native California species (see box) or oak tree located anywhere on private property. The fee for this permit is \$25.00, plus \$10.00 per tree for inspection. Owners are required to hire professional tree trimming contractors to perform any tree trimming work on these protected species and the percentage of live foliage permitted for removal is limited. If you have any questions regarding tree limits, please contact the Public Works Department at (626) 403-7240.

NATIVE CALIFORNIA SPECIES & OAK TREES

Coast Redwood • Giant Redwood
Dawn Redwood
California Walnut • Sycamore
Toyon, Christmas Berry
Blue Elderberry • Mexican Elderberry
Tanbark Oak • Valley Oak • Blue Oak
Englemann Oak • Canyon Live Oak
Coast Live Oak
California Live Oak • Interior Live Oak
California Black Oak
Oracle Oak • Palmer Oak

When will the City be repairing the pothole on my street?

Street maintenance crews will patch potholes as soon as possible. Major street repairs are made using private contractors to the extent allowed by available funding. The Public

Works Department is currently evaluating and ranking all City streets to establish priorities and schedule needed improvements. The results of this analysis will be available this October.

The street light in front of my home is out. When will it be replaced?

There are no regular patrols inspecting street lights so we rely on citizens to report street light malfunctions. The direct number to call when reporting street light outages is (626) 403-7373. There are presently two separate lighting systems in the City. Southern California Edison Company owns one and the other is City-owned. Efforts are made to replace lamps as soon as possible. Streetlight outages that cause an area to be especially dark should be reported to the Police Department so that additional patrols can be provided until the lighting is restored.

YARD WASTE

Yard Waste consists of grass clippings, leaves and tree trimmings:

Apply the "Yard Waste" decals to your designated trash cans and place your yard waste directly into these barrels. Please turn the barrel(s) so the decal is visible to the collection crew. To avoid contamination of yard waste, don't put it in plastic or paper bags.

Trimming bundles and tied into four-foot lengths by two-foot wide, not exceeding 35 lbs. will be collected if placed next to barrels. Tree trimmings larger than 10 inches in diameter and palm fronds are not considered yard waste.

Set the designated barrel(s) next to your regular trash barrels on your regularly scheduled pick up day.

I just moved to South Pasadena. Will the City provide me with recycling crates?

Yes, if you need them. There are two trash collection systems. If you live in a house or rental property with less than four dwellings, you're required to separate your recyclables from the remainder of your trash. The recycling bins for cans, glass and newspaper are provided by the City. Green waste, such as grass, leaves and clippings should be collected in standard trash containers. The City will provide "Yard Waste" labels for you to affix to your containers.

Standard service allows for collection of up to 220 gallons of trash/green waste per week. This is equivalent to approximately six 35-gallon trash barrels. Please call the Public Works Department at (626) 403-7240 for free delivery of recycling crates directly to your home and for "Yard Waste" labels to place on barrels for green waste collection. All customers who use trash bins or dumpsters are participating in a program whereby the entire waste stream is taken to a Material Recovery Facility (MRF) where virtually all recoverable materials are extracted from the commingled trash. The MRF is a facility

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with elaborate sorting and separating machines that has been in operation since July 1997.

RECYCLING

ORANGE CONTAINER: For aluminum and tin cans, glass containers (used for food and beverage products), and plastic containers (clear plastic soda, juice or water bottles, detergent, shampoo, fabric softener, etc.; P.E.T.# & H.D.P.E. #2). No aluminum foil, aerosol cans or scrap metals.

GREEN CONTAINER: For newspapers and inserted supplements. No magazines or phone books.

LIBRARY:

How do I get a library card?

Simply fill out a library card application and present that with valid identification containing your current address (driver's license, bill, or personalized check) at the library's circulation desk. If you're under the age of 18, a parent's or guardian's signature is required (Library card applications are also available in Chinese & Spanish).

Do I have to be a resident of South Pasadena to get a card? Is there a fee?

South Pasadena residency is not a requirement. There is no fee.

Can I use a different city's library card to check things out?

You must have a South Pasadena Public Library card to check out library material. If you have lost your card, the replacement charge is \$1.50.

When is the library open?

Except for scheduled holidays, the library schedule is: M-W 11:00 am - 9:00 pm; Th/Fri 10:00 am-6:00 pm; Sat 10:00 am - 5:00 pm; Sun. 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm.

How long can I check library materials out?

The loan period for most library materials is three (3) weeks. Maximum borrowing period, including one renewal, is six (6) weeks.

Can I renew library materials over the phone?

Library materials may be renewed by calling (626) 403-7340 during regular business hours. Please have your library card in hand. Most library material may be renewed one time only. If there is a hold placed on library material by another person, that item cannot be renewed.

How can I put a hold on library materials I want which are already charged out?

Reserve Requests cost \$1.00 and are payable in advance at the Circulation Desk.

Can I get books from other libraries that aren't in the South Pasadena Public Library?

Yes. Ask for an Interlibrary Loan (ILL) form at the Reference Desk. The ILL fee is \$1.00.

Do you have videos available at the library?

The library has videos as well as audio books on cassette and music CDs. There is no charge for checking out these audio-visual materials.

Do you have Internet access at the library?

Yes. There are four Internet workstations. In addition, the library provides word processors as well as typewriters.

Do you have special programs for children and adults available at the library?

The bi-monthly Library Calendar contains dates, times, and locations of regular programs & events for children and adults. The bi-monthly Library News newsletter highlights special events, activities, programs, and holidays. Both library publications are available for free in the library.

What number should I call at the library if I'm not sure who to call for information?

Call the Reference Desk at (626) 403-7350.

SAFETY:

Why does the fire engine go with the ambulance on calls?

It takes five to seven people to handle patient care, to assist with any equipment needed, removal of the patient from the home and to assist on the way to the hospital. All the employees of the South Pasadena Fire Department are certified by the State to respond to emergency medical calls and more than half are state certified paramedics.

What do firefighters do when they are not putting out fires?

They are busy performing many other duties. These include: training, fire prevention inspections, station and vehicle maintenance, environmental hazardous material inspections and responses; public education, urban search and rescue team training, swift water rescue training, post traumatic stress debriefing, sessions for San Gabriel Valley police and fire personnel and their families, fire hydrant maintenance, fire plans checks, CPR and first aid training, disaster preparedness, school fire and earthquake drills, physical fitness and tours of our facility.

I'm concerned about the weeds in my neighbor's yard. I have called and reported this to the city. Why has it taken so long to correct the problem?

City staff endeavors to notify property owners right away when it has been determined that they must abate weeds on private property. Most property owners clear the weeds upon notification. However, the process slows down if the owner is uncooperative. Upon receipt of a complaint about weeds, the engine company inspects to see if the condition constitutes a hazard. If there is a problem, a notice is sent to the owner of the property.

Upon receipt of the first notice, the owner is given 14 days to correct the problem. If the situation is not corrected, a second notice is sent giving the owner seven more days to comply. If upon re-inspection, the problem is still not abated, a final letter is sent to the owner asking that they meet

FIRST THURSDAYS

'First Thursdays' will be a unique feature of the Farmers' Market. On the first Thursday of each month, businesses adjacent to the Farmers' Market will stay open later to allow shoppers to enjoy refreshments, discounts, raffles, free antique appraisals, and other special events sponsored by the Mission West merchants. FIRST THURSDAYS begins October 7.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS



SEPTEMBER 2

First day of school

SEPTEMBER 6

LABOR DAY

City Offices and Library closed

SEPTEMBER 11

Household Hazardous Waste Roundup
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

900 South Fremont, Alhambra

OCTOBER 2 AND 3

Mission West Arts and Crafts Festival
Mission Street

OCTOBER 7

"First Thursday" in Mission Street

OCTOBER 11

COLUMBUS DAY HOLIDAY
City Offices and Library closed

OCTOBER 16

DUMPSTER DAY

8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Corner of Mission Street and Arroyo Drive

NOVEMBER 4

"First Thursday" in Mission Street

NOVEMBER 11

VETERANS DAY

City Offices and Library closed

NOVEMBER 24

Library closes at 5:00 p.m.

NOVEMBER 25 AND 26

THANKSGIVING

City Offices and Library closed

DECEMBER 2

Mission West Holiday Open House

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CITY PROVIDING BICYCLE LICENSES

The City now offers bicycle licenses at no cost to South Pasadena residents. Come to the Finance Department in City Hall to register your bicycle. A bicycle license provides the Police Department with useful information in the event that your bicycle is stolen.

ATTENTION WATER CUSTOMERS!

A late fee of five percent on the balance of delinquent water bills is now being applied. Please read your bill carefully to ensure that you remit a timely water bill payment.

SOUTH PASADENA TOURNAMENT OF ROSES

Individuals and foursomes are encouraged to participate in the South Pasadena Tournament

of Roses annual golf tournament fundraiser on Nov. 6. at the Arroyo Seco Golf Course. The 18-hole tournament will include individual hole contests and lunch will be provided. Phone (626) 441-3150 for more information.

At the golf tournament, the winner of the exclusive VIP drawing will be announced. One

lucky prizewinner will win four VIP Rose Parade reviewing stand seats, an elegant luncheon for four at the Rose Bowl, four 50-yardline seats at the football game and parking passes.

Buy one of the 200 tax-deductible \$100 tickets and start the millennium as a "Very Important Person." Call (626) 441-3150 and order your tickets now. The winner will be announced at the golf tournament on Nov. 6.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE —

with the Fire Chief to explain why the weeds have not been cut. This process can take up to six weeks. If the owner does not appear, the property is turned over to the Los Angeles County Agricultural Department to put on their list of properties to clear. The charge to clear the weeds is put on the property owner's tax bill. The schedule for clearing is established by the County Agricultural Department.

Does the Police Department provide fingerprinting services to the public?

Yes, except for immigration purposes. The hours are Monday—8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Tuesday through Friday—8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. The cost is \$12 for up to three print cards.

How can I get an overnight parking permit?

Overnight parking permits can be obtained at the Police Department at any time. The cost is \$1 per day (three day maximum); \$11 per

month (three month maximum); \$64 (prorated) per year. Exact cash or check only.

How do I get a copy of a police report?

You must complete a report request form at the Police Department. The cost is 25 cents per page. It can take up to ten days to complete the report and you will be notified when the report is ready.

I lost my parking ticket. Can I find out how much I owe and when it is due?

Yes. You can call the Police Department at (626) 403-7270.

My car has been towed. What do I need to do to get it back?

The registered or legal owner must obtain a vehicle release form from the Police Department. A picture identification and a fee of \$80 must be provided. The owner is responsible for picking up the vehicle from the towing company. The towing company will also charge a towing and storage fee.

Did we just have an earthquake?

Please do not contact the Police Department to inquire about earthquakes unless you need to report an emergency. If the dispatch system is flooded with non-emergency calls, we cannot respond to actual emergencies.

My electricity is out. How can I find out when it will come back on?

It is helpful for the Police Department to know that there has been a power outage. However, the Police Department does not know when power will be restored. Call Southern California Edison at 800-455-4555 to find out when power will be restored.

What should I do if I smell gas?

Call 9-1-1 to report the smell of gas.

When can I use 9-1-1?

The 9-1-1 emergency telephone system should only be used to report emergencies that require immediate police, fire or paramedic response.

CITY COUNCIL

David Saeta, *Mayor*
Dorothy M. Cohen, *Mayor Pro Tem*
Harry A. Knapp *Councilmember*
David Rose, *Councilmember*
Paul Zee, *Councilmember*

Jeannine Gregory, *City Clerk*
Victor Robinette, *City Treasurer*

SOUTH PASADENA Neighbors is published by the City of South Pasadena and is distributed as a public service to City residents and businesses. We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please call the City Manager's Office at (626) 403-7210.



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