



Nichols Hills E-News

July 2012

CITY NEWS

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Upcoming Meetings

- City Council Meeting
August 14th
5:30 pm at City Hall
- Regular Meeting of Municipal Authority
August 14th
5:45 pm at City Hall
- Board of Adjustment
August 15th
5:30 pm at City Hall
- Environmental, Health & Sustainability Committee
August 22nd
8:30 am at City Hall

The recent hailstorm and necessary repairs bring to mind several important reminders:

- 1) Please be sure you list your address as "Nichols Hills, OK" with all of your contractors. That will ensure that NH gets all the sales tax due (which is what our operating budget runs on).**
- 2) There are many construction vehicles parked on the streets, which can block the view around them. In addition to being an annoyance, this can also be dangerous to walkers and children on bikes. Please be cautious and warn your children to be even more vigilant.**
- 3) With lots of necessary "strangers" working in town, it is easier for nefarious strangers to slip around unnoticed. Keep your doors locked and be aware.**

Sody Clements, City Councilman

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FIRE DEPARTMENT

What to Do If You Have a Fire

A fire is a traumatic experience if you own the structure that burns. Whether it's a business or your home a major fire often leaves people shocked and confused about what to do next. In this article I will attempt to give you some guidance that I hope will help if this ever happens to you or someone close to you .

First and foremost your safety is the most important factor. Do not attempt to enter the structure until the Fire Officer in Charge (OIC) of that incident gives you permission. Structures that have had significant fire damage are never safe; there is always some risk when you enter a building after a fire. There may be damage to load bearing walls or other supports that is not visible and there is the added weight of the water that remains as well as other factors that make this a dangerous situation. There is also light smoke that filters through the debris, sometimes for several hours that can be very toxic so please consult with the fire department before entering a burned structure. We are not there to take over your personal business or stop you from regaining control of your life; our number one objective is to keep you safe.

We always do a thorough fire investigation to determine a point of origin of the fire and to determine the cause of the fire. In order to keep from disturbing important clues we do not want civilians or even fire fighters in the structure any more than necessary. If the OIC does not allow you into the structure feel free to ask him/her why but please follow their instructions; there are usually very important reasons for the decision the OIC making.

Making contacts ASAP is also very important. News crews are very fast to broadcast significant fires so contact your friends and family ASAP to let them know what happened and the status of everybody who lived or worked in the building. News reports are rarely complete so don't let them worry if you can help it.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Contact your insurance agent ASAP. This will help start the documentation process early and they can help you with immediate needs like lodging, living expenses, securing the remaining property, debris clean-up, etc. If you are a renter contact the owner or property manager ASAP.

At some point you or your insurance agent will want a copy of the fire report. Most fire departments keep very good records and reports of incidents and most of these records fall under the Open Records laws and are available at your request. At Nichols Hills we make it as easy as possible for you to get a copy of the fire report but please understand that it may take some time for us to complete the report. We usually complete our fire reports in a couple of days but occasionally it takes longer. For example, if a fire happens on a Friday night we may not be able to get some of the information we need until the following week (e.g. information from OG&E or ONG or contact witnesses, etc.).

Securing the property is very important. Once the fire department has released the property back to the owner it is the owner's responsibility to secure the property. Often there are valuables remaining that must be protected and there are liability issues; you do not want anybody to enter the building and get hurt. There are companies that "chase fires" and they may put pressure on you to let them secure your property. Your insurance agent should be able to advise you on this and if you live in Nichols Hills and this happens to you please contact the Fire Chief and we will help you with this. Ultimately it's the property owner's decision and nobody else can tell you what to do.

How do I clean this mess up? We do have some reputable companies in OKC that do a very good job of securing property, clean-up, and restoration of smoke or water damaged property. Again, your insurance agent should be able to help with this or your local fire department may be able to help you find a good company for this.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

When it comes to rebuilding you will work with your insurance agent again but if you do not know a good contractor search until you find one you are comfortable with. This choice can be critical if rebuilding your property, and your life to some extent, is to go smoothly.

At some point it's very important to assess your mental and emotional state. A fire is a traumatic experience and you need to make sure you and your family are alright emotionally. This can be particularly important for children and it's important to know the effects of a traumatic experience may not be evident until long after it's over. Effective communication between family members is critical to the health and well-being of you and your loved ones and please do not hesitate to get professional help if you find that emotional issues persist with any member of your family.

This is not a comprehensive or all-inclusive list but it should help you get started if you experience a fire. Our job does not end when the fire is out so feel free to contact the Nichols Hills Fire Department if you have any questions or need help resolving an issue. We don't have all the answers but we may be able to help.

Terry Hamilton, Fire Chief



PUBLIC WORKS

The temperatures are up and so is our water usage. We pumped 2,600,000 gallons on the 24th of July. That is a lot of water. We are having no trouble keeping up with demand. The water conservation plan triggers at 3 million gallons per day and we will start posting our daily water usage on the Nichols Hills web site.

This month one of the Nichols Hills sanitation workers was injured by some chemical gases discarded in a residential trash container. The worker is fine after an uncomfortable morning. Please be careful what you throw in your trash. The City of Nichols Hills does have an agreement with Midwest City to accept any chemicals or hazardous materials at no charge to the resident.

Atlas is finally finishing the Camden Way project. The street work is complete and they are now working on drives, sprinklers and lawns. The next project will be Wilshire. The utilities have been moved and the project is ready to bid. Construction should start within the next 60 days. As the project gets closer we should have the details on the project and you will be notified.

If Public Works can assist please contact us at 843-5222.

Randy Smith, Public Works Director

ANIMAL RESCUE FRIENDS

If anyone wants to assist ARF in it's mission of saving unclaimed, impounded pets in Nichols Hills, they can donate time, old collars, leashes, crates, dog beds, food, treats, toys and, of course, money by mailing checks to Animal Rescue Friends, Inc of Nichols Hills, C/O Public Works, 1009 N.W. 75th Street, Nichols Hills, OK 73116 or by calling 843-4222 about donating items. ARF will respond by sending a 501 c 3 tax deduction letter (and offering a cat or a dog!). Any animal adopted through ARF comes with a 30 day money back guarantee.

JUNE'S FEATURED PETS



20 lb 3 yr old mom & her 13 lb 1 yr old daughter terrier mixes found in 1900 block of Elmhurst 7-5-12 now available for adoption

SAVE THE DATE:

This year's Pooch Parade will be held October 21st