



Dear Harriet?

Have a question that needs an answer? Try submitting yours to the Newsletter?

CAN I GET TICKETED BY THE POLICE OFFICERS IN CAROLINE PINES?

Any law enforcement officer may patrol the streets and roads within subdivisions of real property, of which streets and roads are maintained by the owners of the lots or parcels of land with the subdivision, or with the consent of the owners or association of owners, to enforce the provisions of this title punishable as felonies, misdemeanors, or traffic infraction.

WHAT ARE THE RULES CONCERNING BURNING?

Virginia's 4pm Burning Law goes into effect February 15th. This law prohibits burning before 4pm from Feb 15-April 30 if the fire is in, or within 300 feet of woodland, brush land or fields containing dry grass or other flammable materials.

Violations are Class 3 misdemeanors punishable by up to a \$500 fine. Those who allow a fire to escape are liable for the cost of suppressing the fire as well as any damage caused to other's property. Each late winter and early spring, downed trees, branches and leaves become "forest fuels" that increase the danger of a forest fire. By adhering to the law and not burning before 4pm, people are less likely to start a fire that threatens them, their property and the forests of Virginia. An unattended fire, a discarded cigarette or a single match can ignite the dry fuels that are so prevalent in the early spring. Add a few days of dry, windy conditions and an escaped wildfire can quickly turn into a raging blaze.

HOW DOES THE CHESAPEAKE BAY PRESERVATION ACT EFFECT MY WATERFRONT PROPERTY?

The RPA buffer that has been established helps to protect and improve the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. The RPA buffer is 100 feet wide starting at the water's edge (or wetland). In many older subdivisions, the county allowed an encroachment into the buffer, for the construction of a home. Since a portion of the vegetation was removed, the homeowner should

improve and enhance the function of the remaining buffer area. The preferred ground cover is the natural mulch layer along with canopy trees, understory trees, shrubs, and groundcover plants. Lawn grass does not do well in this setting, so keep the buffer in a natural state and let your lawn grass thrive in your yard area.

CAN I REMOVE TREES IN THE RPA?

You should practice good woodlot management. Trees and shrubs may be trimmed to allow for healthy growth. The removal of dead, dying and diseased trees and shrubs, as well as noxious weeds and invasive plants, is permitted, although, you may want to leave some areas in their "wild" condition for the birds and wildlife.

I HAVE A NEW HOME WITH A CLEARED BUFFER AND DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THE CHESAPEAKE BAY ACT.

Unfortunately this happens. The buffer will need to be restored. Typically, the most effective buffer is a forested area with a canopy trees, understory trees, shrubs, and a ground cover such as mulch or leaf debris. First, mulch any disturbed areas. Then, contact the planning department to help develop a plan. Let's do it right the first time.

For more information go to: www.visitcaroline.com.

IS THERE A BUDGET COMMITTEE?

There is a budget committee that is currently headed by Jamey Lewchanin. They try to meet once a month and more if needed. Their purpose is to develop a preliminary working budget for Caroline Pines. This six member group is dedicated and has worked hard to examine the needs and costs associated with the Association's operating expenses and budgetary needs and/or restrictions. For more information contact the Pine's Office.

WILL PLANTING A TREE HELP TO CONSERVE ENERGY?

There are specific locations in your yard where planting a tree could help you save energy? According the Arbor Day Foundation, large deciduous trees planted on the east, west and northwest sides of you home create shade for the hot summer sun and reduce summer air-conditioning costs by up to 35 percent. When planting trees in your yard, be sure to call Miss Utility at 811 to mark your utility lines and remember to stay clear of overhead power lines when planting as well. Not only will you save money by conserving energy, but you will also help reduce carbon emissions and make the planet a little bit healthier for your children and grandchildren.