

Dear neighbors,

Here is breaking news from your Community Development District. Film at 11.

LAKE 17: The scheduled work to restore the shoreline off Laguna Springs in Crane Point has been completed. It is the first lake to be restored—other lakes will follow in accordance with a priority assessment based on CDD staff review. We haven't yet identified the next lake.

Because Crane Point was the first, there were lessons learned that will help us with the next lake we tackle. But those on the lake should be happy with the fresh sod and clean look that borders the lake. Having said that, there are several repairs we expected that need follow-up attention.

This is important so sit down: The CDD and Brightview offered an opportunity to Crane Point property owners to connect to a water distribution system by extending their downspouts while crews were there with the necessary equipment. Many of you chose not to do this and the result was predictable. With just one downpour a few weeks ago, the water eroded the freshly sodded shoreline in several locations that did not have extended downspouts. As a result, everyone in the community must now pay to repair the damage—damage that is sure to recur when we enter the rainy season.

The CDD cannot legally require property owners to comply nor can it bill property owners for damage caused by non-compliance. Obviously, my cajoling and humor isn't working. Trust me, your neighbors know who hasn't complied and, hoo boy, don't expect any party invites soon.

Extending downspouts directly into the lake doesn't guarantee protection from erosion, but it greatly reduces the chances. In a deluge, these boxes could be overwhelmed. But in regards to the last downpours: those on Lake 17 who extended their downspouts didn't have any damage. If we don't get compliance from property owners as we tackle other lakes, the erosion problem will continue to cost us money in endless repairs to the lake banks. As one resident said to me, "I did the work as suggested but my neighbor didn't. Now I have to pay for his erosion repairs? It's not fair."

It isn't.

For those haven't extended their downspouts on Lake 17, I highly recommend you do so before the summer rain. For those of you on other lakes, get ahead of the problem. We have provided a design that offers the best solution—I can email it again if you don't have it (see my email address below)—or you can work with Brightview for alternative solutions.

If you see someone weird walking along the Lake 17 shore in the next week or so, don't call the cops. It's me. I want to take a look at any further erosion and inventory the homes that extended its downspouts.

OK, I have spouted off enough.

LAUNCH RAMPS: We know it's handy to use your waterfront as a boat ramp, but you shouldn't. Not only are you using the easement for unintended purposes and technically trespassing, but you may be causing wear and tear to the shoreline. And guess who may have the liability if there is an injury or accident? All of us.

SPRAYING: While the lake levels are low, crews are working to kill invasive weeds before the water rises and spray for algae control. That blue stuff you see in the water is an indicator dye that shows where one of the many treatments we give the lakes is located.

WATER LEVELS: Our lakes will soon rise—can I get an “Amen!”—but it is interesting to note that we started the dry season 3 inches below normal. That's primarily why lake levels were even worse than normal. Hopefully this summer's rain will bring us back to normal.

SPRINKLERS: I see a lot of homeowners hijacking the irrigation system and watering their lawns and plants because, well, they must be special. Please know that this water is coming from the lakes which are very low. The HOA contractor manages this water system very carefully and it doesn't help to have people who disregard or circumvent the program. Just do a little disco and sing, “I Will Survive.”

You can water your plants and grass with municipal water from your taps but know that the county has restrictions in place for now: Even addresses can water Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday; odd addresses are good on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday. No watering between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

MEETING: The May meeting of the CDD has been canceled. The next meeting is scheduled for 10:30 on June 11.

Tom Marquardt, chair, CDD board of supervisors (marq1948@gmail.com)

Debbie Godfrey

Lisa Wild

Anna Harmon

Greg Inez