



# The Bonita Highlander

May 2026

## STOP Feeding Wild Animals !!!

It has come to the attention of the BHHA Board that there are a number of homeowners throughout the Highlands who are leaving food or food scraps outside to feed birds, coyotes, or other wild animals.

**PLEASE STOP IMMEDIATELY! In addition to being dangerous, this is illegal and is classified as animal harassment under the California Code of Regulations which can lead to fines of up to \$1000 or even jail time.**

Feeding coyotes and other wildlife can lead to the habituation of wild animals and increases aggressive behavior. This poses a serious risk and threat to our residents, children, and pets. It has been noted this year that coyotes have been much more brazen than in years past – this is a direct result of homeowners making food available to these wild animals. It is also possible that homeowners are feeding their domesticated animals outside and any residual food is attracting wildlife. Please be mindful of leaving food outside for pets for any length of time.

If you are aware of anyone feeding wild animals, please share this cautionary information with them and/or reach out to the BHHA at [bhighlanderhoa@gmail.com](mailto:bhighlanderhoa@gmail.com) so the Board can address it.

## Potential Breaker Panel Safety Issue

A homeowner wanted the BHHA to make homeowners aware of potential safety issues associated with Zinsco electrical breaker boxes and breakers originally used in the Highlands. It is recommended homeowners check their electrical breaker panels to determine if they are manufactured by Zinsco, Sylvania, GTE-Sylvania, Magnetrip, or Challenger.

While Zinsco electrical panels and breakers were never formally recalled by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), they are universally considered a potential fire hazard by electricians, home inspectors, and the insurance industry. Despite the lack of an official recall, a 2002 court ruling found the manufacturers had knowingly committed consumer fraud by falsifying test data to maintain safety certifications.

**Critical Safety Issues.** The primary danger of Zinsco equipment is its high failure rate, estimated between 25% and 33%, as compared to less than 1% for more modern breakers. Specific issues include.

- **Failure to Trip:** One of the most dangerous flaws is that breakers often fail to trip during an overload or short circuit. This allows electricity to flow unchecked, causing wires to overheat and potentially start a fire.
- **Breakers Melting to Bus Bars:** The horseshoe-shaped clips that connect breakers to the aluminum bus bar often form poor, loose connections. This causes arcing (sparking), which generates enough heat to "weld" or melt the breaker directly to the bus bar.

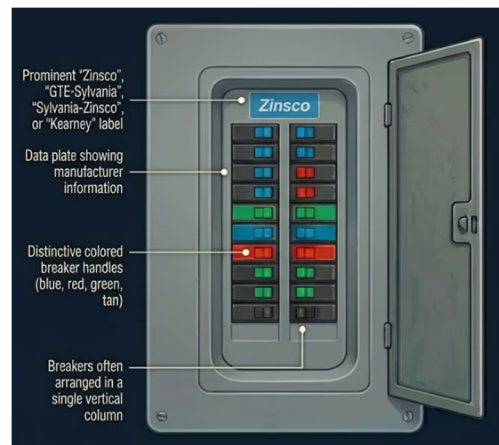
## Potential Breaker Panel Safety Issue (cont)

- **Hidden Damage:** A breaker may appear to be in the "off" position while remaining internally energized. Because the damage typically occurs where the breaker meets the bus bar, it is often undetectable without removing the breaker—a task that should only be performed by a professional due to risk of electrical shock.
- **Aluminum Components:** Most Zinsco panels use aluminum bus bars, which are prone to corrosion and oxidation over time, further degrading the electrical connection and increasing fire risk.

### Identification and Next Steps.

If you suspect your home has one of these panels, look for the following:

- **Brand Names:** Check the panel plate or door for labels reading Zinsco, Sylvania, GTE-Sylvania, Magnetrip, or Challenger.
- **Color-Coded Breakers:** Zinsco panels are famous for distinctive, brightly colored breaker handles in red, blue, green, and pink.
- **Breaker Size:** The breakers are typically much thinner than modern standard circuit breakers.



### Recommended Action.

Experts and insurers strongly recommend a full panel replacement rather than just replacing individual breakers. Many insurance companies will deny coverage and/or cancel policies for homes with Zinsco electrical panels and/or breakers because they are a known liability.

### Limited Fixes

Replacing only the breakers is often ineffective because the underlying aluminum bus bar is frequently already pitted or corroded, preventing new breakers from making a safe connection. The most prudent fix is to replace the entire Electrical Box and all the breakers.

### Additional Information

For more information, homeowners can consult safety guides from organizations like the International Association of Certified Home Inspectors or search for reputable local electricians to perform a safety evaluation.

<https://www.greatamericaninsurancegroup.com/content-hub/loss-control/details/is-your-electric-panel-a-fire-risk>

<https://epicelectrical.com/should-i-replace-zinsco-panel/>

<https://www.electrica-inc.com/blog/zinsco-panels-insurance>

<https://www.integraelectrical.co/blog/zinsco-panel-problems>

Plus below are some videos that explain this issue:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wrY2qITow8M>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IA1fFOWMw2M>

## Exterior Lighting Rules and Regulations Change

The BHHA is in the process of updating BHHA Rules and Regulations regarding Exterior Lighting. The proposed changes will be discussed at the BHHA Board Meeting on May 12, 2026, at the Bonita-Sunnyside Fire Station at 6:00 p.m.

The goal of the proposed revision to the Rules and Regulations is to expand the timeline for holiday lights and provide clarity in this regard. It is also to address permanent, year-round lighting.

Homeowners are invited to attend the BHHA Meeting and provide their inputs and/or concerns with the proposed changes. IF you are unable to attend the meeting but would like to comment on the proposed changes, please send your comments in an email to [bhighlanderhoa@gmail.com](mailto:bhighlanderhoa@gmail.com) and include your name and address for consideration as part of the meeting.

Following the open discussion of the proposed change to the Rules and Regulations at the BHHA Board meeting on May 12th, the Board will review all the inputs/comments, update the proposed change with any agreed comments from the meeting, and will vote on the final version of the proposed change at the BHHA Board meeting in June. The approved change to the BHHA Rules and Regulations will go into effect after the June meeting.

### **Proposed Change to the Rules and Regulations.**

Exterior holiday lighting displays are allowed from October 1 through January 15 to include Halloween/Fall holidays, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukkah and other December holidays. No other holiday lighting is permitted outside of this time frame.

Year-round, permanent exterior lighting, including exterior security lights and motion-sensor lights, must be shielded, low intensity and downward facing so as to create no light trespass to neighboring lots or into the night sky. Only white-toned bulbs are permitted with steady light flow -- no colored lights, twinkling or strobe effects. Any lighting that is higher than 9 feet must be turned off after 11 pm unless it is on a motion sensor so as to eliminate continuous lighting that may intrude into neighboring lots. Security lights, porch lights, garage lights and driveway/sidewalk lights are permitted throughout the night provided they are not above 9 feet. These lights should be shielded and downward facing so as to create no light trespass to neighboring lots or into the night sky.

**The Bonita Highlander** is the monthly newsletter of the Bonita Highlands Homeowners' Association (BHHA), a California non-profit corporation. The Newsletter is distributed (postage paid) or emailed to each residence within the Bonita Highlands. Information for publication should be sent to the recording Secretary & Editor, Mary Ellen Phillips at [bhighlanderhoa@gmail.com](mailto:bhighlanderhoa@gmail.com) by the 15th of the month, for publication the following month. The Association reserves the right to edit any copy submitted for publication.

**BHHA  
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The BHHA documents, forms, meeting minutes and notices can be found on its website:  
[bonitahighlands.org](http://bonitahighlands.org)



## ***The Bonita Highlander***

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The next monthly BHHA meeting will be held on Tuesday **May 12, 2026 at 6:00 PM**, in person at the Bonita Sunnyside Fire Station. All homeowners are welcome to attend.

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, Introduction of Board members, Pledge of Allegiance, Announcement of the Next Meeting, Adoption of Minutes from the last monthly meeting.
2. Homeowner appearances for appeals to notices, fines, or requests for structural alterations.
3. Homeowner Open Communications.
4. Committee and Staff Reports: ACC-A (SCRs), ACC-C (violations), Treasurer, Open Space Chairperson, and BHHA Communications.
5. Old Business: Exterior lighting rule change
6. New Business: assessments & late fees, banking updates, finance and escrow services update.
7. Community Items of Interest.
8. Board Member Comments.
9. Adjournment.
10. Board Executive Session: (personal, financial, compliances issues, if required).



The BHHA Board of Directors (BOD) welcomes and encourages e-mail and letters from homeowners. Any letter sent to the Board may be published in this newsletter. Any opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the author or other contributor, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the BOD or any Staff Member.