



The Bonita Highlander

July 2026

Fireworks are Illegal in the Bonita Highlands!!!

All consumer fireworks—including sparklers, poppers, and "safe and sane" varieties—are strictly illegal for personal use and possession in the City and County of San Diego. And because Bonita Highlands is located in San Diego County, **all types of fireworks are illegal!**

Bonita Highlands Takes Fire Safety Seriously!

The BHHA has been working hard to ensure the Bonita Highlands Open Space Areas and Trails are compliant with a nation-wide fire safety program and have recently celebrated being recognized as a 2026 Firewise USA Site by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). This was no small feat and required a lot of work and resources for our Open Space Chairperson and a homeowner volunteer!

The next phase in this Firewise USA Site certification is to work with homeowners to make sure their properties are compliant. Fortunately, the Bonita-Sunnyside Fire Department (BSDF) was in our community in early June leaving door hangers to schedule a FREE home assessments to protect homes from wildfires. We encourage everyone to take advantage of this Free offer – even if you think your property is ready for the unthinkable. It never hurts to have an expert take a look, for FREE!

If you didn't get a door hanger, you can sign up by calling 619-562-0096 or access the San Diego County Fire Safe website at www.firesafesdcounty.org. Please take advantage of this opportunity to be proactive and make the Bonita Highlands an even safer place for everyone!

Feeding Wildlife? — DON'T! It's Against the Law!!

Feeding wild animals continues to be an issue despite the best efforts of the BHHA Board and Staff to educate homeowners. The BHHA has consulted with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and have been strongly advised that not only is this illegal, it is extremely dangerous on many levels. It is dangerous for homeowners as wild animals become more brazen and more likely to get too close or even attack. It is dangerous for domesticated animals as it puts them in closer proximity to wild animals that are in yards or close by. And it is dangerous for the wild animals as they lose their ability to hunt for their own food. It is not unusual for a wild animal that has been fed by people to require euthanizing due to their inability to live in the wild.

This is both a safety and legal issue. If you are aware of a neighbor feeding wild animals please report it immediately. If possible, get video to evidence the situation. You can file a complaint several ways, the Wildlife CALTIP hotline at 888-334-2258, text a complaint to CALTIP at 847411, download the CALTIP app and follow the instructions, and go to <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Enforcement/CalTIP>. We also encourage you to report your efforts to the BHHA.

All tips are taken very seriously and will be addressed with a Game Warden dispatched. For those of you feeding the animals, be advised that a Game Warden is a law enforcement officer who can fine you and/or even arrest you. Please follow the laws and help us all ensure the safety of our community.

Phase 2 Firewise Tree & Brush Mitigation Program

Dear Homeowners,

As many of you know, Bonita Highlands recently received official Firewise USA® recognition for the wild-fire mitigation work completed to date as part of the formal BHHA 3-year Firewise and Vegetation Management Plan.

We are pleased to report that Phase 1 was completed ahead of schedule and estimates for work on Phase 2 are being processed. Phase 2 will focus on several Open Space “natural” areas which include clearing brush, identification and removal of dead or diseased trees, lacing and thinning of mature trees to reduce fire risk, and brush and shrub reduction in overgrown areas.

The BHHA's work is focused on the BHHA's Open Space and Trail areas. However, wildfire mitigation is most effective when homeowners take similar action on their own properties.

One issue that continues to be observed throughout the community is the growth of eucalyptus saplings and volunteer trees on homeowner properties. While these saplings may appear harmless today, they can quickly develop extensive root systems and grow into large trees that become costly to remove later. In many cases, a sapling that can be removed in minutes today may require professional tree removal costing thousands of dollars in the future.

Homeowners are strongly encouraged to address the trees and large bushes on their properties.

- Remove eucalyptus saplings while they are small
- Remove unwanted volunteer trees before they mature
- Trim and lace mature trees where appropriate
- Remove dead branches and accumulated vegetation
- Maintain defensible space around homes and structures
- Prevent brush and vegetation from becoming overgrown along fences and property lines

By working together, we can continue improving the safety, appearance, and long-term health of our community while reducing wildfire risk for everyone.

We appreciate your continued support as Bonita Highlands advances through Phases 2 and 3 of our Firewise program.

BHHA Open Space Committee

Reminder

Fireworks are illegal in San Diego County and the Bonita Highlands!

Not in your front/side/back yard, not in the Open Space or anywhere within the Bonita Highlands.

Should you see Fireworks being ignited and can pinpoint the area, please call 911 and they will alert the Sheriff and/or Bonita Sunnyside Fire Department

Proposed Exterior Lighting Change to the Rules & Regs

The BHHA has discussed proposed changes to the BHHA Rules and Regulations regarding Exterior Lighting at the last two monthly Board meetings. Several homeowners have attended these meetings and voiced their observations, concerns, and provided recommendations to the various proposed changes. The Board has welcomed the homeowners' interest and involvement in these discussions.

The BHHA also reached out to the San Diego County department responsible for exterior lighting within the County and received documentation regarding the County's rules and regulations.

The BHHA Board received all these inputs, discussed them, and have generated the below version to the proposed Exterior Lighting wording in the BHHA Rules and Regulations, Section 4.8, which is also consistent with the San Diego County's guidelines.

Exterior holiday lighting displays are allowed from November 25 of the current year, through January 10 of the following year. 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. (Light trespass into the neighboring lot means the neighbor can see the light in their yard.) Only white-toned bulbs are permitted with steady light flow -- no colored lights, twinkling or strobe effect lights. Any lighting that is higher than 9' above the ground must be turned off after 11 pm unless it is motion-sensored. Motion-sensored lights that eliminate continuous lighting that may intrude into neighboring lot can only do so for a short period of time, i.e., no more than 10 minutes. Security lights, porch lights, garage lights, and driveway lights are permitted throughout the night provided they are not above 9' off the ground. These security lights should be shielded and downward facing so as to create no light trespass to neighboring lots or into the night sky.

The BHHA Board will vote on this new proposed rule change at the August 11, 2026 meeting that starts at 6 p.m. at the Bonita Sunnyside Fire Station, and it will go into effect immediately.

Reminder:

Feeding Wildlife is Illegal! It is both a safety and legal issue.

If you are aware of a neighbor feeding wild animals please report it immediately to the BHHA and file a complaint with the California Wildlife CALTIP hotline and/or website.

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 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



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The next monthly BHHA meeting will be held on Tuesday **August 11, 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, compliance inspection plans for the summer, feeding wildlife update
6. New Business: banking update, escrow services update
7. Community Items of Interest.
8. Board Member Comments.
9. Adjournment.
10. Board Executive Session: (personal, financial, compliances issues, if required).

Note: Agenda will be posted to PayHOA the Friday before the monthly mtg.



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.