



Mayor's Letter

September 15, 2020

HALLOWEEN - YES, HAYRIDE - NO. The annual Halloween Hayride sponsored by the town has been cancelled due to you know what. At our recent council meeting we discussed various options that would allow for our children to participate in a safe way. They only have a limited number of Halloweens and I'm not going to wipe out this one. One option that we discussed was having citizens explicitly opt in to giving out candy. In that scenario, next month, you would tell us if you wanted the trick-or-treaters to come to your house. Then we would place a green flag or something similar at the edge of your driveway as a signal that you want people to come up to your door. Similarly, if you wished that everyone stay away due to COVID concerns we might put up a red flag. Obviously you could turn your lights off or on etc., but this way we could clearly identify peoples wishes without bothering everyone. This is just a starting point for discussion. We are open to other ideas - we have time to figure it out. We are fortunate to be a small town with a lot of smart people. We can do this. Let me know what you think.

ROAD UPDATE. Last week we poured Meadowlake and Woodcrest Drive. I expect the remaining lanes will be poured next week. We are also moving up the timetable for the rest of the streets. It now appears that we will begin work on Carrie and Highridge earlier, in late October rather than November. In several locations we are currently being held up by AT&T and their line relocations. Their improperly located lines along the edge of the street will continue to be cut as we work on the roads. AT&T has stopped responding to our engineers and Ed Bell requests to move the lines. They have gone "dark" for several weeks and have not responded to dozens of calls and emails. That's why the lines are getting cut. When their subcontractors show up and repair a line they are stupidly and irresponsibly just placing it right back in the street in front of the construction equipment, where it is then destroyed. I know many of you are working from home, let me assure you, the road crews are not deliberately cutting the lines. **The lines are required to be a minimum of 20 feet from the edge of the road, and in many places it isn't even twenty inches** from the pavement. All of us are beyond frustrated with AT&T.

PERMITS AND ILLEGAL CONSTRUCTION. Every city in Texas requires permits (which is the same thing as an inspection) for construction. We do it for safety - **your safety**. Permits are required where there are life-health-safety concerns. Many things don't need a permit such as replacing a toilet, putting in a dimmer switch, new flooring, painting, new faucets in the bathroom, and many more. How do you know ? **ASK. Just ask us.** Town Hall isn't located somewhere off Business 121, most of you live within 1000 feet of the building. You get your mail five feet from Town Hall almost every day. Our phone numbers are on the door. **All you have to do is just ask us.**

Obviously if there is an emergency repair, you do it first and then let us know. So, if your water heater blows up on Friday afternoon and Lowes will install it on Saturday, just do it. And then let us know on Monday and we will inspect it. Same with your AC unit. Fix the emergency first, then let us know. For construction, in general, if you go vertical, so that it will be over someone's head, it must be inspected. Obviously if it were to collapse on the people below, it would cause serious injury. Building a deck on the ground ? Go ahead. Installing pavers in the backyard ? You are good to go. Put in a trellis overhead, a covered patio, or a second story balcony - call us.

"Better to ask forgiveness than permission" couldn't be more wrong. If you build something illegally we will have it torn down. Under Texas law and LWV ordinances you cannot obtain a variance. No Chance. Not possible. **You can never obtain a variance for a self-imposed hardship.** While nearly all construction projects are allowed, there are several things that are absolutely forbidden in LWV. It can really cost you, illegal construction is subject to fines of up to \$2,000 a day, every day, until it is removed. Before you start, ask us. Its simple. There is no excuse.

Still mowing the grass in September ! There's never been a better time to be in Lakewood Village.

Dr. Mark E. Vargus
Mayor

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