

Ponderosa Press

Ponderosa Estates Homeowners Association Newsletter

September 2014 Edition

PEHOA News:

Come to the PEHOA meetings on the first Monday of the Month 7pm

at Jeff and Aimee Wilkins's basement. Their address is 20310 108th ST E.

Party in the Park/Recycle Event Big Success!

A great time was had by all at the annual Party in the Park celebration. Thanks to [Summer](#) for taking charge and coordinating this fun event this year! Also to: [Lauren Choi](#) for supplying the BBQ, games and donations; to [Angela Mandernach](#) for being our cook and for donations; to [Jeff Wilkins](#) for supplying the generator and the budget to make this event possible.; to [Joel Taylor](#) for taking charge of the bouncy house, and pulling the kids out quickly when the generator ran out of gas; to [Donna McLean](#) for taking charge of the craft table; to [Carol Anne Doll](#) for being the greeter, head counter, and cashier. And especially to everyone who came and helped out where needed. Because of all of you, it was a fun event.

Brad Doll, PEHOA President



Point Defiance Zoo and Aquarium Sensational Sea Otters Festival Sunday, September 28th from 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Join us in celebrating some of our favorite marine mammals: our playful sea otters!

Discover how sea otters play a vital role in the near-shore ecosystem. Learn about their behavior, their natural history and conservation issues they face.

Animal Enrichments help animals enjoy their environment !

Watch sea otters enjoy special treats like sea urchins and blue crab at **10:30 am, 1 pm, and 4 pm.**

Special Activities for all to experience 11 am-3 pm: Enjoy hands-on sea otter activities and crafts in the Marine Discovery Center
1-3 pm: See where our keepers prepare meals for sea otters with a behind-the-scenes tour of the Marine Mammal Food Prep area. Plan on attending this fun, educational event. For more info go to <http://www.pdza.org/calendar>



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Curious About Composting?

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Free event sponsored by The Friends of the Sumner Library

It's easy to turn waste into wonderful!

Master Gardener Nancy Mantel gets you started with compost: methods, containers and stages of composting. Participants receive free samples of compost.

Wednesday, Oct. 1, 6-7 p.m.

Sumner Pierce County Library

1116 Fryar Ave. 98390 • 253-548-3306



East Pierce Fire & Rescue 20th Annual Open House

Non-City Event - For details visit

www.eastpiercefirerescue.org

Saturday, September 27, 2014

1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

East Pierce Fire and Rescue invites the public to join them for their 20th annual Open House, from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday, September 28 at the East Pierce headquarters station at 18421 Veterans Memorial Drive East, in Bonney Lake. The free health and safety fair will include booths with public safety partners including the Bonney Lake Police, Sumner Police and Pierce County Sheriff's Departments, plus many more.

Free parking is available at the Pierce Transit Park and Ride at 184th Ave E/Sky Island Dr, off State Route 410 East. A dedicated shuttle will run to and from the East Pierce headquarters station during the event.

For details visit www.eastpiercefirerescue.org website.



McClendon's FREE DIY Clinics Offered



Free Clinics for Do It Yourself's on a variety of topics are available at a location near you.

Listed below are September's class schedule

September 13th - Renton, Tacoma, Puyallup

Household pest control for

ANTS/FLEAS/SPIDERS/RODENTS

Types of chemicals where and when to use chemicals

Experts (Renton - Mike Frost, Tacoma - Joe Freeman, Puyallup - Susan Wigley and Kirk Stuart)

September 27th - Renton, Tacoma, Puyallup

Water Heaters

Gas vs. electric

Replace or repair

Picking the right size

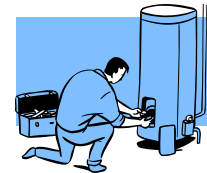
Installation

Experts (Renton - Tim Arndt, Tacoma - Jon Hull,

Puyallup - Joe Galvan)

See their website for more information:

<http://www.mclendons.com/>



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Using Nature's Water Reduce Your Water Bill with Rain Barrels

Do You Use Rain Barrels?

Like many people, you may have planted a garden, hoping to put a dent in your food bill and put more natural and delicious food on your table. That is, until you open your water bill and cringe at the total. Before you throw in the garden towel, consider setting up some rain barrels. It is an easy and extremely affordable way to harness Mother Nature's bounty, and much more beneficial to your garden as well. There are several ways to save on your initial investment of materials needed. Here are some tips and tricks on adding rain barrels to your home and garden.

First, check with your local city ordinances to make sure there are no laws against installing rain barrels. Believe it or not, some communities prohibit the harnessing of natural rainfall. An easy way to determine this is by checking your city's website, contacting the Public Works department, or just calling the number on your water bill. They should be able to answer any questions.

My local water department was extremely helpful and encouraging in my quest to lower my bill. They recommended a couple of classes that explained how to set up rain barrels and even make your own. The only problem was the classes cost \$80 per person, plus \$50 in materials. I knew I could do better. Here's what I learned.

Home improvement stores sell official rain barrels, but they cost anywhere from \$30 on clearance to \$80 for the deluxe model complete with a faucet to hook up a hose. I didn't want to go that fancy or expensive, so I searched for an even cheaper alternative.

Check local hardware and home improvement stores for large, 32-gallon garbage pails with lids. I started with three for only \$9 each at Lowes. The lids are important in keeping out curious squirrels, birds, and bugs like mosquitoes. This also keeps the water clean and free of debris.

I studied the downspouts on my house and garage. We have a total of four. I determined where the barrels would sit and figured out the various ways I would have to convert the downspouts so they would go into the rain barrels.

If your downspouts are straight, simply measure where it would hit your barrel and use a hacksaw to carefully cut it to the right length. If it has a hinge, it makes it easier to lift the lid and get the water out. Another alternative is having a small slit or hole in the lid for the water to flow into, but keep everything else out.

Another way to direct the downspout into the barrel is to change the direction by using a curved piece. They cost very little, around \$3. Again, you cut the downspout to the desired length and attach the curved piece to the end, directing the stream of water to the barrel.

A third way is adding a flexible plastic section to your downspout. This way you can have two or more barrels in the same location and just move the end when one gets full. This is also great for when no rain falls for an extended period.

When placing your rain barrels, it is important to tilt it slightly away from your house, so that when it is full it will overflow onto the lawn instead of against your house, which could cause extensive water damage.

I found that placing large rocks or bricks around the base of the barrel keeps it in place even when it's empty and prevents it from tipping over if the rain flow is torrential. I softened the look by planting pretty lilies all around, which also makes it easier to mow around. I keep an old ice-cream bucket in each barrel to scoop out the water.

Appearance is another consideration of adding rain barrels to your landscape. At first, I was hesitant to add a rain barrel to the front of our house, fearing what the neighbors might think. Some communities might even have bylaws prohibiting any additions to the landscape. Then I realized I was missing out on half of the rainwater from our roof.

We have a very tall evergreen shrub on the corner of our house, conveniently right where the downspout empties into the front yard. At first, I looked for a pail the exact color of our siding which is light tan, but realized that basic black was better. With the tree as camouflage, the barrel is hidden in the shadow. I also added one more to the back of the garage, bringing my total up to five rain barrels. In three years, I haven't had to water the garden or my extensive flower pots with the hose.

So if you would like to reduce your water bill without sacrificing your garden, try rain barrels. By using these tips and learning from my experiences, you can have natural rainwater for your plants without draining your budget. For more inspiration visit [Shaunna Privratsky](#) who is an expert in personal finance. Between writing, reading and gardening, she is always on the lookout for bargains.

You may enjoy receiving her newsletter to sign up for the free newsletter go to [The Discount Diva](#).

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Conducting a your own Home Energy Audit



Step One: Examine the Exterior

Exterior Walls: When conducting a home energy audit, start by examining the outside-facing walls to identify cracks or holes where air might escape the home. Pay close attention to areas where brick or siding fits against another material, such as wood. To identify leaks, hold a candle near potential trouble spots to reveal drafts. Then, be sure to seal leaks with caulk or weather stripping to prevent air from escaping.

Windows and Doors: In addition to examining exterior walls, look for cracks or holes around exterior doors, windows and electrical outlets, and apply a sealant where necessary to prevent air from escaping the home. During the summer, keep blinds closed to prevent sunlight from warming the house, and during the winter, be sure to keep blinds open during the day to allow sunlight to enter and heat the home.

Landscaping: Trees, vines and other shrubs around a house can provide shade that will keep the home cooler and reduce your overall utility bills. Consult with a local nursery to see what type of vegetation will thrive in your area. In addition, it's important to remove any landscaping that is within three feet of the outdoor air conditioning unit to allow the system to take in adequate outside air and operate efficiently.

Step Two: Inspect the Interior

Cooling and Heating Equipment: Set up an appointment with a local utility company or certified technician to inspect the home's air conditioning and heating systems. If the equipment needs to be replaced, homeowners should consider purchasing an ENERGY STAR labeled system, which will be more energy efficient and can save hundreds of dollars in utility bills. In particular, be sure to look for a SEER (Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio) rating of at least 13 on air conditioning units and an AFUE (annual fuel utilization efficiency) rating of at least 90 on furnaces.

Thermostats: Tremendous savings also can be found by installing an automatic setback or programmable thermostat, such as the Lennox SignatureStat Home Comfort Control, which not only reduces energy costs by automatically controlling the temperature at certain times of the day but can also add or remove humidity, depending on the homeowners desired comfort level.

Indoor Lighting: Replace short-lived incandescent light bulbs throughout the home with lower wattage and fluorescent bulbs to save energy. In addition, evaluate the home's lighting needs and determine if there are areas where natural light can be utilized in place of extra light fixtures. Unnecessary lighting can be an added expense on utility bills.

Household Appliances: Make sure appliances are clean and free of dust and lint to ensure proper ventilation and to increase their efficiency. In addition, check refrigerator and freezer doors to ensure they are sealed tight to prevent cool air from escaping. When washing dishes, use the air-dry setting on automatic dishwashers rather than heated drying to conserve energy. You also can use less hot water by washing laundry in cold water whenever possible.

Step Three: Top Off the Energy Audit by Going Up Top

Attic Insulation: Insufficient attic insulation may result in the home's heating and cooling system having to work harder to regulate the indoor temperature. To ensure the home is properly insulated, take a look inside the attic to determine if additional insulation is needed. The amount of insulation you may need to add will vary with climate and the home design, but adding insulation to the attic is an effective, inexpensive and easy way to increase energy efficiency and provide an extended barrier against the elements. Although the attic may have some insulation, if there is less than five inches, it's a good idea to add more.

Roofing Material: With high winds, snow and ice, the winter months can be particularly strenuous on the roof of a house. Thus, spring and summer are good times to examine your roof to ensure all shingles are intact and flashings around chimneys, skylights, antennas and vents are sealed. Be sure to replace broken, curled or missing shingles, and use roof caulking to patch any holes to prevent energy loss. For additional energy savings, consider using ENERGY STAR labeled roofing products, sometimes known as cool roofs, which reflect the sun's rays to keep the roof and house cooler and decrease air conditioning usage. For more helpful information about energy-saving heating and cooling equipment, visit Lennox.com.

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The Zucchini Dilemma

This is the time of year that either the garden is overflowing with zucchini or the neighbors are bringing it to your door. Here are some of the ways to use up your abundance ...

Cut it up and stir fry it with onions and mushrooms in a little olive oil – yum!

[Zucchini Pesto Pasta](#) (love this stuff!!)

[Salmon Stuffed Zucchini](#)

[Chocolate Zucchini Bread](#)

[Zucchini Patties](#)

[Zucchini Pickles](#) (canning recipe)

[Zucchini Pineapple](#) (canning recipe)

[Zucchini Sausage Soup](#) (canning recipe)

[Freezing zucchini](#) for use in [veggie broth/stock](#)

[Freezing zucchini for use in stir fry and soup](#)

Enjoy the zucchini season!!

