



May 28, 2009

Dear Neighbor,

The Forest of Friendswood continues to suffer from several major safety and security problems that we need your help in finally resolving.

Despite periodic letters to all homeowners, detailed information on our website (www.fofhoa.com), presentations at our annual homeowners' association meeting, and friendly reminders from the Friendswood Police Department (FPD), several of our residents and their guests continue to violate the law. We have also experienced several serious motor vehicle collisions, including ones involving children driving golf carts.

Unless mitigated, these problems will present greater threats to our families, will begin impacting property values, and could expose all 714 households to significant liability in the event of a major accident.

Please note the following recurring problems and discuss these with your family:

- **Motor vehicle burglaries:** These are the most common property crimes in the Forest. Over ninety percent of these involve vehicles being left unlocked. Please always lock your vehicles when left in the driveway or on the street.
- **Speeding:** The posted speed limit in the Forest is 20 MPH except on two streets where it is 30 MPH: Woodland Trail Drive and Woodland Park Drive.
- **Stop signs:** Always make a complete stop. It is shocking the number of drivers who don't even slow down much less stop for these basic street signs.
- **"Yield to Pedestrians" signs:** If pedestrians are about to cross, please stop and yield to them until they are safely across the street.
- **All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs):** Per state law, these are prohibited on city streets (all the streets in the Forest are city streets).
- **Golf carts:** In order to drive these in the Forest state law requires the following:
 - **The operator must be a licensed driver**
 - **If operated at night, it must have working stop, turn, and head lights, must be registered, and must have insurance**
- **Hike & Bike Trails:** These are for pedestrians and cyclists only. Motor vehicles of all types are prohibited per association rules and this is clearly stated on signs at the entrance to all common areas.

While the Forest of Friendswood Homeowners' Association (HOA) is committed to ensuring the safest and most secure environment for all our residents and their guests, we cannot do it by ourselves. We ask you to do the following:

- Please follow all state laws and association rules

- Immediately call the police for any suspicious activity or violations of the law
 - For emergencies call 911
 - For all other calls contact the FPD dispatch at (281) 996-3300
- Volunteer to be a Neighborhood Watch Program (NWP) block captain. This program has proven to decrease crime by up to 80% and is one of the most cost-effective ways to protect our families and property. Currently only half the Forest is covered by block captains. A block captain needs to spend a small amount of time doing the following:
 - Exchanging contact information and NWP flyers with neighbors
 - Identifying a location for a NWP sign along with “20 MPH” signs
 - Attending periodic meetings of the Safety & Security Committee

To volunteer please e-mail your name, address, and telephone number to the association manager, Ms. Lindsay McGill at lmcgill@houcomm.com.

In addition, the Forest of Friendswood HOA is coordinating with Chief Bob Wieners of the Friendswood Police Department to resolve our recurring safety and security problems through the following actions:

- Increasing police patrols throughout the Forest, including bike patrols
- Implementing the Specialized Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP); these will target the motor vehicles violations explained above
- Continuing the close dialogue and coordination between the HOA, Safety and Security Committee, and FPD on crime mitigation strategies

Finally, the association is moving ahead with selection of a video surveillance system for all four entrances. This will involve sixteen cameras with license plate recognition capability during the day and at night, a thirty day hard drive memory, and seamless compatibility with the FPD. Approximately seventy-five percent of residents who attended the annual association meeting in April voted to purchase such a system. We will make a selection in June and installation will begin in July. The Forest will then be the first homeowners’ association in Friendswood to field such a system.

Thank you for supporting the board’s many safety and security efforts. With your help we have no doubt that these persistent problems will be significantly mitigated.

Sincerely

Board of Directors
Forest of Friendswood HOA



City of Friendswood

May 27, 2009

Dear Forest of Friendswood Residents:

The purpose of this letter to provide you information regarding the operation of golf carts on public roadways.

The attachment provides information from several sections of the Texas Transportation Code that regulates operation and insurance requirements for golf carts.

It is a Class C misdemeanor to violate these sections of the Texas Transportation Code. The Friendswood Police Department will respond to complaints of illegal operation of golf carts on the public roadway and take enforcement action where and when appropriate.

Respectfully,

Robert B. Wieners
Chief of Police

§ 502.0071. GOLF CARTS. An owner of a golf cart is not required to register the golf cart if:

- (1) the operation of the golf cart occurs in the daytime, as defined by Section 541.401; and
- (2) the operation:
 - (A) does not exceed a distance of two miles from the point of origin to the destination if driven to and from a golf course;
 - (B) occurs entirely within a master planned community with a uniform set of restrictive covenants that has had a plat approved by a county or a municipality; or
 - (C) occurs on a public or private beach.

Explanation: Forest of Friendswood subdivision meets the requirements of TRC 502.0071 subsection "B" meaning that golf carts operated inside the subdivision do not need to be registered (i.e. you do not need to place a license plate on your golf cart).

Sec. 601.052. EXCEPTIONS TO FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY REQUIREMENT.

- (A) Sections 601.051 does not apply to:
 - (1) the operation of a motor vehicle that:
 - (B) is used only for exhibitions, club activities, parades, and other functions of public interest and not for regular transportation; and
 - (C) for which the owner files with the department an affidavit, signed by the owner, stating that the vehicle is a collector's item and used only as described by Paragraph (B);
 - (2) the operation of a golf cart not required to be registered under Section 502.284; or

Explanation: You do not need to insure your golf cart if you fall under 502.0071.

Sec. 502.001. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

- (7) "Golf cart" means a motor vehicle designed by the manufacturer primarily for transporting persons on a golf course.

Sec. 521.021. LICENSE REQUIRED. A person, other than a person expressly exempted under this chapter, may not operate a motor vehicle on a highway in this state unless the person holds a driver's license issued under this chapter.

Sec. 521.458. PERMITTING UNAUTHORIZED PERSON TO DRIVE. (a) A person may not knowingly permit or cause the person's child or ward who is under 18 years of age to operate a motor vehicle on a highway in violation of this chapter.

(b) A person may not authorize or knowingly permit a motor vehicle owned by or under the control of the person to be operated on a highway by any person in violation of this chapter.

Explanation: You must hold and carry with you a valid driver's license to operate Golf Cart on public roads. Allowing a child to operate a golf cart unlicensed could result in charges of PERMIT UNLICENSED MINOR/PERSON TO DRIVE.

Sec. 547.001. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

- 7) "Slow-moving vehicle" means:

(A) a motor vehicle designed to operate at a maximum speed of 25 miles per hour or less, not including an electric personal assistive mobility device, as defined by Section 551.201; or

(8) "Slow-moving-vehicle emblem" means a triangular emblem that conforms to standards and specifications adopted by the director under Section 547.104.

Sec. 547.002. APPLICABILITY. Unless a provision is specifically made applicable, this chapter and the rules of the department adopted under this chapter do not apply to:

- (1) an implement of husbandry;
- (2) road machinery;
- (3) a road roller;
- (4) a farm tractor;
- (5) a bicycle, a bicyclist, or bicycle equipment;
- (6) an electric bicycle, an electric bicyclist, or electric bicycle equipment; or
- (7) a golf cart not required to be registered under Section 502.284.

Sec. 547.703. ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR SLOW-MOVING VEHICLES. (a) Except as provided by Subsection (b), a slow-moving vehicle shall display a slow-moving-vehicle emblem that:

- (1) has a reflective surface designed to be clearly visible in daylight or at night from the light of standard automobile headlamps at a distance of at least 500 feet;
- (2) is mounted base down on the rear of the vehicle at a height from three to five feet above the road surface; and
- (3) is maintained in a clean, reflective condition.

(b) Subsection (a) does not apply to a vehicle that is used in construction or maintenance work and is traveling in a construction area that is marked as required by the Texas Transportation Commission.

(c) If a motor vehicle displaying a slow-moving-vehicle emblem tows machinery, including an implement of husbandry, and the visibility of the emblem is not obstructed, the towed unit is not required to display a slow-moving-vehicle emblem.

(d) A golf cart as defined by Section 502.001 is required to display a slow-moving-vehicle emblem only when it is operated on an arterial street.

(e) In this section, "arterial street" means:

- (1) a roadway assigned a number by this state or the United States;
- (2) a controlled-access highway; or
- (3) a major radial or circumferential street or highway that is in the territory of a local authority and designated by the authority as part of a major arterial system of streets or highways.

Explanation: Chapter 547 has to do with vehicle equipment (i.e. brake, stop, and turn lamps...headlights etc.) Golf Carts who fall under TRC 502.0071 DO NOT need to have turn signals, brake lamps, or head lamps. However they may be required to display slow moving vehicle emblem at the rear of the vehicle if it is operated on a arterial road (i.e. FM 2351)