

**The Woodlands Green Team**  
**Fall 2009**  
**Grounds Update**

**Shrubs**

Several shrubs are being removed this fall from parking islands and garages. The shrubs being removed were selected because they were either dying, were creating maintenance and accessibility problems, were blocking visual clearance of traffic, or were invasive and not good for the environment. Feel free to call or email Deb, our grounds manager, if you have questions. She conducted a comprehensive review of the shrubs in the common areas so that we can budget and plan for the future. She will be happy to share the results of this report with you. We are removing these shrubs now so that we can be ready to plant in the early spring when plant selection and conditions are at their best.

**Trees**

There are 12 trees that are scheduled to be trimmed this fall. The tree trimming is necessitated by roof preservation and improved gutter functioning. We hope to focus next year on trees along the roads and parking lots. Please email or call Deb with any tree trimming requests. We prefer to have all trees at the Woodlands pruned by the grounds crew or a tree care professional instead of residents. Trees require more skill in pruning than other plants and injury to them can result in costly replacement costs for the association.

**Leaves**

Leaf removal will be taking place over the next couple months. Timing of leaf removal depends on how long the trees retain their leaves. Last year the grounds crew was still removing leaves in December because of a late leaf drop. All leaves removed from the property are taken to a composting facility. The grounds crew prefers to wait to remove leaves from private garden beds until all perennials have died back so that they do no harm. The challenge for the grounds crew is that as soon as they leave the property the leaves continue falling and don't always stay where they drop. Please notify Deb if the wind brings more leaves your way than you can handle. We don't want any resident to be frustrated by being buried in leaves.

**Invasive Plant Removal**

The fall is when the Green Team likes to fight some of the invasive plants at our woodland edge. We will continue to work on eradicating Purple Leaf Wintercreeper *Euonymus*. We had some success with killing this specie last year but continue to find more of it creeping further into the woods. We are also going to be removing the invasive Asian Bush Honeysuckle along the eastern woodland edge and along Rogers Road. Both are highly invasive plants that will take years to eradicate, but are so destructive to woodlands that the fight is important.

**Woodland Dumping**

The Green Team would like to continue to ask residents not to dump anything into the woods. All contractors have been notified that no dumping will be allowed in the future. We have accumulated a great deal of debris that is making this valuable woodland asset a real eyesore and an environmental concern. As budget allows in the future, we hope to begin addressing this problem by clearing out this debris. However, we cannot afford to improve the woods if the dumping continues. Please contact Deb so she can make arrangements with the grounds crew to remove your debris and protect our woodland.

**Snow Removal**

We prefer not to leap ahead and think about snow but want to discuss snow removal expectations before the first flake falls. The association policy is that snow is not removed until we have received two or more inches of accumulation. Ice will be treated when roads and walkways are determined to be unsafe. Snow will be removed from roads, walkways, and front door paths. The grounds crew will do their best to not pile snow behind cars, garage doors, mailboxes, or dumpsters. That being said, snow like leaves, does not always stay put and drifting can result. Please call Deb if drifting occurs and you have trouble getting in or out of your home or garage. The crew does not remove snow between or on top of cars because of liability for damage.

They will also do their best to not pile snow into parking spaces and walkways, but there are occasions when the load is so intense that it could become inevitable.

We ask for everyone's patience in extreme weather conditions. These crews work hard under very unfavorable conditions with many clients to serve. All residents should be cautious in poor weather conditions. The association takes resident safety very seriously and our grounds crew will do their best to give us good and timely service, but they have their own challenges in very poor weather conditions.

Try to keep a snow shovel or some form of deicer available in the event that you may need to get out before the crew can reach us. (More about recommended deicers will be included in the October/November newsletter.) All residents should use extreme caution in poor weather when exiting the property. The main drive that slopes down to Rogers Road can be quite slick in poor weather, even when treated with a deicer or snow plowed. Often times, accidents at the entrance can be avoided with a little extra caution. Let's all hope for good weather and have plenty of patience if we are not so lucky.