



**To:** West Highlands Homeowner  
**From:** Sentry Management, BrockBuilt and WH Advisory Committee  
**Date:** February 25, 2014  
**Re: Lawn Care and Landscaping Upkeep and Maintenance**

**NOW** is the time to take an inventory of your lawn/landscape and the exterior condition of your dwelling. The Grounds Committee and the Architectural Committee will jointly conduct property inspections in April. Some of the areas that will be examined outside your home are listed in the Personal Property Standards that can be found on the West Highlands website: [www.westhighlandsatl.com](http://www.westhighlandsatl.com). Since warmer weather is just around the corner, it is a time to prevent crabgrass and other weeds from appearing in your yard. Timing the application of pre-emergent herbicides is critical. They must be applied several weeks before the weed seeds germinate. We recommend application of the pre-emergent before March 1. Treatment later in the season will not kill crabgrass and many other weeds. Applying pre-emergent weed preventers, weed killers, and/or post-emergent weed controllers is an all-year activity. These weeds will multiply and not only jeopardize your lawn, but impact your neighbors' lawns.

According to Article V and Exhibit "D" Section 7 of West Highlands' Declaration of Covenants, Conditions, Restrictions and Easements (CC&Rs), all aspects of the exterior landscaping of your lot (i.e. lawn, shrubs, trees, mulched areas, flower beds, etc.) must be maintained to minimum requirements. Below are a few examples of what are the minimum requirements to maintain your lawn and to remain in compliance per the HOA's CC&Rs.

**Recommended actions to maintain minimal standards:**

1. Control your weeds before they start. Early March is the ideal and maybe your only chance to control crabgrass and many other broadleaf weeds. It is highly recommended to hire a lawn service. The cost of the weed control chemicals, fertilizer, and spreading equipment could easily exceed \$200 in one application (check out Home Depot and Lowe's prices) not including the labor, time and the space used to store the equipment. Contracting with a lawn service, i.e. Arbor-Nomics (770-580-4484), King Green (800-891-7965), etc., is an economical way of receiving all of the necessary applications throughout the year. Importantly, it is an effective measure for controlling weeds. Examinations conducted from previous property inspections have shown that residents who continuously use a lawn service have no weeds. "Do It Yourself" residents tend to fruitlessly struggle in abating weeds resulting in violation notices. If you try to treat your lawn yourself and are unsuccessful, you could be subject to fines. Depending on the package you purchase, the basic cost of a lawn service is usually less than \$20.00 per month for a weed-free lawn. The first fine is \$50 and progressively increases with each additional violation. Ask yourself, what is your time worth? Controlling lawn weeds is a normal cost of owning a home. Preserving the image of West Highlands is paramount and will preserve the value of the entire neighborhood.

2. Trim your trees up (from the ground) to provide at least a six foot vertical clearance. This allows easy passage of walkers and joggers, plus lower branches can obstruct the view of drivers. Someone walking out behind a tree with low hanging branches could be hit by an on-coming car.
3. Mow and edge your lawn at least every two weeks.
4. Trim shrubs around your house so they do not obstruct windows, porches or sidewalks. This task should be done on a monthly basis.
5. Remove dead branches from trees and shrubs as needed.
6. Replenish the mulch under shrubs and trees. A new layer of mulch should be added at least twice a year. This prevents weeds. Tip: buy landscape fabric at home improvement store. Scrape mulch away from base of plant. Cut a layer of fabric and place at the base of the plant. Place thick layer of mulch (bark works best) on top of the landscape fabric. This technique will eliminate all weeds and make the mulch last longer.
7. Watering (as needed) adhering to Georgia's Outdoor Water Use policy <http://www.gaepd.org/Documents/outdoorwater.html>.
8. Check your house for torn screens, fading/peeling paint, damaged roofing, and mailbox damage (including missing letters). Make all of the necessary corrections if any of these conditions exist.
9. If you have utility cables and poles exposed on your property, please contact the appropriate company and request to have them buried by March 31, 2014.

**The approved fine structure is as follows:**

Offense	Notification/Fine \$	Date to Perform Corrective Actions
1 <sup>st</sup>	Warning Notice	10 calendar days
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Fine - \$50.00	7 calendar days
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Fine - \$150.00	7 calendar days
4 <sup>th</sup>	Fine - \$300.00	7 calendar days
5 <sup>th</sup>	Fine - \$600.00	Property Management will arrange for corrective actions to be performed and all costs associated with these corrective actions will be invoiced to the homeowner, including all accumulated fines \$1,100 (\$50+\$150+\$300+\$600)

**Rules Regarding Fines:** Notifications/Fines are cumulative on a twelve month and continuous basis. Example: If you receive both the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> offenses in March before performing the corrective actions then your next offense will be the 3<sup>rd</sup> if another violation occurs before March of the following year.

All fines must be paid in full within 20 days of the date on the invoice. Violators will incur late fees on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of the month if full payment has not been received. Unpaid fines will be added to HOA fees at the time these fees are billed. If full payment has not been received within the due date stated on the homeowner's HOA bill, the HOA will initiate actions to invoice the

lien holder as well as to place a lien on the homeowner's property for all costs incurred including any late fees, administrative fees and court costs.

All properties within the West Highlands community will be surveyed each month. The aim is to assure West Highlands is being well kept in a manner that maintains the reputation as a prestigious neighborhood and the values of the homes.

If you want suggestions on how to maintain your lawn or you would like to be referred to lawn care maintenance companies that serve West Highlands, please post a note on the West Highlands Group discussion board and your neighbors will respond. To become a member of the group, visit <http://groups.google.com/group/west-highlands-homeowners> and "Sign in and apply for membership." Please make sure to insert your full name, WH street address and contact telephone number inside the text box when applying to the Group.

If you have questions regarding this notice, please feel free to contact me so that we can discuss a plan for correction.

Sincerely,

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