Cottonwood Palo Verde at Sun Lakes

Patrol

Safety & Security

Neighborhood Watch

You won't want to miss these tips

Did You Know? Understanding Our Community Safety Network

With the arrival of the summer "slow season," many of our neighbors head north or indoors to beat the heat. This is the perfect time to pull back the curtain on how our community stays protected. While things may seem quiet, our safety teams are working year-round. However, we often hear questions about who does what.

Here is a quick guide to the "who, what, and where" of the safety hierarchy at Cottonwood Palo Verde.

The Hierarchy of Safety at CWPV
In the CWPV organizational structure, safety is a multi-layered partnership between professional operations and resident volunteers.

Safety & Security Committee (Strategic): This is a Board-appointed committee that looks at the "big picture." They review policies and recommend safety improvements to the Board of Directors. Holding educational seminars/events to help educate our homeowners to keep them safe in their homes, and in the community

Patrol (Operational): Our uniformed Patrol team is a division of the HOA Management staff. They are the boots on the ground, 24/7, monitoring our gates and common areas.

Neighborhood Watch (Community Support): This is a dedicated group of resident volunteers. They are the ultimate support system, acting as an extra set of eyes and ears to help their fellow neighbors stay vigilant.

Patrol: Vigilant, But Not the Law
It is important to remember that our Patrol team provides a vital service, but they are not law enforcement. They are here to enforce community rules (like parking or guest access), monitor facilities, and provide a visible presence to deter unusual activity. Because they are not "the law," they cannot make arrests or intervene in criminal matters. They are your first line of assistance for HOA-related issues, but their role is primarily observant and reporting-based.

Safety & Security: The Power of Prevention
Security and safety are essentially preventative measures. In these "unknown days," being proactive is our best defense. Whether it’s ensuring your garage door is closed, using timers on your lights while away, or keeping your guest lists updated with Patrol, these small habits keep you vigilant. Prevention isn’t about being afraid; it’s about making our community an "unattractive" target for trouble.

Neighborhood Watch: Neighbors Helping Neighbors
The Neighborhood Watch is an added layer of support that makes us stronger. This group doesn't just watch for trouble; they support the safety of anyone who lives in Sun Lakes by fostering a culture where neighbors know one another. When neighbors communicate, unusual activity stands out immediately.

Who Do I Call?
Knowing who to call saves precious time. Please keep these numbers handy:

- **EMERGENCY**: Call 911 immediately for any life-threatening situation or crime in progress.

- **Non-Emergency Criminal Activity:** Call the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) 602-876-1011 to handle non-urgent reports.

See Something, Say Something: If you see something unusual that doesn't quite feel right, don't hesitate to report it to Patrol.

Stay Tuned!
Just because it's the slow season doesn't mean we stop being mindful. Stay tuned to this section of ‘In the Know’ throughout the summer. We will be sharing the latest tips and "Safety Secrets" from the Patrol, Safety & Security Committee, and Neighborhood Watch to help keep your home and our community secure until the snowbirds return!



Cottonwood Palo Verde at Sun Lakes

Patrol at Cottonwood Palo Verde

ADDITIONAL LEVEL OF SECURITY IN COTTONWOOD PALO VERDE

With the full support of HOA #2, the Sun Lakes Rangers will continue providing patrols in Cottonwood Palo Verde alongside our Safety Patrol staff members. Both teams share a single goal: delivering effective and efficient security for our residents and guests.

To ensure maximum safety and a swift response, the Patrol and Rangers will:

- Maintain constant radio communication
- Provide immediate backup to one another during any law enforcement event

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PALO VERDE RESIDENTS-HELP KEEP GATE TRAFFIC MOVING!

Please inform guests and contractors that they cannot enter Palo Verde via the Michigan Gate—it is unattended and reserved for residents only (including long-term renters)

- All visitors must enter through the San Tan Gate (staffed 24/7)
- Be sure to pre-register visitors using the Gatehouse Portal, mobile app, or by calling 480-895-6846
- Keeping your visitor log updated helps speed entry and avoids delays for everyone

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NO SOLICITATION POLICY IN COTTONWOOD PALO VERDE

Solicitation of any kind is strictly prohibited in our community. If an aggressive door-to-door solicitor approaches your home, the most effective response is to remain firm:

- Do not engage: Avoid conversations or arguments
- Be direct: Simply say "No thank you" or "I'm not interested," and close the door
- Report it: Immediately contact Patrol at 480-895-9277 to report the activity

ACCESSIBLE PARKING ETIQUETTE IN COTTONWOOD PALO VERDE

Designated handicap parking spaces are specifically reserved for individuals with medical conditions that make mobility difficult. Located in key areas throughout our parking lots, these spots ensure convenient, easy access to all community facilities.

To ensure these spaces remain available for those who truly need them, please follow these essential rules:

- **Proper Utilization:** These spots should only be used if a disabled individual is the driver or a passenger in the vehicle at that time.
- **Clear Visibility Required:** Parking in a designated accessible space without a valid, clearly visible disability placard or a handicap license plate is strictly prohibited.
- **Protect the Access Aisle:** Please ensure you never park or block the painted striped lines next to a handicap spot, as this space is required for wheelchair lifts and ramps to deploy safely.

Thank you for your cooperation and respect in keeping our facilities accessible for everyone!

HANDLING BARKING DOG DISTURBANCES

Barking dogs can become a serious community issue. While some residents tolerate barking, others are highly sensitive to the disruption. If you are experiencing or causing a disturbance, please use the following guidelines to help restore neighborhood peace:

Step 1: Speak with Your Neighbor
Direct communication is usually the fastest and most effective solution. Try speaking to your neighbor or leaving a friendly note. They may truly be unaware of how much their dog is barking or how far the sound travels when they are away.

Step 2: Take Responsibility (If It's Your Dog)
If a neighbor informs you that your dog is disturbing the peace, please take immediate action to curb the behavior. Ensuring your dog is not a nuisance is a key part of being a responsible neighbor, and proactive steps will earn the appreciation and support of those living around you.

Step 3: Escalate If Necessary
If direct communication fails to resolve the issue, you have official avenues for assistance:

- **Contact Local Patrol:** Reach out to the Cottonwood Palo Verde Patrol for on-site assistance and documentation to help reach an eventual resolution.
- **Report a Noise Violation:** You can contact the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office to report an official noise violation.

AUTOMATIC GATE SAFETY

When entering and exiting the automatic gates at the San Tan Blvd. and Michigan Ave. entrances, please approach slowly and use caution. These gates utilize heavy moving parts, and driving carefully ensures the safety of both your vehicle and our community equipment.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: WASTE AND RECYCLING CONTAINERS

To keep our community looking its best, please remember that all trash and recycling containers must be stored completely out of sight from neighboring homes and streets when it is not collection day.
For routine collection services, please follow these timing rules:

- **Placing Containers Out:** You may place your bins at the roadside no earlier than the day before scheduled collection
- **Storing Containers Away:** All bins must be brought back in and stored out of sight by the end of the day on collection day

Thank you for your cooperation in maintaining the beautiful appearance of our neighborhood!

PET CONTROL AND LEASH RULES

As a reminder to all pet owners, you are responsible for keeping your pets securely confined to your lot and maintaining full control over their activities at all times.
When your dog is outside of your property, please ensure they adhere to the following safety standards:

- **Secure Enclosures:** Dogs must be kept within a suitable, secure enclosure when outdoors on your lot
- **Leash Length Restrictions:** When walking your dog in the community, they must be kept on a leash that is no longer than six feet in length

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CRIME AWARENESS IN SUN LAKES

Want to know more in-depth information about what is happening across our Sun Lakes communities? Staying informed is our first line of defense. Understanding crime trends, patterns, and activity in our immediate area is vital for several reasons:

- **Proactive Prevention:** By understanding the specific types of preventable crimes occurring near us, residents can take the exact precautions needed to safeguard their properties.
- **Targeted Vigilance:** Knowledge is power. Recognizing unusual patterns allows neighbors to keep a targeted, watchful eye out for specific vulnerabilities.
- **A Safer Community:** When we stay informed and look out for one another, we actively reduce criminal opportunities and keep Sun Lakes a secure, peaceful place to live.

spotcrime.com crimegrade.org MCSO Crime Map

ARCHITECTURAL MODIFICATION PERMITS

An important reminder for all homeowners: you must obtain authorization via an Architectural Modification Application Permit prior to making any exterior alterations to your property.
These permits are a vital part of protecting our community for several reasons:

- **Community Aesthetics:** They ensure all modifications maintain a cohesive, high-quality neighborhood look
- **Permanent Records:** They provide a lasting record of the work performed and all official inspections conducted
- **Home Value:** They ensure the project is structurally safe and help preserve or enhance your home's market value when deciding to sell

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BE A RESPONSIBLE DRIVER: SHARE THE ROAD SAFELY

Maintaining safe streets is a shared responsibility. Whether you are behind the wheel of a car or a golf cart, practicing mindful driving habits keeps our entire community secure.

Please keep these vital road safety rules in mind during your travels:

- **Obey Residential Speed Limits:** The maximum legal speed limit on a residential street is 25 MPH (unless posted otherwise). Driving 25 MPH or less gives you crucial extra time to react to the unexpected. Check your speedometer frequently—you may be traveling faster than you think. Don't be a speeder, be a leader
- **Stay Alert on Every Trip:** Keep your eyes on the road and eliminate distractions, even during short trips through the neighborhood. Never take unnecessary chances
- **Golf Cart Lane Courtesy:** Under Arizona law, golf carts are classified as motor vehicles and are legally permitted to drive alongside automobile traffic. However, driving directly in the main traffic lane below the normal speed can cause backups and frustrate other motorists
- **Yield to the Right:** If you are operating a golf cart, please move as close as practical to the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway. This allows trailing vehicles to safely pass you on the left
- **Prioritize Safety Over Speed:** Always choose safety over haste. Responsibly share our streets with fellow motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and neighbors to ensure a secure environment for everyone

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PALO VERDE GATE ACCESS: VISITOR GUIDE

Have you ever wondered why GPS sometimes sends your guests to the wrong gate? Common digital glitches—like signal interference or blocked satellite connections—can easily misroute navigation systems.

To prevent unnecessary delays, resident confusion, and costly damage to our automated gate arms and visitor vehicles, please share these gate access rules with all family members, guests, and contractors before they arrive:

- **All Visitors Must Use the San Tan Gate:** Direct your guests to the staffed main entrance at 10704 E. San Tan Blvd. (just east of Alma School Road) to check in with the gate attendant.
- **Michigan Avenue Gate is Resident-Only:** Visible from Alma School Road, this gate is entirely unstaffed and only accessible via a resident RFID windshield transmitter.

Please remind your visitors to avoid the Michigan Ave gate entirely and head straight to the San Tan entrance!

Cottonwood Palo Verde at Sun Lakes

Safety & Security Committee

NEXT MEETING:
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14
10:00AM
CLC MEETING ROOM 1

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM SCAMS: ESSENTIAL SAFETY TIPS

Scammers are becoming increasingly sophisticated in their attempts to steal your money and personal information. Staying alert is your best defense. Protect yourself and your assets by following these essential security tips:

- **Know Who You Are Dealing With:** Never take a sender's or caller's word at face value. If you cannot independently verify their identity, do not engage
- **Handle Digital Messages with Caution:** Do not open suspicious text messages, pop-up windows, links, or email attachments. Delete them immediately
- **Hang Up on Remote Access Requests:** Never respond to unsolicited phone calls about your computer, and never allow a stranger remote access to your device. Hang up immediately
- **Keep Personal Details Secure:** Lock down your mobile devices and computers. Use strong, unique passwords, and routinely check your privacy and security settings on social media and all digital apps
- **Be Skeptical of Money Requests:** Beware of any sudden, urgent requests for your financial details or money, and always use caution when shopping online

Remember the golden rule of fraud prevention: **If it looks too good to be true, it probably is**

GARAGE DOOR SAFETY REMINDER

Keeping your garage door open just a small amount—even a foot or two—might seem like a good way to vent heat, but it introduces significant security risks. During the overnight hours, a cracked garage door signals a lapse in vigilance, making your home an easy target for opportunistic criminals. As we head into mid-summer, keeping our homes locked down is more important than ever:

- **Peak Crime Months:** July and August are peak months for thefts and burglaries right here in our community
- **Secure All Points of Entry:** Fully closing and securing your main garage door, as well as any attached side doors, is the easiest way to deter unwanted visitors
- **Protect Your Assets:** A shut door protects your vehicles, valuable belongings, and your family's overall home security

Don't give thieves an easy window of opportunity. Keep those garage doors completely closed, stay vigilant, and let's keep our neighborhood safe this summer!

PREVENT VEHICLE BREAK-INS: DON'T GIVE THIEVES A WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY

In Arizona, property crimes like larceny-theft and vehicle burglaries consistently rank at the top of the crime list, far outweighing other offenses. Fortunately, most vehicle break-ins are crimes of opportunity that can be easily prevented with a few proactive habits.

To protect your vehicle and belongings, keep these essential prevention techniques in mind:

- **Remove All Visible Items:** Thieves like to "window shop." Avoid leaving anything visible inside your car—including purses, shopping bags, luggage, electronics, or loose change. Even an item you think is worthless can look valuable to a thief from the outside.
- **Keep Your Vehicle Tidy:** A clean, empty car is a highly unattractive target for a criminal.
- **Always Lock Your Doors:** The vast majority of vehicle break-ins and thefts happen to unlocked vehicles. If your doors are securely locked, opportunistic thieves will almost always move on to an easier target.

Taking just a few seconds to clear out your car and lock the doors is the best way to safeguard your property. Don't let the bad guy win!

FOR PEDESTRIANS: BE VISIBLE AND SMART

- **Walk Facing Traffic:** Always walk on the left shoulder of the road, facing oncoming vehicles. Stay as far from the active travel lane as possible so you can see oncoming traffic and react if necessary.

- **Dress to Be Seen:** Wear bright, high-visibility clothing during the day. If you are walking at dawn, dusk, or after dark, wear reflective gear and always carry a flashlight.

- **Stay Alert:** Never assume a driver sees you. Keep your eyes on approaching vehicles and avoid distractions like looking down at your phone.

FOR MOTORISTS: PRACTICE HIGH VIGILANCE

- **Expect the Unexpected:** Scan the shoulders of the road constantly, especially around curves and in poorly lit areas at night
- **Give Plenty of Room:** Pass pedestrians slowly and provide as much clearance as safely possible.

Safety on our streets is everyone's job. By staying alert and visible, we can protect one another and keep our neighborhoods secure.

ACC GUIDELINES: OUTDOOR SECURITY CAMERA PLACEMENT

In Arizona, homeowners have the legal right to install outdoor security cameras to protect and monitor their property. However, these devices must never violate a neighbor's reasonable expectation of privacy.

To maintain harmony in our neighborhoods, our Architectural Control Committee (ACC) guidelines require all outdoor security devices to respect adjacent properties:

- **Protect Your Perimeter Only:** Security cameras mounted on or near your home must be aimed exclusively at your own property.
- **Respect Private Areas:** Cameras must be positioned so that they point away from neighboring properties, including side yards, backyards, windows, and other private zones.
- **Focus on the Main Purpose:** Keep the focus on the true goal of outdoor surveillance—deterring criminal activity and monitoring your own home's immediate perimeter.

By keeping your cameras properly aimed, you can safeguard your home while fully respecting the privacy of those living around you.

COMMUNITY SAFETY REMINDER

Living in a large, active community means safety depends on all of us. Please keep these simple habits in mind to keep our neighborhoods secure:

- **Stay Aware:** Be mindful of your surroundings whether you are driving, walking, or at home.
- **Report Suspicious Activity:** If you see something out of place, report it to Patrol or local authorities immediately.
- **Look Out for Neighbors:** Watch out for pedestrians and golf carts on the road, and check in on those around you.

Safety is a team effort. Thank you for doing your part!

Cottonwood Palo Verde at Sun Lakes

SUN LAKES NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH GROUP

NEXT MEETING:
WEDNESDAY, SEPT 9,
4:30PM
CLC MEETING ROOM

GAIN Kickoff Planning Meeting

Tuesday, Sept 22, 6:30 at Sisk Park

Register your party
Find info on hosting a party
Get answers to questions
Giveaways

Can't make it to the kickoff meeting but still want to host a party?
You still can, please email sunlakesneighborhoodwatch@gmail.com, simply let us know you want to host *or help* for our **First Annual GAIN Block Party**

First Annual GAIN Night

Getting Arizona Involved in Neighborhoods

October 24

Weather your planning to host solo or gather a group, this is your opportunity to
Meet more neighbors
Share resources
Be a part of something meaningful & fun
Meet community members who work everyday to help keep us safe
Learn something new

This is a first-of-its-kind event for our Sun Lakes communities, this special evening is dedicated to bringing our communities together, strengthening neighborhood connections and celebrating local pride across Sun Lakes

We're looking for great people to host and/or help!
If you have ever thought of hosting a block party for your neighbors, GAIN is the night!!
Email us with any questions.



SUN LAKES, AZ
NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Upcoming
Neighborhood Watch Meeting

September 9 | 4:30pm

Computer Learning Center