

2009/10 WINTER | News Magazine & Activity Guide



laguna hills

# CITY VIEWS

## Public Safety in Laguna Hills



**What's Inside?**

Public Safety  
Holiday Safety Tips  
Animal Services  
Capital Improvement Projects  
Environment



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**CITY VIEWS**  
2010 WINTER NEWS MAGAZINE & ACTIVITY GUIDE

**CITY HALL HOURS:**

8 am – 5 pm Monday – Friday

**ENGINEERING, PLANNING AND BUILDING COUNTER HOURS:**

1 pm – 5:30 pm Monday – Thursday

1 pm – 5 pm Friday

Regular *City Council Meetings* are held on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month.

*Traffic Commission Meetings* are held on the third Wednesday of January, March, May, July, September and November.

*Parks and Recreation Commission Meetings* are held on the first Wednesday of February, April, June, August, October and December.

All meetings begin at 7 pm in the City Council Chambers.



**LAGUNA HILLS CITY COUNCIL:**

**Joel Lautenschleger**  
Mayor

**Randal Bressette**  
Mayor Pro Tem

**Melody Carruth**

**R. Craig Scott**

**L. Allan Songstad, Jr.**

*A Message*  
from the **CITY**

Winter is fast approaching and we're looking forward to the holidays and family events in store for the next few months. As we reflect on things that we're thankful for, the City of Laguna Hills is proud to announce its "Best Family Neighborhoods" award from Parenting OC Magazine. As the City accepts this award it's looking forward to continuing its community improvement efforts over the next year through major Capital Improvement Projects that will begin in late 2009 and early 2010. The City will be starting roadway improvements in various locations throughout the City. These projects are outlined in this issue of City Views on pages eight and nine.

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**CITY VIEWS**

City Views is published quarterly by the City of Laguna Hills and is distributed as a public service to City residents and businesses. We welcome your suggestions and feedback and value your involvement in the community. Please send or call in any comments or questions to:

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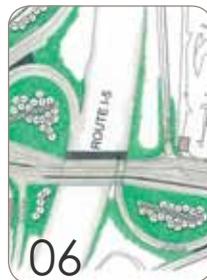
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# Double Digit

Public Safety is a top priority for Laguna Hills. This year alone the City is investing about \$6.5 million in public safety to ensure residents and property are safe and secure.

Laguna Hills, like many South Orange County cities, contracts police services with the Orange County Sheriff's Department (OCSD). Cities that do not contract with the Sheriff and have their own police department have the added overhead costs of development and maintenance. When cities like Laguna Hills contract with the Sheriff's department they can see substantial savings over a stand-alone police force while retaining all of the resources at the Sheriff Department's disposal.

Laguna Hills Police Services is led by Lt. Steve Doan, a 25-year veteran of OCSD, who commands a staff of 30 that is comprised of Sergeants, Investigators, Deputies and Community Services Officers that patrol Laguna Hills in various assignments. Laguna Hills proudly has more deputies per capita (5.68 deputies per 10,000 residents) than any of its neighboring cities (see graph).

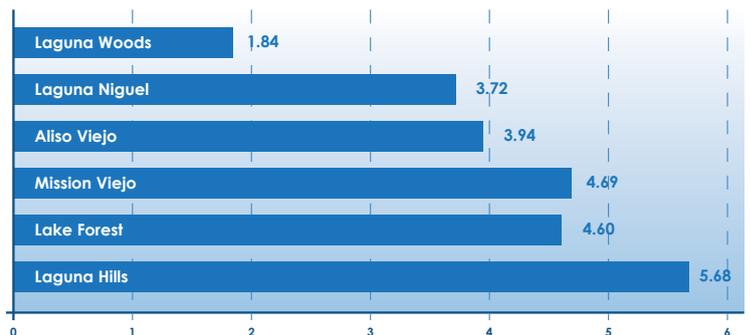
# Drop in Crime

Usually as the economy declines crime tends to increase but in 2008, Laguna Hills saw a substantial drop in a variety of crimes:

- Overall crime went down 11 percent
- Violent crime went down a total of 25 percent
- Property crime decreased by 10 percent

In addition to providing basic police services, the Sheriff's Department also provides the benefit of other services such as regional programs for residents including the Citizen's Emergency Preparedness Class, the Neighborhood Watch Program and Business Watch Programs.

**Deputies Per 10,000 Residents in LH and Surrounding Cities**



## School Resources Officer Program, One Year Report

Last fall, *City Views* featured a story about a new Sheriff's Deputy Program starting at Laguna Hills High School. After the first year of the School Resource Officer (SRO) program, Deputy Ray Botta has seen success in multiple areas and looks forward to further positive results.

The SRO program has seen a substantial decrease of problems in and around the high school compared to the 2007-2008 school year. The SRO program has also led to a greater partnership between law enforcement and the school staff and students in addressing law enforcement issues. School staff has reported a decrease in drug use, gang issues and fights on the campuses since the SRO program began last year.

In addition to enhancing on campus student safety, the program has also allowed officers to interact with parents on campus and at PTA meetings, giving the public a clearer view of the issues surrounding youth in South Orange County.

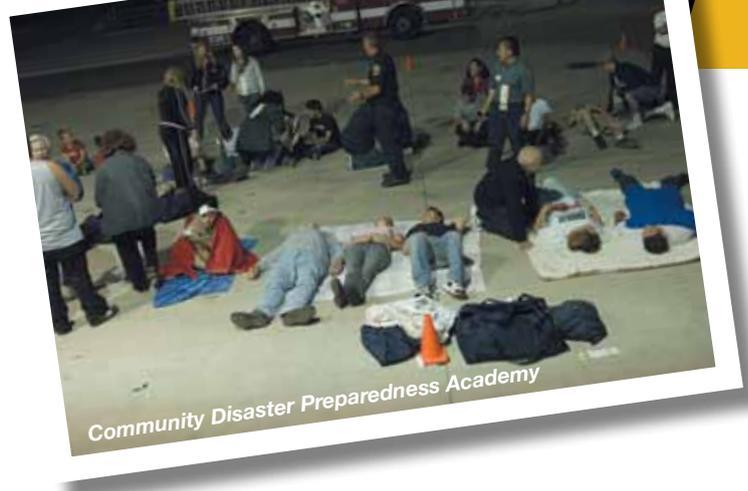
The SRO program has also seen some successes in combating issues that had been difficult to enforce such as truancy. Through the SRO program there has also been an increase in the number of recruits into the Sheriff's Department Law Enforcement Explorer Program.

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*"Deputy Botta's daily presence and visibility on our campus is a positive force in every respect; he has become a true partner and a valued member of our educational team. He has earned the respect of both students and faculty as he has demonstrated time and again his dedication to the security of this campus."*

*The LHHS administration team, faculty, and staff thank the City Council of Laguna Hills for Deputy Botta, and we acknowledge the City's commitment to the safety and well-being of all students at the Home of the Hawks."*

*– Sean Boulton, Principal, Laguna Hills High School*



## Citizen's Emergency Preparedness Academy

The Citizen's Emergency Preparedness Academy is designed to give residents basic survival skills should a natural disaster or major emergency occur. In the event of a major emergency, Fire and Police Services may not be able to immediately answer all calls for service. Laguna Hills Police Services and the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) Emergency Preparedness Academy is an eight-week course and is offered in the fall, those interested in taking the course should contact Deputy Lambert with Laguna Hills Police Services at (949) 707-2641 or [lambertca@ocsd.org](mailto:lambertca@ocsd.org).

## ReadyOC: Keeping Residents Prepared for an Emergency

ReadyOC is a new web-based disaster preparedness program that began in September 2009. ReadyOC is designed to educate and empower residents in the event of an emergency. At [ReadyOC.org](http://ReadyOC.org) residents can sign up to receive disaster and emergency alerts on their house phone, e-mail or on their cell phones. At [ReadyOC.org](http://ReadyOC.org) residents can also obtain information about what they should have in their emergency preparedness kits and can find resources about local disaster preparedness programs. ReadyOC.org will also give real-time information on emergency preparedness and response resources. For more information and to sign up go to [www.ReadyOC.org](http://www.ReadyOC.org).



# HOLIDAY SAFETY



*Dangerous fires like this can get out of control in a matter of minutes.*

## Holiday Safety Tips from OCFA

The Orange County Fire Authority wants you and your loved ones to enjoy a safe and happy holiday season. The following safety tips are provided to ensure your holiday celebrations are fire safe and injury free.

### CHRISTMAS TREES

A Christmas tree can be one of the most hazardous items ever brought into your home. An ignited tree can be totally consumed by fire in 3 to 5 seconds, and generate over 2000 degrees of radiant heat. This intense heat can instantly ignite furniture and draperies located across the room from the tree itself.

- **Cut** 2-3 inches off bottom of a fresh tree and put tree in water immediately. Use a sturdy holder and fill with water daily.
- **Check lights carefully** for broken sockets or frayed wires before you put them on your tree. Replace any damaged strings.
- **Place tree away** from fireplaces, radiators, or other heat sources. Ensure tree is out of the way of day-to-day traffic and doesn't block doorways.
- **Avoid** placing breakable ornaments on lower branches where children and pets can reach them. Ornaments and other holiday decorations should be non-combustible or flame resistant.
- **Remove** your tree promptly after the holidays.

### HOLIDAY LIGHTS

Holiday lights are festive but they can also be a fire hazard, remember these important safety tips.

- **Check** all indoor and outdoor decorative lighting for frayed cords, broken wires and loose connections. Replace any damaged sets.
- **Keep electrical connections** off the ground and away from moisture. Water and electricity are a deadly combination!
- **When hanging lights**, ensure staples, tacks or nails do not pierce wires. Use plastic ties instead.
- **Only lights and extension cords** designed for outdoor use should be used outdoors.
- **Use a surge protector/strip plug** for lights to avoid an overload. Use no more than three sets of lights per single extension cord.
- **Unplug** lights before going to bed or leaving the house.

### FIREPLACES

While a roaring fire in the fireplace can be cozy, it can also be dangerous if safety precautions are not taken.

- **Have your chimney inspected and cleaned** by a professional at least once a year. Always open the chimney flue or damper to allow smoke to get out before lighting a fire.
- **Make sure your chimney has a spark arrestor** with ½ inch mesh. Never burn trash or paper in a fireplace as it can float up a chimney and onto your roof or into your yard.
- **Do not** attempt to burn your Christmas tree in a fireplace.
- **Use a glass or metal screen** in front of the fireplace opening to prevent embers or sparks from popping out on to combustible items.
- **Remove ashes in a metal container** and never store them inside your home. Ashes can retain heat for up to 48 hours. Be sure to soak ashes thoroughly to cool before disposing of them.
- **Carbon Monoxide gases can be emitted from a smoldering fire.** Be sure fires are fully extinguished before going to bed.
- **Never heat your house using the kitchen stove or a portable barbecue or hibachi.**

### CANDLES

Candles are responsible for thousands of fires across the U.S. each year. Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Years Eve, and New Years Day account for the four of the five most prevalent days of candle related fires. Use these tips to prevent fires in your home.

- **Never use** lighted candles on a tree or near other evergreens. Keep candles away from decorations and wrapping paper.
- **Never leave** a burning candle unattended. Always extinguish before leaving a room or going to bed.
- **Keep** burning candles out of reach from children and pets.
- **Place** candles where they can't be knocked down or blown over.
- **Always** use heat resistant and non-tip candle holders.

# ANIMAL SERVICES

## Dog Licensing An EmPAWering Experience!

I truly lead a dog's life. I get to hang out with my family, play fetch, take naps, go on walks, and chase after my tail. But life wouldn't be all this easy and carefree if I wasn't licensed. Each year between six and eight million dogs and cats enter shelters across the U.S. Many are unlicensed and often the offspring of other unlicensed dogs and cats. Here in Laguna Hills we have the lowest number of dogs and cats that end up in shelters as compared to neighboring cities such as Irvine and Mission Viejo. Even so, a recent study found that only 43 percent of dogs within the City are licensed.

All dogs 4 months of age and older are required by state law to be licensed, which is a good thing! Licensing keeps dogs like me healthy; it ensures we have our rabies vaccinations, provides vital information to support investigations of cruelty and neglect and also increases the chance that I'd be reunited with my owner if I get lost. In fact, I got out last week and since I was licensed the nice Animal Services Officer gave me a quick ride home instead of taking me to the shelter! Most important of all, licensing encourages owners to spay and neuter their pet, which prevents unwanted dogs and cats and leads to healthier and happier animals. Each day in the United States, more than 70,000 puppies and kittens are born. That's more than seven times the amount of human births each day! The number of animals born far outweighs the number of available homes. Spaying and neutering your pet is the right thing to do to keep them safe and healthy. As a dog I'm glad to be licensed but I know not all dogs are so fortunate. It's my hope that by the end of 2010 all dogs in Laguna Hills are licensed and can enjoy the benefits and peace of mind enjoyed by being licensed.



## Laguna Hills Pet Clinic Recap

The 2009 Laguna Hills Pet Clinic was held on Saturday, October 3rd and was a great success. During the Pet Clinic 66 dogs and 18 cats received low cost vaccinations, 36 pets were licensed, 19 were micro chipped, and one kitten was adopted.

## Spay and Neuter Excuses, Myths & Facts

*"But my pet is a pure bred"* – So is at least one out of every four animals brought to animal shelters around the country.

*"I want my dog to be protective"* – Spaying and Neutering does not affect a dog's natural instinct to protect its home and family. A dog's personality is formed more by genetics and its environment than by its sex hormones.

*"I don't want my male dog or cat to feel less male"* – Pets don't have any concept of sexual identity or ego. Neutering a male dog or cat will not change its basic personality. It doesn't suffer any kind of emotional reaction or identity crisis when neutered.

## Low Cost Spay and Neuter Clinics in Laguna Hills

### Affordable Spay and Neuter

24861 Alicia Pkwy Ste. D (Dick's Sporting Goods Plaza)  
Laguna Hills, CA 92653  
(949) 768-1314

For more information or to find other low cost clinics, contact the OC Animal Care at (714) 935-6848 or go to [www.ocpetinfo.com](http://www.ocpetinfo.com).



# CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT



## Capital Improvement Projects, Keeping Laguna Hills on the Move!

As part of the Laguna Hills General Plan and Biennial Budget, the City of Laguna Hills is proceeding with a variety of Capital Improvement Projects. These projects focus on mobility and will help to alleviate traffic congestion throughout the City.

## La Paz Widening at I-5

The La Paz project will make substantial changes to both the east and westbound lanes of La Paz Road. The project will add additional on-and-off-ramp lanes for I-5 and a second westbound left turn lane from La Paz Road to southbound Cabot Road. The project will also involve a realignment of westbound La Paz Road to southbound I-5. The project is scheduled to begin in the Spring of 2010 and will take about nine months to complete. While this project will affect traffic, most of the work will be performed at night. The project will cost \$5.3 million and is being funded through Federal, State and Measure M funds.



# ENVIRONMENT

## New Household Hazardous Waste Recycling Programs

The City of Laguna Hills has established free drop-off locations where the following Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) products can be properly disposed.

- Batteries
- Compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs)
- Cell phones

These are regular household items that contain dangerous materials such as cadmium, mercury, copper, zinc, lead, manganese, nickel, and lithium that could contaminate landfills and therefore are banned from landfill disposal.

### **Free City of Laguna Hills Drop-Off Locations and Acceptable HHW Items**

**Laguna Hills Community Center,**  
25555 Alicia Pkwy accepts **Batteries, Cell Phones, CFLs.**

**Laguna Hills Car Wash,**  
24794 Alicia Pkwy accepts **Batteries, Cell Phones.**

**Lamps Plus,** 23451 Avenida De Carlotta accepts **CFLs**

Plastic bags are available at each site to dispose of batteries and CFLs.

**Please be aware that fluorescent tubes are not accepted at the City of Laguna Hills Drop-Off locations listed above.** For the nearest drop off location for fluorescent tubes, and more drop-off locations outside of the City of

Laguna Hills for batteries and CFLs, please contact Mercury Disposal Systems at (714) 505-6100 or visit the Trash and Recycling Services section of the City's website:  
[www.ci.laguna-hills.ca.us](http://www.ci.laguna-hills.ca.us).



**Please Note: Automobile batteries are not accepted at these locations but may be dropped off at one of the four County of Orange Household Hazardous Waste Collection Centers (HHWCC).** These drop-off centers are free and will accept all HHW including indoor pesticides, automotive products, flammable products, cleaning products, workshop/painting supplies, e-waste, sharps, lawn and garden products, batteries, fluorescent tubes, and CFLs. The two local HHWCCs are located at:

**Prima Deshecha Landfill** – 32250 La Pata Ave., San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675

**Irvine Regional HHW Center** – 6411 Oak Canyon, Irvine, CA 92618

For more information on the OC HHWCCs including hours of operation, please call (714) 834-6752.



## Christmas Tree Recycling

The holidays are upon us and Christmas trees are a big part of the festivities. But when the holiday is over, make sure you properly dispose of your live tree.

- Remove all ornaments, tinsel, lights and the tree stand.
- Cut your tree in half if it is over 6' tall.
- Place your tree curbside on your collection day next to your automated containers.

Please note that since Christmas and New Year's Day fall on Thursdays the remainder of the week's collection will be one day behind for those weeks. The City's waste hauler CR&R will be picking up the trees as part of its regular service until January 8, 2010.

## What About "Sharps?"

"Sharps" are the term used for hypodermic needles or exposed blades such as straight razors or scalpels. Sharps are banned from landfill disposal because of the dangers that they pose to individuals who handle and process trash and recyclable waste. The City of Laguna Hills has recently implemented a recycling program for the proper disposal of sharps waste by working with local pharmacies to establish drop-off locations. The current pharmacy sharps waste drop-off location is:

### **Sharps Waste Recycling Center**

**Dial Drug**, 24261 Avenida De La Carlota, Laguna Hills (949) 588-7900

To dispose of sharps waste, residents must first pick up a container at a participating pharmacy by showing proof of Laguna Hills residency, bring it home and fill the container with the sharps they wish to dispose. Once returned, another free

sharps waste container will be provided. The pharmacy will ship these containers to a certified sharps waste disposal company which will incinerate the sharps waste.

The recycling drop-off program is funded by grants received from the County of Orange and San Diego Gas and Electric. For more information on the hazardous waste recycling program please contact the City at (949) 707-2680.

## Cooling Down Our Water Usage This Winter!

As we enter winter, remember to keep water restrictions in mind! Traditionally the Fall and Winter months are when Southern Californians' waste the most water. Often the temperatures don't dip too low, and our plants enter dormancy which means they require less water.

Both El Toro and Moulton Niguel Water Districts are under mandatory water restrictions and are asking residents to reduce their water usage by 20 percent. In Laguna Hills the days for watering are Tuesday, Friday and Saturday or Sunday. Remember to shorten the amount of time you water plants and use water in your household. For more info on how you can cut back on water usage go to [www.mnwd.com](http://www.mnwd.com) or [www.etwd.com](http://www.etwd.com).