

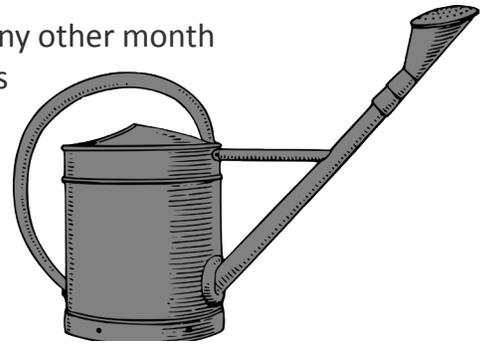
2012
August

Bates-Hendricks Newsletter



The Lawn is Gone

It's official. This July saw the most days in the 90s of any other month in the last 100 years. There were over twenty-six days above that mark, with four more in the hundreds. For most of us, that counts as the hottest month we've ever experienced in the Bates-Hendricks neighborhood. Combine that with the ten inches we are missing from average rainfall figures, and most of Indiana is in a very severe drought.



For our local landscape, you've seen dead or dormant grass for almost two months and, more recently, dying shrubs and suffering ornamental trees. By the time the drought hits September, even mature trees will start to see the effects of stress.

So what can we do to help keep this season from affecting our future landscape? There are several important facts to consider. The primary consideration should be length of time to recover existing features. In other words, big trees are king in the following list of tips:

1. Forget about the lawn. If you are still trying to water grass, stop. The watering ban in Marion County specifically addresses this type of watering, and for good reason. Keeping grass alive in these conditions is almost impossible and, due to the lack of rain, starting a new lawn may not even be possible once fall hits.
2. Water your trees. I'm not just talking about small ornamental trees anymore. For every week we do not receive 1" of rain between now and the beginning of November, put your hose on a trickle under each tree for several hours each. Try to make sure you are applying about 10 gallons of water per inch of trunk caliper (diameter of trunk at chest height). This means about 15-20 gallons of water per week for newer, small trees. Mature trees will need much more water. Don't water extremely hardy/invasive trees such as Mulberry, Cottonwood, and Tree of Heaven, as they should survive without help.
3. Water ornamental shrubs. I've even seen hardy evergreens such as Yews and Boxwood suffering through this heat. Water much less than trees, about 20 to 30 seconds with the hose once a week for established plants and twice a week for specimens planted in the last three years. Some larger plants will need more than 30 seconds. If you begin to see dry edges on leaves or early fall coloration, the plant is likely stressed and water is needed.
4. Keep yourself hydrated. As you're caring for your trees and shrubs, don't forget to water yourself. If you ever stop sweating in extreme heat, take a break inside with lots to drink.

Tune in next month for tips on lawn alternatives in Indiana landscapes.

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Letter from the President

Save the Date – Volunteer Weekend

I couldn't be more excited about the opportunity we have been given. Just a few weeks ago, our friends and partners at the Immanuel United Church of Christ at 402 Prospect Street approached us with an opportunity. Northview Church in Carmel organizes an event each year called the Good Neighbor Weekend. They provide volunteers and potential financial support to an urban neighborhood for an entire weekend, doing whatever is needed. Northview approached Immanuel with the opportunity of coming to our neighborhood. Subsequently, Immanuel approached us. We sat down with Ed Stringer and Val Ruess from Immanuel and Darrell Unsworth, the new president of Southeast Neighborhood Development (SEND), to discuss preparation of applications. We then prepared and submitted some very comprehensive applications.



BHNA President, Rob Uppencamp

I am happy to announce that we were just informed that on the weekend of October 13 and 14, we will receive 400 volunteers from Northview. We are still finalizing the details of what exactly we will be doing, but we presented them with projects such as maintenance and beautification of our greenspaces, home repair and community center remodeling, cleaning up trash in streets and alleys, cleaning up abandoned properties, excessive vegetation removal, storm drain cleaning, and much more. In the coming weeks, we will finalize and plan and keep the neighborhood informed. If you have suggestions on where we have the greatest needs, please let us know at president@bateshendricks.org.

Despite receiving huge volunteer support from outside the neighborhood, we also need volunteers from inside the neighborhood. We need team leaders that will lead a group of volunteers in specific tasks and, obviously, the more volunteers we have, the more we can accomplish. We also need people starting now to help us coordinate this event. So, save the date for October 13 and 14, from 9:00am to 4:00pm each day. All volunteers from inside the neighborhood will receive lunch on both days.

I hope you are having a safe and enjoyable summer, despite the drought. –Rob Uppencamp

Bates-Hendricks 2012 Abandoned Housing Report

Every summer for the past four years, Bates-Hendricks residents have fanned out across the neighborhood to identify, count, and rate the vacant and abandoned housing in our neighborhood. This information has allowed us to create an annual “problem property” list of the worst properties as well as keep abreast of trends in our neighborhood. In addition, it has positioned us to better inform and influence city policy around demolition and rehabilitation in our neighborhood. Based on the recent survey, we can draw many conclusions about housing trends.



In August of 2011, there were 206 vacant or abandoned houses in our neighborhood. In the past year:

- 6 were rehabbed, repaired
- 12 were demolished
- 68 are now occupied, though some of these may not have been repaired
- Average condition of the vacant houses has improved

This August, we found only 191 vacant and abandoned houses. Even if the demolished houses are accounted for, this is still a reduction in vacant and abandoned houses.

In the past year, 64 houses became vacant or abandoned; however the average condition of these houses was under 5 points. This basically means that most of the new houses are simply vacant, rather than abandoned. Also, with 89 becoming vacant or abandoned in the previous year, this was positive improvement.

Of the present 191 vacant or abandoned houses:

- 58 are in serious disrepair.
- 57 are in some disrepair.
- 75 are vacant, but in repair.

Of these 191 vacant and abandoned houses, 5 are scheduled to be demolished in the next six months. The list may increase to add another 5 within the next year. This will mean we will have had over 30 homes demolished in our neighborhood in the last three years. While this is a sad solution to many of the homes, it will continue to be part of the solution in the near term.

A bright point is that, from the work on the Abandoned Housing Taskforce, we now have a better ability to move “problem properties” to new owners. One such way is through the SEND “Transfer and Transform” program. This allows residents and developers to buy city properties for \$5,500 as long as they rehab the house within eighteen months. There have already been three Bates-Hendricks properties transferred, with four more in the works. Those interested in seeing a list of potential homes can find it at www.sendcdc.org.

Another tool available to us is the County Surplus Auctions. This frees up yet another 20 abandoned houses that can now be moved into the hands of responsible owners. The first auction was this past June and we have our first house on its way to a new life!

The Abandoned Housing Taskforce will meet Monday, August 6 directly after the neighborhood association meeting to further discuss the results from the survey and to determine the strategy for our worst houses. For more details, please contact John Winter at 414-9108 or housingtaskforce@bateshendricks.org.

Bates-Hendricks Neighborhood Association

The Bates-Hendricks Neighborhood Association strives to improve the quality of life of those living in the neighborhood through efforts to assure safety, to maintain or improve the living environment, and to enhance the spirit of cooperation and neighborliness among all residents. We meet monthly on the first Monday of the month at the Immanuel United Church of Christ at the corner of East and Prospect at 6:30pm. Annual dues are \$3 for individuals, \$5 for families, and \$25 for businesses. Please mail dues to Craig Dukate, 1435 S. New Jersey Street, Indianapolis, IN 46225. More information about the neighborhood can be found online at bateshendricks.org.

Monthly Calendar

- Aug 5** All About Bees, Garfield Park Conservatory, 1:30 to 3:30pm, free. Learn about bee biology and why bees are important to our gardens and our world. Experience first-hand how honey is harvested and taste a sample. Registration required, 327-7580. Ages: 18+.
- Aug 6** **Bates-Hendricks Neighborhood Association Meeting, 6:30pm, Immanuel United Church of Christ.**
- Aug 8** Nature T-Shirts, Garfield Park Conservatory, 4:00 to 5:00pm, \$4. Bring a t-shirt and create a one-of-a-kind design using objects from nature. A dark or bright colored t-shirt will work best. Registration required, 327-7580. Ages: 6+.
- Aug 9** SEND 5-Year Plan Strategic Meeting, SECS Youth Center at 924 Shelby Street, 5:30pm. Southeast Neighborhood Development (SEND) has spent the last few months working on a new 5-year strategic plan. Many of you have contributed to this process by participating in small groups and answering surveys. However, SEND wants every interested neighbor to have an opportunity to hear about the tentative plan and offer input and comment. Consultants will present the tentative plan and listen to feedback. SEND board members and staff will not be present in order to facilitate an open forum for suggestions and concerns. Please take this opportunity to be part of what SEND becomes.
- Aug 11** Bug Hunt, Garfield Park Conservatory, 2:00 to 3:00pm, \$4. Explore the garden for bugs! Make your own bug catcher and see what you can find. Registration required, 327-7580. Ages: 5-12.
- Aug 30** Music in the Garden, Garfield Park Sunken Garden, 7:00pm. Bring your lawn chairs and picnic to enjoy an evening of music in the Sunken Garden.

