



MARCH 2020

BLACKBERRY MOUNTAIN ASSOCIATION

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

David Galusha, President
Dave Teffeteller, Vice President
Carolyn Sewell, Treasurer
Rich Baker, Secretary
Dolly Vantrepotte, Member at Large

DESIGN COMMITTEE

Barbara Dunson
Jennifer Fontenot
Dave Teffeteller



Clean-Up, High Speed Internet & More

Spring Clean-Up and Roadside Chipping

The annual Blackberry property clean-up and chipping will be begin the **last week in March**. Workers will be removing debris from the roadways, ditches, check dams and rights of way including limbs and debris from residents' property. This is great opportunity to clean



up your property and to share the cost equally through the Association membership. To make the project a success:

- Place debris to be chipped in the right-of-way along the roadsides where it is easily accessible but will not encroach onto the roadway.
- Keep debris set out for chipping to less than six inches in diameter. You do not need to cut longer limbs into piles of shorter limbs.
- Stack debris so that all the limbs are facing in one direction.
- Volunteer to help with chipping if you are able. While we pay a tree service to provide workers and a chipper, community volunteers can help reduce the time and work effort involved in the chipping, which results in a reduced cost to the community, as well. If you would like to volunteer, please call the office or contact Dave Teffeteller at dave@ellijay.com.
- If you need assistance in moving your debris to the roadside, you can hire workers to help.

Remember that any tree work, other than removing downed trees, branches and debris from your property, requires Design Committee approval. Workers and tree services are not permitted to perform any cutting or removal of standing trees and vegetation without this approval.

High Speed Internet

As discussed at the Annual Meeting, Ellijay Telephone Company has begun the process of upgrading Blackberry's existing DSL internet service to high speed VDSL service. This is a significant upgrade to our existing service, and unlike fiber optic service, **requires no cost to the Association.** The beta testing has been completed, and the results are very promising. You will be notified by ETC, with a reminder from the Association, when your area of Blackberry will be switched over to the new service. It will require that you replace your existing DSL modem with a new VDSL modem. ETC will instruct you on obtaining the new modem.

Once the installation is completed throughout Blackberry, ETC will determine a tiered pricing structure based on the bandwidth you desire.

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For the basic service, our understanding is that there will be no increase over the charge we are currently paying for DSL service.

Firewise

If you did not attend the last Blackberry Mountain Association annual meeting, you may not be aware that we are in the process of becoming a recognized Firewise® community. The National Fire Prevention Association's Firewise USA® program teaches people how to adapt to living with wildfire and encourages neighbors to work together and take proactive action to prevent losses. There are no costs associated with membership and it is not mandatory that every homeowner comply with implementation of the risk reduction steps you can take to make your home safer during a wildfire event. However, it is the BMA Board's goal that we achieve 100% homeowner participation.

It is highly recommended that you contact Anthony English of the Georgia Forestry Commission and request that an onsite Firewise® Risk Assessment Survey be performed on your home and property. There is no charge and you do not have to be present for the survey. Following the survey, you will receive a written report identifying any areas where attention is recommended. Anthony's phone number is (706) 754-2354.

Pamphlets are available at the Association office that provide an overview of wildfire risk reduction steps that can make your home safer during a wildfire. The major threat during a wildfire in the North Georgia mountains that is moving towards your home is airborne embers and radiant heat. Historical and empirical data confirm that taking the following simple steps will greatly increase the probability that the integrity of your home will be maintained.

- Maintain an approximate 30-foot radius around your home free of flammable vegetation such as fallen leaves and twigs.



- Clean roofs and gutters of dead leaves, debris and pine needles.
- Replace or repair loose or missing shingles.
- If you have vents in the eaves, install 1/8-inch mesh screening over the vents.
- Clean debris from exterior attic vents and install 1/8-inch mesh screening over the vents.
- Repair or replace damaged or loose window screens or broken windows.
- Clean areas under patios and decks of debris and screen or box in those areas.
- Remove all flammable material away from the foundation such as mulch, flammable plants, leaves and firewood – anything that could burn.
- Remove anything flammable from underneath decks and porches.
- Ensure the area around your propane tank is free of any flammable material.
- Trim branches that overhang the home, porch or deck.
- Store firewood no closer than 30 feet from the home.

For more information go to www.firewise.org. If you have any questions or desire additional information, please contact Rich Baker BMA Board Secretary at bakerr1@aol.com or (706) 889-6989.

Design Committee Approval Requests

All construction, exterior remodeling, additions, decks, patios, garages, carports, sheds, stairs, and walkways require Design Committee approval. **These projects also require Gilmer County Building Permits.** The Design Committee cannot consider an application without a Gilmer County Building permit.

As you are planning your project, please consult with the Design Committee to guide you through the process.

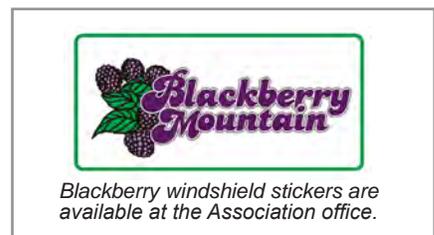
Also remember that all tree and shrub removal or trimming must have Design Committee approval.

The Design Committee forms are available on the Association website.

Wells Chlorination

Blackberry's community wells will receive their annual chlorination during the week of April 13th. The shock chlorine treatment is not harmful but may cause a slight taste and odor. Depending on the volume of water used, the odor should dissipate within 24 hours.

You may wish to drink bottled water and refrain from washing clothes while the odor of chlorine is present.



Mark Your Calendar

Clean-Up and Roadside Chipping

Last week in March

2nd Quarter Assessment Due

April 1, 2020

Chlorination of Blackberry Wells

Week of April 13, 2020

3rd Quarter Assessment Due

July 1, 2020

4th Quarter Assessment Due

October 1, 2020