

Emmarentia Post

Dear Emmarentia residents

ERA Newsletter, No 7, December 2017

We know that many of you travel away from your homes at this time of year so instead of the normal printed newsletter, we are putting out this short e-mailer.

Security whatsapp group hot on the tails of criminals

Since mid-September, ERA, together with ward committee member, Felicity Gratz-Lawlor, and some other concerned residents have been piloting a dedicated security whatsapp group (called PPP) with all the major security companies operating in the area as participants - CAP, Beagle Watch, SP Security, ADT, Chubb, NYPD.

Each time there is a report of a security incident by a resident on any one of Emmarentia's different whatsapp groups, members of the PPP whatsapp group who are on these groups, pick up these reports and post them to the PPP group. The security companies then take action, if they have not already heard of the incident.

So far there have been a number of successes, and it has meant that all security companies can now talk to each other through this group and coordinate their activities.

Since the group was set up security companies have:

- apprehended a group of six men digging a trench on the pavement in Kei Road, corner Orange Road. Four suspects ran away, their explanations of what they were doing could not be verified; two were handed over to Linden SAPS as suspected cable thieves.
- apprehended a City Power imposter who had used the cover to enter households and stolen two laptops in the area. SAPS Parkview were called and the suspect was arrested.
- responded to a domestic violence incident and called in SAPS Parkview who arrested the man involved
- monitored a suspicious VW hatchback reported by shopkeepers in Greenhill Road
- monitored rubble trucks to prevent them from illegally dumping in public open spaces
- assisted a person that was injured in the park, apprehended the person that injured him and called an ambulance
- helped to deal with an aggressive woman in the park as well and a number of separate incidents of drunken people in public spaces
- helped recover a stolen Isuzu double cab and notified their security networks of other cases of stolen vehicles
- increased patrols at night in areas without power.

How can you help?

Report immediately to the whatsapp group you belong to:

- any suspicious behaviour or suspected criminal behaviour
 - a crime incident
 - anything that is endangering the lives of people in public spaces.
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Crime and security tips for the holiday season

- The latest trend in crime is for burglars to gain access using a pickhead or crowbar
- **Park inside a property if you can:** 13 Ford Rangers were stolen in October in our precinct
- **Don't leave your laptops near windows:** there is lots of opportunistic theft of them, as well as electronic items, taking place in the early hours of the morning
- **Gardeners beware:** they are soft targets when they work on the pavements outside their employers' homes with the gate remote
- **Residents beware:** saying long goodbyes outside your properties with the gates open can expose you to crime
- **People waiting for Uber cabs be vigilant while you wait:** don't be too involved on your cellphones
- **Beware of car guards:** Often they are around vehicles that get stolen
- **Don't leave items of value visible in your car when you park it**
- **Beware:** some cell phones have been snatched off cafe tables on the sidewalk
- **Before going away, test your alarms and leave a key with your neighbour**

ERA – working for you

1. 4-way stop to make the intersection safer

Thanks to the support from 528 residents from Emmarentia (and some neighbouring suburbs) who signed the petition calling for improvements to our roads in the suburb, ERA had the power to secure a 4-way stop at the intersection of Komatie and Greenhill Roads.

This was not the first time residents had called for the 4-way stop. For close to 10 years ERA, with your backing, had submitted a petition, written many letters, and pleaded with city officials. This time ERA's cajoling and badgering was successful but we couldn't have done it without you.

Some parking bays adjacent to Medicare Greenhill have been eliminated and the parking converted to parallel parking to increase the visibility for motorists at the crossing. We have heard residents' suggestions on whatsapp groups that the 4-way STOP is not signposted correctly and have approached JRA to install the correct sign.

Now to try and get the rest of the demands on your wishlist...



Some of the parking bays outside the chemist have been converted into parallel parking bays to improve visibility

2. Potholes filled in

ERA has also been nagging JRA to fill in potholes. Please also report potholes yourselves to JRA - hotline@jra.org.za or if urgent Call 0860JOBURG (562874)

3. Copper cables replaced in 8 streets

After persistent nagging by ERA, City Power has replaced copper cables on Lower Louw Geldenhuys Drive, Ingalele Rd, Umgwezi Rd, Vaal Rd, Muirfield Rd, Umtata Road, Cunene Rd and Molopo Road with new aluminium cables. This will hopefully reduce cable theft as the new cables are not highly sought after. Some streets in the suburb have also had insulated streetlight cables installed that will minimise shorting when there is a storm or heavy rain.



4. Keeping open spaces clean

The park situation with the displaced persons is under control. ERA regularly liaises with Felicity Gratz-Lawlor whose team of workers has passionately looked after the cleanliness of the open parts of the park. Moreover, with regular work, more of them have managed to secure rented accommodation nearby.

Recently ERA donated R3000 to her group so that they could clear the area below the dam adjacent to the electricity pylons that follow the spruit.

Thanks to residents who donate to her on an ongoing basis. We encourage you to continue supporting her team. She has now registered as an NPO and the details to deposit money are as follows:

Name of account:

LET'S WORK

Capitec Bank: Savings account - 1552551790

Branch 470010

5. Improving security in Emmarentia park and public open spaces

ERA continues to engage with City Parks around safety in our green spaces in the suburb. At the most recent meeting Beagle Watch, CAP, JMPD and SAPS also attended. The meeting agreed to draw up a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), which ERA subsequently drafted and then submitted to all parties. This MOA has now been tabled with the senior executives of City Parks. The MOA tries to give effect to community policing. More in the next newsletter.

6. Greenhill Road car guards

ERA approached the Greenhill shopkeepers to assist them with a solution with respect to car guards, some of whom were harassing motorists. The shopkeepers are still exploring their own solution.

Building keeping you awake at night?

As the end of the year nears, builders are under pressure to complete jobs by close down in order to avoid penalties and to deliver the building into the owners' hands. However, this mustn't happen at the expense of residents. Whatsapp groups recently have been full of stories of building going on in Greenside, way beyond normal working hours.

Regulation F6 of National Building Regulations and Building Standards Act, 1977 (as amended on 30 May 2008) says:

- (2)(a) No person shall during the course of any building, demolition or excavation work use any machine, machinery, engine, apparatus, tool or contrivance, which in the opinion of the local authority may unreasonably disturb or interfere with the amenity of the neighbourhood:
- (i) on a public holiday or Sunday
 - (ii) before 06:00 or after 17:00 on any Saturday; and
 - (iii) before 06:00 or after 18:00 on any day other than those days contemplated in subparagraphs (i) and (ii)
- (b) The prohibition in paragraph (a) shall not apply in any circumstances in which the use of such machine, machinery, engine, apparatus, tool or contrivance -
- (i) is urgently necessary in order to preserve the life, safety or health of any person;
 - (ii) is urgently necessary to preserve property;
 - (iii) has been authorized by the local authority; or
 - (iv) is necessary for the execution of work being carried out on behalf of any public authority.
- (3) Any owner or person who contravenes a provision of this regulation shall be guilty of an offence.

If you believe that a builder or your neighbour is contravening these regulations, first speak to your neighbour or the builder. If you get no positive response, call JMPD or SAPS.

Planning new additions to your house in 2018?

If you're planning on spending your holidays dreaming of making alterations or additions to your existing home in Emmarentia, just a reminder that there are regulations that you need to follow. Follow these steps below to avoid disappointment.

STEP 1. Title deeds:

Check your title deeds before proceeding with building works. There are clauses that require you to get your plans scrutinised and signed off on (eg if you want to use corrugated iron or IBR roofing) by the Louw Geldenhuys Family Trust (LGT) before you get them approved by the City Council. The ERA acts on the family's behalf for residents' convenience. Contact **Gemey Abrahams** on info@emmarentia.co.za

STEP 2: Heritage requirements:

Check when your house was built. If it is 60 years or older, any alteration, addition or demolition is subject to Section 34. (1) of the National Heritage Act. In Gauteng the **Provincial Heritage Resources Agency – Gauteng** (PHRAG) is responsible for vetting. ERA acts for them in Emmarentia. Contact **Gemey Abrahams** on info@emmarentia.co.za

STEP 3: Confirm the town planning rights, including the precinct plan for Emmarentia, to see whether your planned changes comply with these rights.

STEP 4: Consult with adjoining neighbours (if your alterations are increasing the height of the existing building, you must also consult diagonally, and over the street)

STEP 5: Don't leave building rubble on sidewalk. However you may store new building materials on your sidewalk for a limited period if you get permission (a wayleave from the municipality).

STEP 6: Obtain approval for building plans. It is essential to obtain approved building plans before doing building alterations as this maintains the value of your property. If you don't you will find it difficult to sell your property if prospective purchasers require the building plans.

ERA charges a small fee for scrutinising building plans for LGT and PHRAG. The funds are used to support LGT and ERA. Contact Gemey Abrahams for detailed information with regard to these processes on info@emmarentia.co.za

With warm wishes from all at ERA for happy holidays and a productive 2018.

Travel safe and enjoy the time with your loved ones.