

Top O'Topanga Community Association

July 2024 Newsletter

Lordon Management

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TOTCA Board of Directors

President: Ken Solomon
Vice-President: Paul Beauvais
Secretary: Joanne Helfrich
Treasurer: Marylou Morelock
Members at Large:

Derek Christopher
Amit Galai
Jen Specland

TOTCA Onsite Office

Natalie Smith, Onsite Manager
totonsiteoffice@gmail.com
(818) 346-9252

Hours:

Sun: 8:30 AM-5:30 PM
Mon-Thu: 10 AM-7 PM
Fri & Sat: Closed

Park security / Parking in the streets - Archon Security Company (800) 274-5717

POLICE OR FIRE EMERGENCY: 911

Non-Emergency - LA County Sheriff, Lost Hills Station (818) 878-1808

ONLINE RESOURCES

www.topotopanga.org
www.TOTCA.org (owners, contact Lordon Management to register)
www.mylordon.com

TOPANGA AREA EMERGENCY INFO RESOURCE

Keep on your smartphone and computer: www.tcep.org

FRS Emergency Radio Channel #8

UPCOMING HOA EVENTS

MONTHLY BOARD MEETING

Monday, July 22, 2024

ZOOM Online Teleconference

Info and log-on instructions will be emailed before the meeting or contact the Onsite Manager for instructions.

Executive Session - 5:00pm

Regular Session - 6:30pm

Open Forum - 8:00pm

QUARTERLY TOWN HALL MEETING

July 13, Saturday, 9:30am -11:00am

East Patio, Weather Permitting

***Please note that ALL Schedules**

are approximate, as some Board matters may take longer than anticipated. **All scheduled meeting dates and times may be modified or cancelled at any time.** Please bear with us. Thanks!

PLEASE KEEP THE 4TH OF JULY SAFE

A reminder that all our streets are designated as fire lanes and there is NO PARKING at any time on any street. People watching fireworks in the valley on Pawnee must be mindful of traffic and not hinder vehicle movement at any time. NO sparklers or fireworks are allowed anywhere in the community.

Security will have an extra patrol at the gate and circulating within the community on the evening of July 4th.

Use of all fireworks is against the law! If you see someone setting off any kind of fireworks or you see a fire, CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY WITH THE EXACT LOCATION OF THE PROBLEM. DO NOT CALL SECURITY, THE ONSITE OFFICE, OR LORDON.



POTABLE WATER SYSTEM PROJECT

Phase II of the Potable Water Project is now nearing completion. The crew has finalized the connections to a few remaining homes around the community. All fire hydrant, irrigation and common area facility connections are now being completed. Within the next few weeks, the old water system will be shut down, disconnected and all old home connections will be capped off or removed.

After the completion of all phase II connections, arrangements will be made with homeowners to restore, and remediate, where required, landscaping or hardscape that has been disturbed or removed.

Complete street concrete repair and resurfacing is expected to be scheduled in mid-June and early July, weather permitting. Further information will be provided about traffic control and temporary alternative parking as the dates approach.

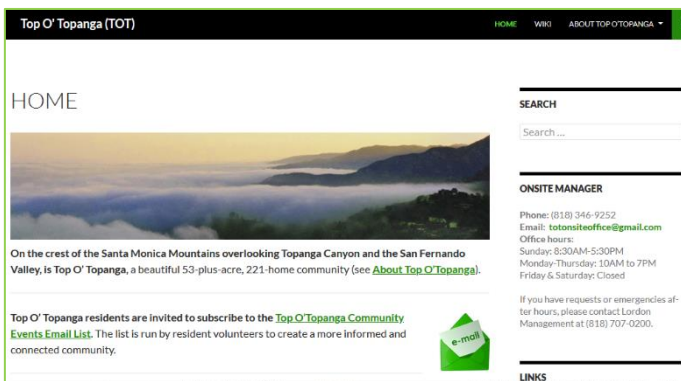
- **Homeowners are asked to clear or cut back any landscaping and border materials that overhang into the street up to no less than two feet in height** to allow the paving equipment clearance to operate up to the edge of the roadway. The Paving contractor or the HOA will not be held responsible for damage to any landscaping or materials that intrude into the roadway.
- **Please avoid driving or foot traffic and keep pets and children away from the work areas.**

Please pay attention to the flyers, emails, and phone blasts when sent to avoid delays completing any work occurring in the area around your home. Residents' questions and inquiries may directed to Natalie in the onsite office totonsiteoffice@gmail.com and, where appropriate, will be forwarded to our project manager for an appropriate response or action.

GET FAST ACCESS TO TOT INFORMATION AT TOPOTOPANGA.ORG

With just a click from your desktop or phone, get:

- **Info and how-to's** for “everything TOT” including gate information, landscape help, governance documents, emergency preparedness, wildlife, and governing documents
- **The TOT monthly Newsletter** with upcoming events and other updates
- **Historical information about Top O’Topanga**, including archival photos
- **Links to the HOA Member Website, Top O’ Topanga Nextdoor, T-CEP, OneTopanga.com,** and many other online resources
- **A search feature** to make finding things easy
- **The ability to send contributions** and questions via the link on the bottom of every page



BE MINDFUL OF SNAKES, BUT DON'T KILL THEM: THEY HELP CONTROL THE RODENT POPULATION

Once the weather gets warm, we may find a snake in our path. **Rattlesnakes** strike only as a defensive mechanism to protect themselves: they won't attack unless provoked. They usually give warning by rattling their tail. When walking, keep you and your pet away from the vegetation at the edges of paths and streets. **If bitten, call 911 or get to an emergency room immediately.**

Gopher snakes (pictured)

are harmless but are often mistaken for rattlers. They are slimmer and longer, and have no rattles, but can imitate rattlesnakes by “rattling” their tails against the ground in an attempt to fool predators. **Snakes are an important, natural control to the rodent population, and it is important to let them do their part in maintaining our ecosystem. If you need to remove and relocate a snake,** contact John MacNeil (310) 455-2013, Dan MacNeil 310.455.2234 (H) or 818.730.7379 (C), Doug Allan (310) 579-7667, or call the Onsite Manager.



BLACK WIDOW SPIDERS: PLEASE BE CAUTIOUS

There have been multiple sightings of black widow spiders in the spa pergola area. We are treating the area with a non-toxic spray to remove the spiders and their webs. Black widows are typically nocturnal, solitary, and bite only in self-defense.



Black widow spiders rarely bite humans, but bites can be fatal for young children and older people. Seek immediate medical help if someone you believe is bitten.

While occasionally dangerous, they are also awesome! Did you know that the tensile strength of a female black widow's silk is the strongest known substance in nature! It is also the most uniform in size, so much so that it was used for bombsight cross hairs in WWII bombers.

See the next pages for more surprising facts about black widow spiders, and how to prevent and remove them.

IT'S BABY FROG SEASON...watch your step!

Baby California Treefrogs are often spotted in the grass near the Clubhouse and pool this time of year. Also known as California chorus frog (*Pseudacris cadaverina*) they're our friends and eat a wide variety of insects,

spiders, centipedes and other invertebrates, and they sing us beautiful serenades.



PLEASE DO NOT FLUSH ANYTHING OTHER THAN HUMAN WASTE AND TOILET PAPER

Our community has its own waste water treatment plan and cannot break down any other material, resulting in costly fixes. Even items that claim to be “flushable” clog our system. Please do not flush “flushable wipes”, diapers, facial tissues, tampons, pads, paper towels, cotton swabs, condoms, cigarettes, grease, chemicals, medications, or other non-biodegradable products.

Please bag these items and put them in the appropriate trash containers. Other safe toilet paper alternatives include bidet toilet seats and perineal irrigation bottles, which can be purchased online.

BLACK WIDOW SPIDERS: FACTS vs. FEARS

The female black widow spider is one of the most easily recognizable spiders around, with a shiny black 1-1/2 inch long body and reddish-orange hourglass-like pattern on the underside of her belly (or series of dots). Males are half that size and usually brown or gray with the yellow and red bands with spots on their backs. Black widows get their name from the lore that the females eat the males after mating, leaving them “widowed,” but this seldom happens.



Black widows are typically nocturnal, solitary, and bite only in self-defense. A scientific study found that poking a black widow spider repeatedly with a finger wasn't enough to get the arachnid to bite. Instead, the prodded black widows in the study often ran away, played dead, or flicked a few strands of silk at their attackers.

They rarely bite humans, but if they do, seek help immediately

If you suspect someone has been bitten by a black widow, stay calm and seek immediate medical care. Bites can be fatal in young children and older people. Symptoms may include trouble breathing, swollen eyes, headache, increased saliva production, nausea and vomiting, excessive sweating, fever, and chills.

These tips can ease symptoms and prevent further infection:

- Wash the area with soap and water.
- Apply a cold washcloth or ice pack wrapped in cloth to the area.
- Take an over-the-counter pain reliever like acetaminophen.
- If the bite is on your arm or leg, elevate it to prevent swelling.
- Apply an antibiotic cream or lotion to the bite.

When they do bite, they don't usually kill

Black widows' bites are usually venomous only when the spiders feel their lives are in imminent danger. If the threat is less severe, the black widow may deliver what's known as a dry, or nonvenomous, bite, the researchers found.

In 2013, there were 1,866 black widow bites reported to the American Association of Poison Control Centers, but only 14 of these resulted in severe symptoms. None resulted in death.

They're awesome!

The tensile strength of a female black widow's silk is the strongest known substance in nature. It is also the most uniform in size, so much so that it was used for bombsight cross hairs in WWII bombers. An arachnologist once stated that it would be possible to replace the steel cables on the Golden Gate Bridge with black widow silken cables the thickness of a pencil.

Black widows use their silk to build a tangled structure that both traps prey and acts like an early warning system; the slightest vibration brings the spider to investigate immediately. If you find yourself crawling around under your house and feel a strong tug and hear crackling, be on the alert because you just stumbled into a black widow's web. The web contains silica and tinkles like breaking glass when broken, and the silken blobs about the size of your fingernail hanging in the complex webbing are egg sacs.



The male does an awesome courtship dance on the female's web to tell her he's a *male* and not a *meal*!

How to Prevent Contact

- Keep your home decluttered, dusted, vacuumed, and web free. Ensure all containers are tightly closed.
- Inspect for cracks and holes in walls, windows, and door frames. Use a flashlight to check dark areas. A good quality silicone caulk can provide durable, flexible, weather-resistant seal.
- Use dehumidifiers in damp areas of your home, like basements and crawl spaces, as spiders are attracted to moisture.
- Install yellow light bulbs in outside light fixtures to deter bugs that black widows like to feed upon.
- Keep your lawn cleared and mowed. Keep bushes, shrubs, and tree branches trimmed back from your house. Keep wood piles, rock piles, and trash piles far from your home.
- Use a headlamp or flashlight during inspections or cleanups in dark areas, ensuring you can see clearly to avoid unexpected encounters.
- Before handling areas where spiders might be present, dress in long-sleeve shirts tucked into long pants (tucked into long socks), and gloves. Never attempt to clear webs with your bare hands.

Ways to Remove Spiders

- Capture and release spiders using a clear jar or glass and a piece of stiff paper or cardboard. Place the jar over the spider and against a flat surface, then slide the paper over the opening. Secure the lid and release the spider far away from residential areas.
- Place sticky traps specifically for catching spiders along edges (e.g. where a wall meets the floor), corners, behind furniture, in closets, under appliances, in basements, and in garages.
- Vacuum the spiders, webs, and egg sacs. Empty the vacuum bag and put waste remnants in a plastic bag immediately, seal it, and dispose in an outdoor garbage cart.
- Use a spray repellent such as the nontoxic, effective Web-Away Spider Eliminator, available at webaway.com.
- <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/black-widow-spider-bite>
- <https://www.livescience.com/51014-black-widow-spiders-misconceptions.html>
- <https://www.bendsource.com/outside/friend-or-foe-the-truth-about-the-black-widow-2138588>
- <https://aantex.com/blog-post/black-widows-how-to-prevent-and-eliminate-infestations/>