

## Safety/Security – October 2023:

**Residents/Owners:** Please share with renters and contractors – be courteous; we all live in this community.

Bottom Line Up Front:

- Fire Prevention Month
- See and Be Seen
- Wet Leaves
- Storms Continue
- Package Delivery
- CAC – November 7 General Election Early Voting; Online Recycling Options

**Fire Prevention Month:** is observed every October in recognition of the Great Chicago Fire, October 8 – 10, 1871. The VBFD has posted a lengthy notice on Nextdoor addressing some dos and don'ts. Here are some highlights:

- Change batteries in all smoke and carbon monoxide detectors this month. Replace detectors if > 10 years old or if testing fails.
- Fires are not permitted on the beach.
- Permits are required for burn pits and bonfires.
- Permitted fires must be at least 50 feet from any structure. (Commercially-sold outdoor fire places must be at least 15 feet from any structure).
- The burning of leaves, limbs, and other yard debris is prohibited.
- A means of extinguishing any fire must be readily available. Put fires out twice – drown the blaze, rake and/or stir the remains, drown it again.
- Ashes must be disposed of in a non-combustible container placed away from any flammable material or structure.

Visit <https://virginiabeach.gov> -> Departments -> Fire -> Fire Prevention for more info.

**See and Be Seen:** Lower sun angles and increasing dusk during Autumn commuting hours lead to hazards for both drivers and pedestrians.

If walking or biking in dusk or darkness, please wear light colored and/or reflective clothing or shoes, carry a flashlight (could be cellphone feature), and obtain a leash or collar for your dog that has reflective qualities. Be aware that if you are up-sun, drivers may not be able to see you. Try to make eye contact with drivers before crossing a street; or just be patient and wait for sufficient gaps in traffic. Bicycles should have lights if being ridden at night.

If driving, keep these visibility challenges in mind and exercise caution when approaching crosswalks and intersections. Don't drive distracted, maintain a constant scan, and have a good pair of polarized sunglasses. Please refer to owner's manuals for instructions on setting dusk-sensing headlights and daytime running lights (helpful even on sunny days). If using windshield wipers, Virginia State Code requires that headlights be in the "on" position. This will ensure that even the tail lights are illuminated.

**Wet Leaves Mean Slick Roads:** Rain and dew can leave fallen leaves as slick as ice. Beware of driving or bicycling over them, especially on curves.

**Storms Continue:** As I write this, I am watching National Hurricane Center track Tropical Storms (T/S) Philippe as it meanders across the Atlantic. We dodged a bullet with T/S Ophelia recently and hope that our luck holds. Hazardous weather warnings and watches have been plentiful of late and those who have lived in Croatan for more than a season or two, know that the winter nor'easters can be especially destructive to our beach and property. Keep your storm survival kits replenished and mind the warnings through VBAAlert, weather.gov, forecast.weather.gov, VB Office of Emergency Management posts on Nextdoor, or some other authoritative source.

**Package Delivery:** As the Holiday Season approaches, package deliveries increase and are often made by those driving privately owned vehicles rather than marked trucks or vans. Most are legitimate, but this practice leads to increased concerns over potential porch pirates cruising (“casing”) the neighborhood. Consider directing delivery to days when someone is at home, speak with a neighbor about taking in packages delivered to doorsteps – especially if you’re going to be away from a few days, or direct deliveries to commercial receiving facilities. This option is often listed on eCommerce websites. Neighbors – even if you haven’t been asked, keep an eye out for packages being carried away from porches rather than towards them.

**Citizen’s Advisory Committee (CAC):** Will conduct its meeting on October 11. Some topics of discussion will include:

**Early Voting is Now Underway** for the November 7 General Election. Visit <https://virginiabeach.gov> -> Services -> Elections and Voting for more information. Please note that the 2024 election district numbers (below) have changed from previous years. Croatan’s candidates for Delegate to the Virginia General Assembly (98<sup>th</sup> House of Delegate District) and State Senate (19<sup>th</sup> State Senate District) are both on the ballot. The delegate race is unopposed. Both candidates for State Senate are new “faces.” Ref: [Who's My Legislator? \(viriniageneralassembly.gov\)](http://viriniageneralassembly.gov)

**Recycling Options – Vote Online Starting Monday, October 2:** The Virginia Beach contract with their recycling company is up for renewal. Local government leaders are seeking public input to influence their decisions on how to proceed. Visit “SpeakUpVB” after October 2 to cast your vote for one of four options:

- **Option 1:** Same services as present with increased cost (estimated at \$2.50 - \$4.00 per household per month).
- **Option 2:** Eliminate curbside recycling and increase number of recycling centers (currently only two) at an estimated cost of \$400,000 each.
- **Option 3:** Develop an opt-in/opt-out recycling process. Cost increase would be a factor of how many households opt-in.
- **Option 4:** Other options not already offered.

The next CAC meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 8 in the conference room of the Virginia Beach Volunteer Rescue Squad, Station #14 – 740 VB Blvd (17<sup>th</sup> Street) - at 7:00 PM. If attending, please park on the east side of the building. This meeting is open to all.

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