

# LakeRidge Falls

4200 LakeRidge Blvd.  
Sarasota, FL 34243

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Here are the more important stories we had this past and upcoming weeks:

**Tree Trimming** – As promised and reported, ACI, the Association’s tree maintenance company, was on-site this week to finish the trimming of all the palms, with the vast majority of them located in the three neighborhoods, i.e. Stirling, Victoria, and Sandstone. However, we asked, and ACI was kind enough to agree, to start trimming the canopy trees, mainly oak trees, along Victoria Falls Circle and Kariba Lake Terrace before continuing with the palm trimming project. But before we go for the reason why we asked them to do so, here is a short history of the practice of canopy tree trimming in LakeRidge Falls.

Years ago, the community was divided into three somewhat equal sections based on the number of canopy trees in each section. As can be seen in the picture below, each section was assigned a time frame in which it would be serviced. For example, all the hardwood trees that fall under the green section, the Stirling Falls Neighborhood, were trimmed earlier this year. Using the same example, the next time hardwood trees will be trimmed in this section of the Association will be in 2024. This three-year cycle program was adopted a few years ago based on best pruning practices as provided by the University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. These best practices state that a “typical pruning cycle for an active, preventive urban forestry pruning program in Florida is about three years.”



So with this in mind, let’s go back to our story. Based on the schedule described above, the area of Victoria Falls Neighborhood was scheduled to be trimmed next year, i.e. 2022. However, we had to push the trimming project a couple of months ahead of schedule because of the Florida Fire Prevention Code. The code specifies that roadways are required to have a minimum of 13 feet 6 inches clearance. The clearances are required, as explained to us by county officials in the past, so emergency vehicles, such as fire ladders, and other large vehicles, such as garbage trucks, have a

safe passage when driving on roadways. And indeed, we all can appreciate how dangerous a situation could be if a fire truck, for example, which is rushed to an emergency call, hits a low-hanging oak tree branch at a high rate of speed. For this significant safety reason, ACI agreed to our request to trim all large canopy trees in the Victoria Falls Neighborhood first and ahead of schedule. Below are a couple of before and after pictures of the work performed this week by ACI.



Currently, ACI completed about 75 percent of all the trees in that area. They are scheduled to be here next week to finish the remaining 25 percent. Once concluded, they will move to trim all palm trees minus foxtail palms. As you recall, foxtail palms are considered self-pruned palms. In other words, foxtail palms older leaves die and quickly fall from the palm to facilitate new leaves which do not require maintenance. This is also true for the foxtail palms' seed pods. However, there is a small disclaimer, or maybe a big one, depending on your point of view of course, with them. Some members prefer the seed pods to be removed, regardless of the type of palm, to avoid the mess the fruits create when they fall off and below the tree. Others, on the other hand, feel that removing the seed pods gives the palms a cleaner look. We are happy to say that we were fortunate enough to have all seed pods removed from over 200 foxtail palms at no cost to the Association, which saved the community about four thousand dollars.

As a final note, please know that today's rain created delays in picking up the debris. Therefore, the collection of oak tree branches and seed pods is now scheduled for tomorrow. In the meantime, we ask all who drive or walk along where there are piles of landscape waste to please exercise caution. We thank you in advance for this temporary inconvenience and understanding on this matter.

**Amenities Use** – Unfortunately, there was some sort of misunderstanding this week regarding the usage of the Association's amenities, mainly the clubhouse. So to make it simple and without overcomplicating things, here is the bottom line: all residents, generally speaking, have the right to use all amenities. Period. Now, it is true that the Board of Directors has the obligation under the governing documents to regulate the operation and use of common areas. After all, it will only make sense that there will be an entity that makes the call when, for example, the clubhouse opens and closes. However, the Association can't and will not arbitrarily prevent residents from using the amenities and common areas. So as long as you comply with the current policies, regulations, and rules established, which are posted on the Association's website and the various amenities, please feel free to enjoy LakeRidge Falls' amenities.

**Pool Signage** – Speaking of policies, regulations, and rules, we were advised by an Environmental Health Representative from Manatee County Health Department that Florida Building Code, Section 454, was recently revised. The revision that was made by the Florida Department of Health amended the verbiage of the required pool signage. To

make things simple, below are the two generic signs, the old and the new ones. If you look closely at them, you will notice that the main change is the right of pool users to place plastic water bottles on the wet deck. For those who may not know what it means, the pool wet deck is the 4-foot-wide area around the outside of the pool water perimeter. With this new change, pool users are now allowed to leave plastic, and plastic only, water bottles within 4 ft of the pool edge while using the pool for exercise. A small change which many pool users will agree makes a big difference.



Have a healthy and safe weekend.

Sincerely,

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