

Rattan Creek Neighborhood Issues

This page is dedicated to keeping everyone up to date on the latest issues that are affecting our neighborhood. If there is an issue that you want to see posted here that is not currently posted, please send an email to webmaster@rattancreek.org and request that an update for that issue be posted on this page. This is our chance to address your concerns, so please take advantage of it! So go ahead and send an email to webmaster@rattancreek.org, and let us work to discover your answer!

What kind of issues can be addressed on this page? Issues like parking, rentals, noise, off-leash pets, park usage, etc. The RCNA doesn't have any enforcement capabilities, however we can take your issues to the next MUD meeting and get answers to your questions as needed.

If you see something below that is not accurate, send an email to webmaster@rattancreek.org and set us straight!

Thank you!

Non Emergency Sheriff's Dispatch

In case you need or want it, the non-emergency call-in number for the Williamson County Sheriff's Office Dispatch is 512.864.8301. Call this number to report "stuff" that doesn't qualify for 911. Please don't be shy, call them if something suspicious is going on. The only way they can accurately track activity in our neighborhood is if it gets reported. The Wilco Sheriff's Office happens to have a substation in the Rattan Creek Park Community Center. They aren't always there, but sometimes they are already in the neighborhood and can respond very quickly if something questionable is happening. This is also the number to call for any complaints you have about noise, parking, safety issues, etc.

A special note, the Williamson County folks that answer the non-emergency 512.864.8301 number share a big open office space with the folks that answer the 911 calls. So if you can't remember the non-emergency dispatch number, you can call 911 in Williamson County and ask to be connected to the non-emergency team.

If you happen to be one of our Rattan Creek Travis county residents, 311 (and 911) works fine for non-emergency issues for you. It just happens that Williamson County currently does not have 311 capability. Anyone in our neighborhood that calls 311 will be connected to the Travis County 311 non-emergency dispatch service. And if you are actually reporting something in Williamson County, sometimes the Travis County 311 dispatchers know what to do and sometimes they don't. Safest best is that if you are in Williamson County, don't use 311.

Off-Leash Dogs

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At about 9:50 this morning I was walking my small miniature poodle on leash, entering Robinson Park at the parking lot by the soccer fields. As I approached I saw two large dogs off leash with their owners playing fetch in the soccer field. I started to turn around to leave and the dogs rushed and attacked my dog, one of them picking her up with its teeth and thrashing her. The owner had a really hard time call them off and then holding onto them, but he managed to hand me my bleeding dog. He then proceeded to yell at me, that it was all my fault for not picking up my dog. There were multiple witnesses. My dog will survive but has multiple puncture wounds and is getting stitches and antibiotics. Someone please explain to me what part of "dogs must be on leash" people don't understand. I will be reporting this to the sheriff's office. If you were there and witnessed my screams and this "neighbor" blaming me, please reach out. I'm at a loss that this continues to happen in our neighborhood. I write this in a shirt and hands drenched with my dog's blood.

"

You can **[read the full post along with all the neighborhood comments here.](#)**

To start off, and it is important to make this very clear, the RCNA has absolutely no authority to enforce or make any changes to the current off-leash laws, or to create any kind off-leash area in the Rattan Creek Park. Zero authority. None. All we can do is advocate to the MUD on behalf of our neighbors. The MUD has the authority, and the resources, in order to make

something like an official off-leash area happen. But they need to be presented with a solution that is both legal and agreeable.

Every once in a while, **[a post surfaces on nextdoor.com about off-leash dogs](#)** in Rattan Creek Park, and this is a VERY divisive topic. Currently, Rattan Creek Park does not have any official off-leash dog areas. Anyone allowing their dogs to walk, run or roam off-leash is **[breaking the law according to Williamson County](#)** and is subject to a fine.

Broken record alert: keep in mind that the RCNA is not responsible in any way, shape, or form, for park usage. The rules and enforcement capabilities lie with the MUD, not with the RCNA. All the RCNA can do is advocate for you to the MUD, or help you organize a group to approach the MUD independently. We cannot change the rules or enforce the rules.

If this this is an issue you are passionate about, we strongly encourage you to start or join a "let's push the MUD to create an official Rattan Creek off-leash dog park" (there is better phrasing but you get the idea) group on Facebook or your choice of channels. Notice the word "MUD" and not "RCNA". The MUD is the governing body that would have the authority and finances available to create an off-leash dog area.

We encourage you to come to the RCNA meetings, and we will help you to organize an off-leash area committee. And once organized, we encourage you to approach the MUD, or we at the RCNA will address the MUD on your behalf, with a list of potential solutions. That is the important part - we as a community need to keep brainstorming potential solutions until we come up with something that works. If the MUD shoots down our first 50 ideas, we come up with 51. And we at the RCNA will do everything we can to help you make your voice heard by the MUD. If this facebook group already exists, send an email with the link to webmaster@rattancreek.org and it will be added right here in the blurb and also on our **[Online Groups](#)** page.

If you have constructive ideas for how we, as a neighborhood, and working through the MUD, can create an off-leash dog area, please come share them at any **[RCNA Board Meeting](#)**! Everyone loves their four legged furry friends and family members. What we at the RCNA want to do is to work within the law and come up with a legal solution that works as well as it can for everyone in the neighborhood, dog owners and non dog owners alike.

Broken record alert: Remember, we have no authority to make any changes to the current off-leash laws, or to create an off-leash area in the park. All we can do is advocate to the MUD on behalf of our neighbors. We at the RCNA will ABSOLUTELY advocate for you. And we need to do this in an organized and unified fashion, and take something concrete to the MUD. If we have 50 people show up to EVERY MUD meeting going forward, and everyone takes their allotted 3 minutes to speak, solutions will surface.

Deed Restrictions: **Parking, Lawns, Fences, RVs, Boats, Rental Houses, etc**

To start off, our neighborhood does NOT have a homogenous set of deed restrictions. And it can get very confusing. For a very detailed and real life example, we have 2 neighbors who live next door to each other on Dallas Drive. These 2 neighbors, again right next door to each other, happen to live in 2 different sections of our neighborhood. One of the neighbors is allowed to have a boat parked in his driveway. The neighbor right next door to him is not. And these are indeed enforceable deed restrictions.

Also an important distinction that many people don't fully understand. The RCNA is a neighborhood association, not a homeowner's association. If you understand the difference, awesome! If not, **[here is a wikipedia entry that better explains the roll of a neighborhood association](#)**. Basically, the RCNA has no power whatsoever to enforce deed restrictions, that is solely a MUD power. The RCNA also has no power to "call the cops". If a law is being broken, it is up to each of you to call the cops and report the problem or incident.

That is a specific example, but one we hope that illustrates a very important point. Do not assume anything when it comes to your section's deed restrictions. There are 23 different sections of our neighborhood, which means there are 23 different sets of deed restrictions. It is simply not possible for an RCNA volunteer to be thoroughly familiar with each different set of deed restrictions. And it is not correct to assume that just because your neighbor has a particular deed restriction, that you do too.

On top of deed restrictions, there are also County ordinances that can sometimes be used for situations that are not covered by the deed restrictions. For example, a car sitting in the street for 30 days or more without being moved is considered abandoned and can be towed. Another example is the noise ordinance. Simply call the non-emergency dispatch for your county.

[Click here to check out the RCNA list of deed restrictions.](#) We make no guarantee as to the accuracy or completeness of our listing. This is simply provided as is for a place to start your research.

To obtain an official copy of your deed restrictions, or to report a possible deed restriction violation, go **[visit the deed restriction page on the North Austin MUD #1 website.](#)** The MUD has a company that is paid to handle every single deed restriction complaint, and is familiar with all of our various deed restrictions. Do not hesitate to use that resource. Fill out the deed restriction violation form on the bottom of that page. It may take a little while, but they will investigate your submission and get back to you. Unfortunately, sometimes the answer is that there is nothing to be done. It is disappointing when that happens, but let's face it, sometimes life just isn't fair.

Mosquitos

In 2016 there was quite a renewal in the interest of minimizing the mosquito population with the scare of the Zika virus. There have been many lengthy posts on Facebook, along with a statement for the MUD contractor who handles the parks and greenbelts. Instead of trying to summarize that vast quantity of information, we have instead created an article page and included lots of the Facebook posting unedited.

However, it is worth mentioning here that our District places Mosquito Dunks in standing water areas on a monthly basis during the wet season. These Dunks contain Bacillus genus, a microscopic organism that kills a reasonable percent of mosquito larvae before it emerges into an adult. These Dunks last at least 30 days and become active when wet, then go dormant when dry and activate when it rains again.

Please check out the extensive mosquito information we have by clicking here.

Semi Truck Parking

A local resident looked in to the semis parking on the streets. Here is a string of posts from facebook:

I just wanted to follow up on this. I never did call the sheriff's office. After talking with the RCNA board and a MUD board member last month, I spoke with the County Commissioner's office and they said that there was nothing they could do, because it is a public right-of-way. The sheriff's office would also not be able to do anything about it, because there is no law against parking anything on a public right-of-way in unincorporated Wilco. The assistant to the Commissioner said that she might be able to get the County Engineer to do something about the trucks on Dallas Dr., because it intersects Parmer. (I never received a call back from the County Engineer.)

Texas Transportation Code 545.307 provides for subdivisions to ban overnight parking of semitrailers - the subdivision has to petition for the signs and pay for them but once posted tickets can be written, here is a link to the

Code: **<http://codes.findlaw.com/tx/transportation-code/transp-sect-545-307.html>**

According to the code referenced above: "The residents of a residential subdivision may petition a county or municipality in which the subdivision is located for the posting of signs prohibiting the overnight parking of a commercial motor vehicle in the subdivision..." However, my understanding is that since we in the NAMUD1 are an unincorporated extraterritorial jurisdiction, or ETJ, we do not qualify for "residential subdivision" status. Again - this is my understanding and I'd love to be proven wrong.

To this layperson, they specified exactly what subdivision meant in that part of the code, and there's nothing that says ETJ's don't apply. Wilco has more than 220k people (over double that!), we have plats and deed restrictions, and that's all that counts, in my opinion. YMMV.

I'm afraid the previous post is right about ETJs. Regarding NAMUD#1, I have had great luck talking to Jimmy Sagnus(?) with the MUD at 512-576-2671. He seems to know the letter of the law, but also seems to be aware of best practice and common sense solutions.

Fence Ownership

Who owns the fencing between houses? What determines whose fence it is, is what piece of property the fence is actually on. It is not determined by which "side" is facing "out". Dig up your survey and figure out whose property it's on. If it truly is on the lot line, you and your neighbors just have to come to an agreement. It's nice if you can split the repair or replacement cost down the middle. If not, this is NOT a dispute the MUD or the RCNA can solve.

Sidewalk Repair

Our sidewalks have not been maintained since the neighborhood was built. The MUD is trying to work with the county to repair our sidewalks, but the county is refusing, claiming that the MUD is responsible for sidewalk maintenance. This is an ongoing and lengthy battle, one that hopefully we be resolved in the MUD's favor, but it could still take a while. If there are any updates, we'll get them added here.

Speeding

Speeding along our neighborhood roads, especially Tamayo, Dallas, Osborne, Amasia, and Elkhorn Mountain, has been an issue in our neighborhood since the first houses went up, just like it is a problem in every neighborhood across the country.

Various remedies have been attempted over time including speed bumps, increased patrols and radar-controlled digital speed displays. While the RCNA & the MUD continue to brainstorm ideas for reminding and encouraging people to slow down, we ask you here right now - please slow down and take it easy in our neighborhood. There are too many kids and animals that are on the streets, and we want to avoid all preventable accidents. Save those higher speeds for the highways!

If you have some ideas for controlling speeding in the neighborhood, come to a **MUD Board Meeting** or **RCNA Board Meeting** and share your ideas!

Crime Statistics

It is important to note that the crime statistics for our neighborhood are extremely low compared to most neighborhoods around us. The MUD pays for extra patrols in our neighborhood, and it shows. There is a lot of misinformation out there regarding crime, and the big source of that is confusion about our neighborhood.

Our neighborhood at one time was called Millwood, not to be confused with Old Millwood down Parmer on the other side of McNeil. Since then, our official neighborhood name has changed to Rattan Creek. However, not everyone realizes this, and still looks up crime statistics for "Millwood". These are NOT the crime statistics for Rattan Creek.

If anything, pulling up the crime statistics for Millwood, then pulling for Rattan Creek, will give a very clear example of just how low the crime rate actually is in our neighborhood.

Break-Ins & Robberies

Just to start out, it is important to mention that the crime statistics for our neighborhood are extremely low compared to most neighborhoods around us. There is a lot of misinformation out there regarding crime

There has recently been a thread on Nextdoor.com about breakins and suspicious people around the neighborhood. We are not going to discuss all the details here, instead feel free to **visit the thread and catch up**. However, we do want to list the various ideas our neighbors have posted in that thread to help YOU deter and be ready for any kind of late night unwanted visitor or visitors to your house. You are of course free to pick and choose which of these suggestions you take, if any. We are simply passing along all that we found for the sake of completeness and awareness. So if you recognize something you wrote on Nextdoor, please forgive us for the blatant plagiarism. And as always, feel free to send us an email if you have any additional suggestions or edits!\

- Leave your front AND back lights on over night - these late night visitors can easily scale fences so quietly that the surrounding dogs are not alerted but can be spooked if lights are on
- Install a motion sensing light on your front porch if you don't want to leave the light on all the time, motion sensing floods on the corners of your house by the garage and both corners of your backyard, and landscape lighting with a "wash" near your gates. You can put these solar panel powered, motion activated flood lights anywhere. They are cheap and you don't need to tie into electrical circuit. "Sunforce 82080 80-LED Solar Motion Light"
- Make sure to report any suspicious activity to someone - even if just sending an email to the RCNA - so these activities can be properly tracked and more informative action can be taken as warranted
- Have an alarm system installed and maintained
- Take a basic self defense class
- Add padlocks to your gates if you can
- Keep your car alarm nearby at night when you go to sleep. If something happens, hit the panic button on your car to wake up the neighborhood or at least scare off any potential ne'er-do-wells.
- At night lock up and disarm your garage door. Just pull on the dangling rope by the garage door motor. If anyone is driving around with a universal remote they will not be able to open your garage door.
- Make sure to lock your car doors every night
- Get to know your neighbors and communicate often!
- **Attend a board meeting and get involved!!**
- **Read up on forming a neighborhood watch program, and additional safety measures you can take, from the Austin PD**

Google Fiber

So why can't we get Google Fiber service in our neighborhood? It is because, even though we have an Austin mailing address, we are not part of the Austin City Proper. We are in the Austin ETJ, or Extra Territorial Jurisdiction. Because we are in the ETJ and part of the MUD, we have a year round heated pool (which the City of Austin would never willingly support), and much lower property taxes than what someone who lives in the City of Austin proper has to pay. Unfortunately, for the time being, that means no Google Fiber. We can hope that Google Fiber expands out to the ETJs at some point in the near future!

Check out our page explaining our MUD if you want more info.

Overgrown Yards

From a deed restriction standpoint, there is nothing that can be done about a neighbor who has an overgrown yard. Our deed restrictions are simply not restrictive enough to have a legal recourse for solving unkempt yard problems. However, one possibility is to contact the health department in the county where the property is located. It may be that they can get involved and order some kind of change in the situation. Otherwise, not much can be done. Maybe its time to recruit some of your fellow neighbors and have a yard maintenance block party!

Here is a link to the home page of the City of Austin Utilities website where you can get their contact information.

Power Lines Need To Be Cleared Of Trees

If you have trees growing into your power lines, you want to call City of Austin Utilities. They don't really like other people to be around their power lines and they want to handle it themselves according to their own rules and regulations.

Here is a link to the home page of the City of Austin Utilities website where you can get their contact information.