

Rossmoor Garden Club Rules

Effective June 1, 2023

These Rules are established by the Rossmoor Garden Club (Club) Board of Directors to set standards for garden use and member conduct for the safety and benefit of all members.

1. Letter of Acknowledgement.

Applicants for membership must agree to abide by these Rules by signing and submitting a Letter of Acknowledgement at the time of lot acquisition.

2. Voting.

Members may vote for candidates for the Board of Directors at the annual Fall meeting. Members may also vote on proposed amendments to the Bylaws. Members who are unable to attend membership meetings may vote by proxy at rossmoorgardenclub@gmail.com.

3. Communication.

- a) Member communication will be primarily via email. For those members without email, copies of club emails will be posted on the Club bulletin board by the parking lot for at least two weeks.
- b) Members and assistants are responsible for reading the Club emails and complying with rules and notifications.
- c) Members and assistants are responsible for notifying the Membership Director of changes in their contact information including email address, phone numbers and home address.

4. Garden Hours.

Members may access the garden Monday through Friday from 7 am to dusk, and Sunday and holidays from 8 am to dusk. These hours are set by the City of Walnut Creek.

5. Speed Limit.

The speed limit in the garden is 10 mph. Members may not exceed the posted speed limit.

6. Garden Security.

- a) The drive-in gate code and the walk-in gate code may not be given to anyone. Members must meet friends, family members, and hired workers at the drive-in gate where the member must enter the access code.
- b) Members may not tailgate other cars into the garden. Each member must stop and enter the gate code.

7. Common Resources.

- a) Garden tools such as rakes, shovels, and wheelbarrows are available to Club members and assistants. They may not be removed for personal use outside the garden and they must be returned to designated storage areas before leaving the garden.
- b) The deck under the Heritage Oak tree may be used by members for private social events. Guests may include non-members. To reserve the deck area, members may request a reservation by supplying the date, time, and approximate number of guests in an email to the Social Director at rossmoorgardenclub@gmail.com.
- c) Members and assistants may help themselves to berries in the common berry patch and herbs in the common herb garden. Community flowers are for the enjoyment of all members and are not for cutting.

8. Maintaining Garden Lots (including orchards and berry/flower patches.)

- a) Members must maintain an orderly garden lot including surrounding pathways, which must be covered with wood chips as available.
- b) Members must actively cultivate their gardens and must begin planting by May 1.
- c) Weeds must be removed before they set seed.
- d) Exposed, standing water must be removed. If a member wishes to store water for irrigation, the water container must be covered.
- e) Debris such as broken garden furniture, unused or discarded garden supplies, broken pots or pails, or any debris that could be considered a health hazard may not be stored on a member's lot.
- f) Overripe/rotting fruit and vegetables must be removed to avoid rodent problems.
- g) Members may plant dwarf trees in garden lots provided the trees do not grow to more than five feet tall or are pruned to five feet and do not shade neighboring lots.
- h) Tools and equipment including compost bins, tool boxes, hoses, etc. may not be left or stored in common pathways or against fences.
- i) TRELLIS by Pulte Homes (Trellis)

The Trellis homes are adjacent to the lower garden lots. The fence, which belongs to Trellis, creates a border between the homes and the garden. Members whose lots are located along the fence between the garden and Trellis must:

- a. ensure their equipment, supplies, and plants do not touch or lean against the fence.
 - b. ensure that leaves and debris are raked away from the fence. Leaving plant matter to decompose against the fence will cause deterioration.
 - c. keep equipment and supplies stored neatly so they do not create unsightly conditions for the owners of the homes.
- j) In orchards, the trees must be pruned annually to no more than 10 feet high. Each orchard may not contain more than 5 trees. Branches may not extend beyond individual orchard boundaries. Trees must be kept free of pests and disease, and fruit may not be left on the ground to rot.
- k) Berry/flower patches. These garden areas located along the upper garden fence are assigned to members for planting berries or flowers. They are not to be used exclusively for storage.
- l) Any proposed alteration to the construction of a lot, its contiguous pathways, or plumbing must be pre-approved by the Board. "Alteration" may include building raised beds, building or installing a trellis or other garden structures rising four feet from the top of a raised bed, using concrete in any construction, and laying bricks or pavers that require concrete. "Plumbing" may include piping, spigots, or general plumbing work.

9. Maintaining Common Pathways.

Hoses, tools, weeds, wheelbarrows, hoses, and pots, etc. must be kept clear of the common pathways. Common pathways are the responsibility of the members in contiguous lots. Members are urged to work with their neighboring gardeners to keep pathways clear of weeds and to keep a layer of wood chips in pathways.

10. Green Dumpster.

The dumpster located near the entrance to the garden is for biodegradable garden and orchard debris only. Lumber, large branches, plant tags, fencing, pots, etc. may not be placed in the dumpster.

11. Other Garden Debris.

Once or twice a year, a temporary landfill dumpster will be available for disposal of non-organic garden refuse gathered from the Rossmoor garden.

12. Construction.

Compost bins, tool boxes, sheds, etc. may not exceed four feet in height from ground level and must be placed within the member's lot. No items may be attached to the fence between the garden and the Trellis Community homes or any fence surrounding the garden. Support poles and wire frames may not exceed six feet from the ground and may not shade another garden.

13. Annual Membership Dues.

- a) Annual membership dues per lot are \$55/full lot; \$30/half lot; \$15/quarter lot; \$25/orchard; and, \$15/berry/flower patch.
- b) The Membership Director will email members on or about November 1 each year reminding them of their dues payment. Dues must be paid by December 1. Unpaid dues are delinquent on December 15. A second email will be sent requesting payment by December 31. Members who do not pay their dues by December 31 may forfeit Garden Club membership.

14. Applying for Garden Club Membership.

- a) Applications for membership may be made online on the Club's website at rossmoorgardenclub.org or may be picked up in the Club's mailbox at Gateway. Completed applications may be mailed, emailed, or hand delivered by following the instructions on the application.
- b) If there is a waiting list for garden lots, the applicant's name will be placed on a waitlist and the applicant will be notified of the current position on the list.

15. Membership and Lot Acquisition.

Applicants for Garden Club membership must be Rossmoor residents.

- a) Applicants may participate in a tour of the garden each spring. They are invited to select a garden lot in the order they appear on the waitlist.
- b) Membership is established following the garden tour and following payment of annual dues, a one-time \$100 membership fee, and one-time lot fee.
- c) Each lot may include two co-members. The co-members may be spouses/partners or any Rossmoor resident. Each co-member must pay the \$100 membership fee.
- d) If a co-member leaves the Club, the lot reverts to the remaining co-member.
- e) Lot values, including orchards and berry patches, are set by the President and the Membership Director and are based on the size and condition of the lot.

- f) Members may be assigned only one lot, one orchard and one berry patch.

16. Garden Assistants.

- a) Members are responsible for the conduct of their Assistants.
- b) Members may not be designated as Assistants. If a fellow gardener needs occasional help, members may provide that help, but they may not cultivate their own crops in another's lot. Members who need assistance may find someone to assist them and complete the application process or they may contact the Membership Director. The Membership Director may contact those on the Waitlist to determine if there is interest in being an Assistant.
- c) Assistants do not have succession rights to a garden. If the member leaves the garden, the assistant approval is terminated.
- d) A member may have only one garden assistant at a time and must apply for that assistant by completing an Assistant Application form found on the Club's website at rossmoorgardenclub.org, or in the Garden Club mailbox at Gateway. The form must be sent for approval to the Club's Membership Director. Once approved, the signed form will be returned to the member by mail or email.
- e) All Assistant approvals expire on December 31. If a member wishes to continue with the help of an Assistant, a new application must be filed and approved annually.
- f) Assistants may work alone in members' gardens and must follow all Rules.
- g) Assistants must have a copy or photo of their Assistant Application approval signed by a Board member while working in the garden. Members may not reveal the garden gate code to a prospective Assistant or allow the Assistant to enter or remain in the garden unattended before that Assistant has been approved by the Board.

17. Trading lots.

Members may trade their lots by requesting the Membership Director to place them on the trade waitlist.

- a) At the beginning of each year, available lots are offered to members in the order the member's name appears on the trade waitlist.
- b) If the trade involves upgrading to a lot that has been improved, the member will pay the difference between the value of the traded lot and the value of the new lot.

- c) Members must leave their original lots in good, clean condition within 15 days of leaving the lot.

18. Relinquishing a lot.

Members who wish to relinquish a lot, orchard or berry patch, may do so by sending an email to the Club President or Membership Director. Members may not sell or transfer their lots and will not be reimbursed for any improvements made to their lots.

19. Water Use.

Mandatory water rationing may be established by the Board as necessary.

Members must:

- a) notify the Water Committee or a board member immediately of any leaks to their system if they are not able to repair the leak. Contact numbers are posted on the bulletin board next to the parking lot.
- b) attach a nozzle or shut-off valve on the end of their hoses.
- c) ensure that the faucet is turned off when leaving the lot.
- d) If water rationing is in place, members may water only on their assigned days. Members may not substitute their assigned days, but may ask another member or approved assistant to water for them in their absence.
- e) ensure that hoses are not left on or running unattended.
- f) not water by flooding their garden lots, berry patches, or orchards.

20. Irrigation Systems.

Automatic irrigation systems may be installed in a member's lot at the member's expense. Before installation, the member must obtain approval of the design and materials from the Water Committee. Maintenance of the automatic watering systems above the ball valve on system risers is the responsibility of the member.

21. Garden Inspections.

- a) Garden inspections are generally done in May each year and the date will be announced by email to all members.
- b) Lots will be inspected for the following: weed abatement, wood chip placement, clear pathways, debris, water leaks, hose nozzle and valve shut off, trees/vines pruned and size appropriate, standing water, encroachment on another lot or common pathways, overuse of water/excess moisture in beds.

- c) Members who are out of compliance will be given a deadline for corrections in accordance with Rule 26. Failure to make required corrections may result in relinquishment of membership and surrender of the garden lot.

22. Emergencies.

The physical address of the garden is 2121 Tice Valley Blvd, Walnut Creek 94595.

- a) Security emergencies, such as unauthorized people in the garden: call Securitas at (925) 988-7843.
- b) Health or fire emergencies: call 911 and then Securitas at the above number.
- c) Gate issues: call Securitas at the above number.
- d) Water leaks: contact a member of the water committee or a board member. Phone numbers are listed on the bulletin board in the parking lot.

23. Pets.

Well behaved pets on a leash are welcome in the garden. Owners are responsible for cleaning up after their pets.

24. Assessments.

If operating costs or necessary capital expenses exceed revenue and/or reserves, an assessment to cover these expenses will be charged to each lot proportionately. Full lots will be assessed at full share, half lots at half share, berry patches and orchards at one-quarter share.

25. Member and Assistant Conduct.

Members and Assistants:

- a) must obey all Garden Club Rules.
- b) may not remove anything from another member's lot without express permission.
- c) must show respect to others in the garden by refraining from loud or inappropriate language, threats, or other conduct that could cause fear or harm.
- d) may not irrigate on days not assigned to them (if water restrictions are in effect) and must not overwater.
- e) may not irrigate on Wednesdays.

26. Result of Violation of Rules.

Violations of the Rules may result in verbal requests for compliance, formal warnings, monetary fines and/or action taken by the Board to revoke membership and require relinquishment of the garden lot.

a) Fines for Rule Violations.

Fines will be assessed and must be paid within two weeks of notification as follows:

- \$100 for the first violation;
- \$250 for the second violation;
- Revocation of membership. If there is a third violation and/or if a fine is not paid within two weeks of assessment, the membership may be revoked. The Garden Club Board members will take under consideration multiple violations by the same member to determine appropriate action.

b) **Immediate revocation of membership may result for the following violations:**

- Tampering with the wells or irrigation system
- Repeated overuse of water or using water on unauthorized days
- Theft
- Disorderly verbal or physical conduct that endangers the safety of others or causes fear in others
- Failure to pay dues within the required time limit.