



# Neighborhood Watch

## Please park in your driveway or garage

By Sr. Sgt. Brice Herring, Traffic Unit, Montgomery County Sheriff's Office, District 6

### **Parking on public streets in The Woodlands Township neighborhoods**

With continued growth in The Woodlands over the last several years there has been a drastic increase in calls to The Woodlands Township Neighborhood Watch and law enforcement in relation to parking issues. The most common complaint received is that some residents do not utilize their private driveway to park their vehicles on a daily basis. In many of the neighborhoods, vehicles are parked on the street across from a neighbor's driveway, in front of the cluster mailboxes, too close to an intersection or stop sign, parked facing the wrong direction (into traffic) and parking that prohibits the safe movement of traffic. While some of these parking habits may not be illegal, they can contribute to an unsafe environment in the neighborhood.

Most streets in The Woodlands are wide enough to accommodate a vehicle or vehicles parking on one side of the street, however, the problem occurs when vehicles are parked on both sides of the street, which causes impeded sight lines and makes movement of vehicles slow and difficult. It also can inhibit the safe movement of fire apparatus, ambulances, law enforcement vehicles, school buses, U.S. Mail and utility vehicles. Additionally, it causes an unsafe environment for pedestrians to move freely around their neighborhood, especially small children.

**Law enforcement strongly encourages residents to park in their private driveway**, even though in most cases it is not illegal to park on neighborhood streets. All violations of traffic laws will be strictly enforced by law enforcement, and if your vehicle is deemed to be a traffic hazard or violates traffic laws, it can be ticketed or moved at the owner's expense.

### **Specific Texas parking laws**

Texas parking laws are listed under the state's Transportation Code Section 545.301. Law enforcement appreciates your attention to these state laws and just as importantly your consideration of a safe neighborhood. Here is a summary:

#### **Section 545.302 Stopping, Standing, or Parking Prohibited in Certain Places.**

- a) An operator may not stop, stand, or park a vehicle:
  - On the roadway side of a vehicle stopped or parked at the edge or curb of a street;
  - On a sidewalk;
  - In an intersection;
  - On a crosswalk;
  - Between safety zone and the adjacent curb or within 30 feet on the curb opposite of the safety zone;
  - Where an official sign prohibits stopping or other Texas parking law prohibits parking.

- b) An operator may not, except momentarily to pick up or discharge a passenger, stand or park an occupied or unoccupied vehicle:
- In front of a public or private driveway;
  - Within 15 feet of a fire hydrant;
  - Within 20 feet of a crosswalk at an intersection;
  - Within 30 feet of a flashing signal, stop sign, yield sign, or traffic-control signal located at the side of the roadway;
  - Where an official sign prohibits standing or other Texas parking law prohibits parking.

### **Section 545.303 Additional Parking Regulations**

- A vehicle must be parked parallel to a curb and be parked within 18 inches of the curb.

### **Section 683.002 Abandoned Motor Vehicle**

- a) For the purposes of this chapter, a motor vehicle is abandoned if the motor vehicle:
- 1) Is inoperable, is more than five years old, and has been left unattended on public property for more than 48 hours;
  - 2) Has remained illegally on public property for more than 48 hours;
  - 3) Has remained on private property without consent of the owner or person in charge of the property for more than 48 hours;
  - 4) Has been left unattended on the right-of-way of a designated county, state, or federal highway for more than 48 hours;

### **For all Texas State Law parking violations, contact:**

- Montgomery County Sheriff's Office at 936-442-7797 choose option #3
- Harris County Constable's Office, Precinct 4 at 281-376-3472

### **Parking, according to the Covenants**

The Woodlands Township Covenants and Standards address boat, trailer and automobile parking and storage:

- Boats, trailers, trailer houses, recreational vehicles, truck campers, semi-truck tractors or mobile homes, may not be parked 48 consecutive hours or more on any street or any lot, where visible at ground level from a street or adjacent property.
- Parking on lawns, ditches, open space areas or other dirt, gravel or grassy areas is not allowed.

### **For all Covenant related parking violations, contact:**

- The Woodlands Township Covenant Administration Department at 281-210-3800

Please drive (and park!) safely.