

Reston All Gardener's Meeting 2/24/12

Rules/Regulations

By Karen Parnicky, Lake Anne Coordinator

1. Introduction

2. Topic: *Garden Plot Rules or Guidelines for a Successful Community Garden*

Look for the rules at RA website; print them out for future reference.

3. Here are a few of last year's emails to me from Lake Anne gardeners with questions about the rules:

- *Help! How do I get into the garden?!* Line up the code, push the lock closed first and then it will pop up and open; then please spin the combo before entering the garden! This way the code will remain hidden and the lock will be engaged when leaving. The current code is EATS (3287)
- *When should I start my garden?* This week! But definitely by the May 1st inspection. There will be monthly inspections and plots need to be maintained throughout the season.
- *I just saw a rat! Can I put out poison?* No. Poisons and baits are prohibited. Snap traps are okay for mice, rats, voles. Ground hogs? Note the exact location of the burrow entry and notify a garden coordinator (Sara Clapp or me). RA will handle it.
- *My neighbor is flooding my garden, what to do?* Talk to them! But please everyone should use gardening etiquette. Consider your neighbors during the season ... structures, tall plants, watering, vines, weeds, etc. can affect the gardens around you.
- *The garden paths are overgrown!* Call your coordinator, they'll contact RA, and it will be done.
- *The vines are taking over the fences!* Everyone is responsible for keeping weeds off deer fence, but particularly those gardeners who have plots on the perimeter. Remember how it was before the fence was installed? If you weren't gardening then, just ask someone who was!
- *I just received a notice from RA that my plot is neglected and that I have 2 weeks to clean it up, but I'm out of town due to a family emergency.* Communicate! As you know, there is a waiting list for plots ...we need to relinquish unused gardens asap, not just because untended areas are an eyesore, but they negatively affect nearby plots. If you don't want to give up your garden, but are having difficulty maintaining it for any reason, please talk to your coordinator or RA.

- Are there community garden tools we can use (esp. wheelbarrows)? No. But look around – the plots are filled with tools. It's a great excuse for talking to other gardeners. Share your tools, your extra seeds/seedlings, your gardening tips. Trade the use of a wheelbarrow for vacation watering of your neighbor's garden. Share your zucchini and get some zinnias in return ... this is what I like best about being part of a community garden!
- What is Project Green Thumb? Take any overstock produce to Reston Interfaith Food Bank or to the Embry Rucker shelter. If you're going on vacation, ask your garden coordinator to take your flowers/vegs/herbs to the food bank while you're away. Someone will be grateful to receive your fresh produce. Let's not have any veggies spoiling on the vine this year!
- And a final request: Communicate! Sara and I are interested in hearing your suggestions, questions, and concerns. And RA has been very responsive to our needs, e.g., deer fencing, locks, mowing, mulch delivery, trash removal. Just let us know!