

## Frequently Asked Neighbor-to-Neighbor Questions

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### What are the best strategies to avoid Neighbor to Neighbor conflicts?

Your behavior affects your neighbors. The key to minimizing conflict with your neighbor is to take responsibility for being a good neighbor yourself.

- Meet your neighbor. Don't wait until there is a problem, take the time to introduce yourself and learn your neighbors' names.
- Keep your neighbors informed. Contact your neighbor before you do something that might affect them – such as hosting a big party, home improvements or getting a new dog. Informing them ahead of time allows them to make plans or tell you how your plans may affect them.
- Observe the Platinum Rule. Treat your neighbors the way you would like to be treated. Set an example by being considerate about noise, pets and activities.
- Be aware of differences. Differences in age, ethnic background, years in the neighborhood, etc. can lead to conflicting expectations or misunderstandings unless we make an effort to communicate and understand each other.

### What are the most common Neighbor-to-Neighbor conflicts?

- **Noise.** The quiet enjoyment noted in the CC&Rs Initial Use Restrictions support that nothing shall be done or maintained that creates noise or other conditions which tend to disturb the peace, quiet, safety and comfort of serenity of your neighbors. Approach your neighbor and discuss noise issues such as barking dogs, loud nighttime talking, music, etc. Letting your neighbor know their noise is bothering you gives them an opportunity to fix a problem they may not know they are creating.
- **Pets.** Be aware of your responsibility to properly care for your pet and ensure they are not creating a nuisance for your neighbors. If your neighbor approaches you about a problem with your pet, be willing to consider that you need to be part of the solution. Follow common courtesies such as waste removal, leash controls, noise controls and pet occupancy limits.
- **Visual Nuisances: trees, signs and birdfeeders.** Compliance to the CC&Rs ensures your home improvements and landscaping don't negatively affect your neighbor. If your neighbor approaches you about a violation, the ability to provide improvement approval paperwork or reference the specific policy can resolve an issue quickly. Remember, when making exterior changes to your home or yard, "Apply to Comply."

### How do I positively address a potential neighbor conflict?

- Communicate early and calmly. Don't assume that discussing a problem will aggravate your neighbor. Your neighbors can't help resolve a problem they don't know exists. Usually, people are willing to make changes if you approach them respectfully. Approach your neighbor with a focus on learning rather than delivering a message; understanding and acknowledgement rather than blame; joint problem solving rather than who is at fault.
- Separate the person from the problem. Focusing on the issue will allow problem-solving while maintaining and even improving your relationship.
- Listen well and empathically. When you discuss a problem, try to understand how your neighbor feels about the issue and why. Understanding is not the same as agreeing, but will increase the likelihood of a solution that works for both.
- If things get heated, take a break. It's hard to problem solve when you are in the middle of a heated discussion.

### What if a positive Neighbor-to-Neighbor approach doesn't resolve the conflict?

- If you've tried resolving your conflict with the Neighbor-to-Neighbor approach without success, please contact the ACCCA staff and ask that they intervene. In most cases, our staff serving as an impartial third party leads to a positive resolution for both neighbors.
- If after using the Neighbor-to-Neighbor approach and connecting with ACCCA staff to intervene the problem continues to persist, you may file a Complaint Form with the ACCCA. This form can be found under documents and forms on the ACCCA website. Please be advised a complaint must be in noncompliance to the Community Documents to process. Also consider that any complaint logged with the ACCCA will NOT remain anonymous. The person complaining of the alleged violation must state their first and last names and this information will be sent to the party who is accused of the violation.
- If you seek **immediate** resolution for **excessive noise**, you may contact the MCSO directly at 602-876-1000 for assistance. It is important to report an issue to the MCSO during the actual noise violation. **Always** report issues to the ACCCA.