



HEBGEN LAKE ESTATES OWNERS' ASSOCIATION

Summer Newsletter

Happy Summer Hebgen Lake Estates Residents

1. Annual Meeting.

Our upcoming annual meeting will be held at the Povah Center, West Yellowstone on Saturday September 27, 2025, between 3:00 -5:00 pm.

Join via Google Meet: <https://meet.google.com/unj-ftci-nua>

Seeking Candidates

The main business item will be to conduct elections for the Board of Directors. The Board is looking for candidates with some experience and skills in leadership, communication, financial management, information technology, construction, county zoning, or building codes. However, anyone who is interested in supporting the community's core values—such as open space, scenic preservation, a wildlife-friendly environment, resident safety, property upkeep, and increasing property values—is welcome to run for a Board position.

Candidates' Submission Requirements

Property owners who wish to run for a Board position should prepare a Candidacy Statement not to exceed 200 words to include:

- Personal background and life experiences.
- Work qualifications, accomplishments, awards, and any volunteer service.
- What you would like to accomplish if elected.

Please send Candidacy Statements to the Board via email at hebgenlakeestateshoa@gmail.com or by mail to PO Box 638, West Yellowstone, MT 59758 **NLT September 15, 2025.**

Candidates' Election Ballots and Proxies

A list of candidates, an official election ballot, a proxy form, will be mailed to all owners. Instructions for both forms will be included in the materials mailed. If you cannot attend the annual meeting, please mail back or give to an owner attending the meeting the election and proxy documents by **NLT September 20, 2025.** These documents will be used at the annual meeting.

2 .Neighborhood Updates.

Construction of 5 New Homes

HLE adds about 5 new homes each year. Builders and residents should note the short construction window, with late cold snaps, and frequent high winds impacting project timelines. The brief season also makes scheduling trades like plumbers and electricians more challenging.

The Board asks that the community please be patient and understanding of construction projects. Contractors, please watch for children, pets, and avoid leaving nails or debris on the road. Let's work together. Report incidents involving owners and/or contractors to the HOA Gmail account.

3. Enforcing Covenants

- The HOA Board is made up of volunteers and responds to owner complaints, similar to Gallatin County. Owners can report potential covenant violations by emailing the HOA Gmail account or mailing a letter to the HOA address.
- There is a group of owners who refuse to pay current and prior year's annual dues. The Board is allowed by the covenants to assess late fees and penalties and is proceeding with filing liens against their properties with the county.
- Despite several requests from the Board, one owner has ignored submitting a construction project requiring review by the HLE Architectural Review Committee. When the Board made another inquiry about construction material on the property, the owner sent the Board a written notice threatening possible legal action.

- The Board had another incident with an owner. While attempting to enforce HOA covenants in conjunction with county ordinances regarding a construction project, the owner sent the Board a written notice threatening possible legal action.
- Currently, our covenants do not provide for imposing fines on owners who fail to abide by the covenants. Last year, a ballot measure proposed lowering the percentage of owners necessary to amend our covenants from 75% approval to a simple majority (50% +1) approval. If this ballot measure passes, it would allow the community to more easily amend our covenants and possibly provide for more avenues to enforce the covenants. The ballot is still open. If you haven't voted, or wish to change your ballot, please do so by email to hebgenlakeestateshoa@gmail.com or by writing to the HOA at PO Box 638, West Yellowstone, MT 59758.
- At the annual meeting, we will discuss whether the community wants to support the current ballot measure or would prefer potential increases in the annual dues or special assessments to cover the cost of litigation (as has been threatened by several homeowners) and the cost of litigation to enforce the covenants. Your attendance and input at this meeting are encouraged and appreciated.
- **4. Other Covenant Related Topics.**

Living in an HOA Community.

When you purchased your property all owners signed documents constituting a contract whereby owners agreed to abide by the HLE covenants. The HLE covenants are binding on all property owners.

Architectural Review Committee (ARC).

- To construct a home, fence, shed, greenhouse, install yard lights, or to do any reconstruction or alteration, plans must be submitted to the (ARC) for review and approval according to the covenants. The ARC is composed of the Board of Directors for Hebgen Lake Estates (HLE). For specific requirements, refer to Sections 3 and 4 of the covenants on the "Documents" page on the HLE website at: hebgenlakeestates.org.
- Owners are required to complete construction within 12 months, unless you receive written HOA approval for an extension of time.

- Business activities are prohibited on residential lots, including parking construction equipment for construction businesses.
- LPG tanks must be either properly buried or concealed as approved by the ARC.
- HLE/HOA Covenants can be more restrictive than county ordinances.
- HLE/HOA cannot approve anything that county ordinance prohibits.

5. Weed Spraying.

Please review the **attached 2025 weed spray map** to see if your lot is marked “spray” shaded or “no spray.” Noxious weed spraying in HLE occurred on July 13th and August 14th, 2025. To change your lot’s designation, send an email to: hebgenlakeestateshoa@gmail.com.



6. August is Wildfire Prevention Month

The main fire risk to your home may come from nearby homes and outbuildings storing flammable or toxic materials. Structures are not allowed in lot line setbacks, which serve as fire breaks. Keeping setbacks clear of flammable items helps protect both your home and your neighbors.' The setbacks in HLE are:

Front Lot Line: 35 feet per the County

Side Lot Line: 15 feet per our covenants

Rear Lot Line: 25 feet per the County

NOTE: The Board is requesting additional tree trimming along Rainbow Point Road due to concerns about fire and safety. Overgrown trees may obstruct the exit route during wildfires and impede access by emergency vehicle to our community. The request will be sent to the US Forest Service and Gallatin County Commissioners for their consideration and action.

What is the purpose of a Homeowners Association (HOA)?

For most Americans, their home is their largest asset and a key driver of their overall net worth. Generally, we expect the value of our home to increase over time, and apart from location and home condition, the sale price of similar homes in the neighborhood are key indicators of your home value. The main purpose of any HOA is to protect home and property values of all residents.

The HOA sets and enforces rules, known as protective covenants, for how properties should look in the neighborhood and for what homeowners can-and cannot-do. When you purchase a home in Hebgen Lake Estates (HLE), you are automatically part of the HLE HOA. The current HLE HOA covenants were last revised in 1993 and then filed with the county land records. The HOA covenants are a package deal that attach to the land, so they are binding on all present homeowners and future purchasers of homes in HLE. At your home's closing you signed documents constituting a contract whereby you agreed to abide by the HOAs covenants and could face monetary and/or legal penalties if you chose not to follow the protective covenants.

As a homeowner, did you know?

If you would like to put up a fence, build a home, a shed, a greenhouse or even install yard lights, you must submit your plans to the board's Architectural Review Committee (ARC) for review and approval per the covenants. The ARC consists of the Board of Directors for HLE. For more details on the submissions process, please go to the "Document" page on our website at hebgenlakeestates.org

If you are building a home or other structure, you must complete it within 12 months unless you have written permission from the HOA for extra time.

If you are a small business owner, you may not conduct your business on a residential lot. Should you be in the construction business, covenants strictly prevent parking construction equipment on your property. The purpose of this covenant is to maintain the natural state of the neighborhood.

If you use natural gas and have an LPG tank, it must either be buried with the proper galvanized coating to prevent deterioration or it must be hidden from view as approved by the ARC.

HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION'S DUTIES & BENEFITS

An HOA helps to ensure residents are held accountable to community restrictions, and that individual properties and common areas are well-maintained. This all serves one underlying goal: to keep the community appealing to residents and future residents while keeping property values high. HOAs work to make people feel a part of the communities they live in. One of the many advantages of living in a community association is sharing with other members the costs of certain maintenance and amenities that are often too expensive for a single-family homeowner. Weed spraying is the primary amenity provided by the HOA. All HLE members are legally bound to share those costs in the form of HOA assessments.

HOA DUES & COLLECTION POLICY

Homeowner dues are \$75 annually per lot payable within 30-days after their receipt. Please make out your check payment to HLE/HOA and mail to P.O. Box 638, West Yellowstone, MT 59758. Because of increased dues in arrears, additional collection measures have been enacted. **Homeowners with delinquent dues are subject to 10% interest charges per annum on their unpaid balance, and a \$25 late penalty fee per lot per year.** Additionally, for property owners who have not paid their prior year (s) dues before December 31, 2022, the HOA intends to file Notices of Liens against their properties for delinquent amounts owed. For homeowners who have not paid their current 2022 HOA dues, interest will continue to accue on the unpaid balance until paid. If dues remain unpaid in the next calendar year, the HOA will also file Notices of Liens against homeowners' properties for delinquent amounts owed. **Note that lien amounts will include interest charges, late penalties fees, and filing, recording, and administrative costs of liens. Additional attorney fees and other costs incurred by the HOA will be charged to the property owner.**