



Houston Laker
Since March 1957 – Edition 69
May 2026 issue



On April 7, 2026 -
Houston Lake Passed
A 1% Sale Tax.

Jesse Beshears and
Sarah Loring were
reelected as aldermen.



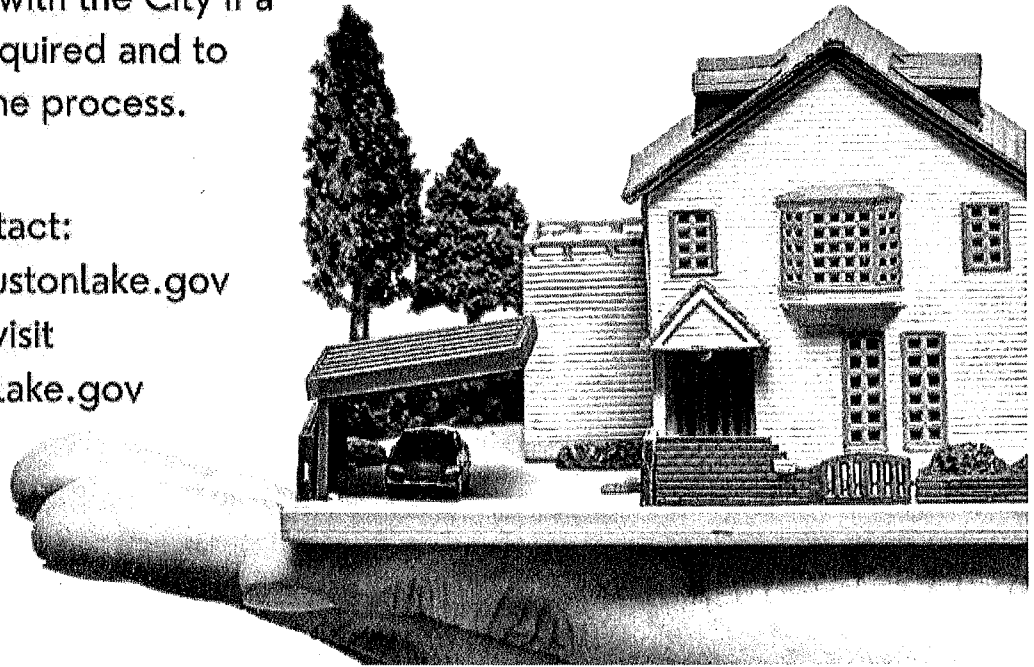
Now is a great time for home projects

Houston Lake

Many projects and
improvements require a permit.

Please check with the City if a
permit is required and to
discuss the process.

Contact:
cityclerk@houstonlake.gov
or visit
Houstonlake.gov



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Recently, Gary of **Crawford Climbers**, and his crew, came through Houston Lake to complete our "Spring Brush Pickup". They worked very fast and efficiently. They are a great service provider for our community!

While they were here for those two days, they were completing work on behalf of the City. However, many homeowners reached out to him, while they were working, to ask questions about their home and their tree servicing needs. Gary was pleased to talk with everyone, he did not want to offend anyone, but he reports it was distracting him from the work they needed to complete for the City.

The City, and Gary, ask - if you need tree services - please call **Gary** at **Crawford Climbers** directly at **816-935-0186** to set up an appointment with him. In this way, he can make certain he addresses your needs.

FROM THE VENETIAN GARDENS HOMES ASSOCIATION

Hello Fellow Houston Lakers,

I'd like to take a moment to thank everyone who helped with the lake clean-up during March. Many of you contributed without formal coordination, and your efforts did not go unnoticed—please accept my sincere appreciation.

A special thank you to Chuck, Laura, Lisa, Don, and Jammie for their egg addling efforts.

Special thanks to Drew and Kenny for removing and treating honeysuckle at City Park and around the silt pond. Jennifer, Josh, Don, and Lisa worked hard clearing trees and debris from the lake and spillway. Dan and Katheryn gathered limbs from the beach shelter area. I'd also like to recognize our daily walkers who consistently pick up trash while enjoying the lake—your ongoing care makes a difference.

As we prepare for the summer season, the VGHA will be planting native aquatic plants to help reduce shoreline erosion and improve the lake's chemical balance. Bio-pods will be refreshed every two months throughout the season. Chuck and I will also be conducting pre-season muck measurements around the lake to help guide next year's maintenance priorities.

In addition, we are planning to dredge a channel through the center of the shallows just beyond the peninsula. I am currently developing this plan and will share more details once it has been reviewed and approved by the Board.

We are also looking for someone to assist with maintaining the beach dock and swim dock, as well as emptying trash and dog waste containers during the summer season. If you are interested, please contact me at **816-726-4455**.

Thank you again for your continued support and commitment to our lake community.

Best regards,

Pam Freese
President of the VGHA

*We have awesome
volunteers
working diligently
throughout the City.....*



Thank You!
For All
Your
Hard Work!

2026 TRASH & RECYCLING

DATES

City Trash and Recycling Service are handled by Republic Services. For assistance with your receptacles, issues with pick up, or questions about large items contact customer service at 816-254-1470 or republicservices.com.

One Trash bin and **one** Recycling bin is picked up every Thursday. (If you require more than one trash bin and/or more than one recycling bin, you need to contact Republic Services directly at 816-254-1470 to set up any additional service you require for your residence.) They need to be at the curb/edge of street by 6am. Place carts 1 foot from the curb/edge of the street. Leave room for the arm of the truck to pick up and return the receptacles without causing damage to vehicles, fences, etc. **Place the cart at least 5 feet from any object – like a car, tree, pole, fire hydrant, mailbox, electrical box, or cable box – so the automated arm can reach your cart.**

Trash & Recycling pickup is every Thursday.

Please maintain this same distance of 5 feet between recycling and waste carts.

Remember only one of each bin is allowed.

A \$10.00 charge per bin, per month, if you need additional bins.

2026 Holidays:

May 25 Memorial Day
– Pick up Changed to Friday May 29.

July 4 Independence Day –
No Change pick up will be on Thursday July 2.

September 7 Labor Day
– Pick up changed to Friday September 11.

November 26 Thanksgiving
Day - Pick up changed to Friday November 27.

December 25 Christmas Day
– No Change pickup will be on Thursday December 24.

Lake Life

May 2026 Events

Trash and Recycling pick up change to Thursday

10 – Mother's Day

13 – Wednesday - City of Houston Lake Meeting – City Hall 6:30pm.

18 - Monday - VGHA meeting - 6:30pm City Hall. VGHA Treasurer Don Miller will be distributing 2026 Lake Wristbands from 6pm to 6:30pm.

23 - Houston Laker Article Deadline

25 – Memorial Day

29 – Friday Recycle and Trash Day pick-up

Houston Lake Cookbook

1st and 2nd Edition of the Houston Lake Cookbooks is available. **Houston Lake**

History Book

77 pages of the History of Houston Lake is available.

Email Mary Head at maryviewel40@gmail.com or call (816) 741-5639

Houston Lake City Officials

City Hall – (816) 741-0644

Mayor – Sarah Schofield
mayor@houstonlake.gov

City Clerk – Lisa A. Shepard
cityclerk@houstonlake.gov

City Collector – Kathryn Kreider
citycollector@houstonlake.gov

City Bookkeeper – Kay Honeycutt
khoneycutt@houstonlake.gov

Custodian of Records –
cityclerk@houstonlake.gov

Board of Aldermen

Mayor Pro Tem - Sarah Loring
sloring@houstonlake.gov

Jesse Beshears
jbeshears@houstonlake.gov

Teresa Olson
tolson@houstonlake.gov

Jennifer Heese
jheese@houstonlake.gov

As most of the City Officials and VGHA Officers have full-time jobs, phone calls may not be answered/returned as quickly as a text or email.

City Hall is open during meetings, events, and by appointment.

Venetian Gardens Homes

Association Officers

President – Pam Freese – (816) 726-4455
venetian.gardens.homes.assoc@gmail.com

Vice President/Treasurer/Lake Tags -
Don Miller = (918) 633-4109
drmiller5@icloud.com

Secretary – Monica Beshears
(573) 356-4118
weety30@gmail.com

Board Member at Large – Mary Head
(816) 741-5639
maryjewel40@gmail.com

Board Member at Large – Josh Williams
(816) 560-6433
jwil6872@gmail.com

Houston Laker Newspaper Editor
Mary Head – 816-741-5639
maryjewel40@gmail.com

**In case of a Police, Fire, or Medical
Emergency – Call 911**

**Police Non-Emergency & Animal
Control Platte County Sheriff
(816) 858-3521**

**Fire Non-Emergency Riverside Fire
Department (816) 372-9024**

**Grinder Pump Haynes Equipment
Services (913) 782-5013**



City Council Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, the 11th day of March, 2026

Location: Houston Lake City Hall, 5417 N Adrian, Houston Lake, MO 64151-3389

The regular meeting of the City Council of Houston Lake, MO, was called to order by Mayor Sarah Schofield on Wednesday, March 11, 2026 at 6:35 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Schofield.

On roll call, the following members were present: Mayor Sarah Schofield, Alderman Jesse Beshears, Alderman Jennifer Heese, Alderman Sarah Loring, and Alderman Teresa Olson. A quorum was established.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Beshears moved to approve the 02/18/26 City Council Meeting minutes. Loring 2nd. A voice vote resulted in approval. Loring moved to approve the 02/24/26 CLOSED City Council Meeting minutes. Heese 2nd. A voice vote resulted in approval.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Riverside Fire Department Report - no department representative present. Mayor Schofield asked if any council member would be willing to contact the utilities regarding overhead lines. Platte Co Sheriff's Department Report- Sgt Jessica Duda reported ten calls for service in February for a total of 38.12 hours: 1 abandoned auto, 1 welfare check, 2 parking complaints, 1 prowler, 2 residence check-party, 1 stalking, and 2 suspicious person-vehicle. Council asked again about the data from the speed scanner machine that was located on Adrian last summer. Still no data accessed. Machine is currently being used by MoDOT. Mayor Schofield asked for assistance with two residences listed on the February report.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION - none

VENETIAN GARDENS HOMES ASSOCIATION (VGHA) REPORT

Mary Head reported no public VGHA meeting in March. The next public VGHA meeting will be **Wednesday** April 15 (possible permanent change to the third Wednesday of the month). Lake cleanup is happening all during the month of March as outlined in the Houston Laker. The deadline to submit news of any kind for the April edition of the Houston Laker is March 25, 2026.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Financial Reports dated 02/28/26 were reviewed and accepted as presented. Amend Budget to Accommodate Insurance Expense - an invoice for insurance was received for \$1,568.00 that was in excess of what was anticipated in the 2025-2026 budget. Discussion. Olson moved to use \$250 received, but not budgeted, for the Rental of City Hall toward the insurance

invoice, as well as reduce Gifts/Awards/Donations budget by \$250, and reduce Property/Park Maintenance budget by \$1,050 to increase the Insurance budget by \$1,300, in order to pay the insurance bill. Beshears 2nd. A voice vote resulted in approval. It is time to review all of our insurance policies. Grinder Pump Fund - Update - \$19,200 annual grinder pump funds have been received with all taxes collected by Platte Co. There has been an additional expense of 801.33 paid from the GP Fund. We are still on track to return the \$17,133, borrowed from the General Fund earlier this year to the General Fund by the end of this fiscal year. Bridge Investment - will review this again at next month's meeting after learning if the grant is approved.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Sales Tax - information about the upcoming Sales Tax has been shared in the Houston Laker. It was recommended this information be shared again in the April Houston Laker ahead of the April 7, 2026 election and question. Short-Term Rental (STR) DRAFT Ordinance - lengthy discussion on this ordinance ahead of sending this to the City's attorney for finalization. Additional review of a Short-Term Rental (STR) Application was accomplished.

NEW BUSINESS - none

REPORTS FROM CITY STAFF

Shepard reminded council about an upcoming City Officials training opportunity. She and Heese recently attended a KC Lakes meeting - it is more geared to VGHA so they hope to report to the VGHA board at the next opportunity.

REPORTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Beshears would like to investigate signs and/or cameras to be placed at the beach and bridge to deter dishonest activity. Resident Bobby Baker suggested asking the City's attorney about placing cameras. Beshears is anticipating hearing about the grant soon. Olson reminded every resident to monitor all of your utility bills to make sure your address reflects Houston Lake and has not been changed to Kansas City. Loring - no report. Heese recently attended a MARC meeting to help with possible grants.

REPORT FROM MAYOR

Schofield reported we did not receive a recent grant for native plants. She put a request out for bids for gravel, for the City Hall parking lot and, perhaps, Johnson Trail. She would like to look at paving the part of Edgewater Trail that never got redone and, perhaps, Johnson Trail (instead of using gravel). The spring brush cleanup is scheduled for April 9. She is working on codes violations processes and building permits process.

NEXT MEETING AND ADJOURNMENT

The next City Council meeting will be Wednesday, April 8, 2026 at 6:30 PM at City Hall.

Schofield adjourned the meeting at 9:15 PM.

Minutes submitted by: City Clerk, Lisa A. Shepard

Approved 04/08/2026



Feeding geese and other waterfowl bread and crackers is a common pastime for many adults and children, but many people do not know that this can be harmful to the birds, as well as the environment. Here are several reasons why you should not feed geese and other birds.

Bread, crackers, popcorn, and other high-carbohydrate foods are like junk food to birds. They provide very little nutritional content, and birds that fill up on them will not seek out other, nutritious food. This can cause the birds to become malnourished, which can contribute to a host of health problems for both adults and babies.

Even though you may only choose to feed geese and other bird's small amounts of bread or other foods, other families may be doing the same thing. The result could be that the birds' diet consists primarily of unhealthy foods.

If an abundant supply of food is readily available from humans, the geese population will grow because the birds will be attracted to the handouts. This can cause the area to become overcrowded. A supply of easy-to-acquire food will also lead the birds to lay more eggs, which can further contribute to overpopulation.

Feeding geese bread can also contribute to the spread of disease. A diet rich in carbohydrates will cause the birds to defecate more, which can spread bacteria that can contribute to disease. Moldy bread that is not eaten and left on the ground can cause aspergillosis, a lung infection that can be fatal to waterfowl. In addition, rotting bread can attract pests, such as rats, mice, and insects, which can spread disease.

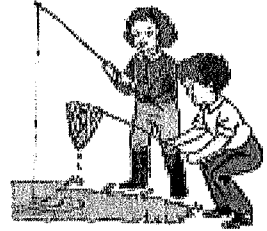
Feeding geese can also pollute the environment. Uneaten bread is unsightly. It can rot and release noxious odors, and it can also lead to the growth of algae, which can clog natural waterways and endanger the health of fish and other wildlife.

Geese and other birds that rely on humans for food lose their natural fear and may place themselves in dangerous situations, such as crossing roads in search of food. They may also become aggressive toward humans who do not provide them with the food they want.

While you may think that you are helping geese by providing them with food, you can be jeopardizing the health of the birds, other animals, and humans, as well as polluting the environment. Wild geese have plenty of healthy food in their habitat to sustain them. Please let the geese find food on their own so that they, and other animals in the environment, can stay healthy.

Don't Forget Your Missouri Fishing License and a Houston Lake "2026 Wristband" when fishing!!

Lake Residents from the age of 16 through 64 need a Missouri Fishing License and a Houston Lake 2026 Wristband in order to fish in Houston Lake. Residents 65 and over need only a 2026 Wristband. No Fishing in the Beach Area.



To get your 2026 Wristbands call VGHA Treasurer, Don Miller 918-633-4109 or email drmiller5@icloud.com. The Wristbands are FREE if your Homes Association dues are paid. Guests of Residents must have that Residents 2026 Wristband with them when they are on or around the lake and Homes Association property.

No trout lines, jug lines, seine net, gillnetting or unattended fishing lines. No FISHING anywhere beyond the gate at the swim beach.

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**Monday May 18 - Venetian Gardens Homes Association
Meeting 6:30 PM - City Hall**

Paid Members can pick up 2026 wristbands from 6:00 PM to 6:30 PM at City Hall just before the meeting.

The Board of Directors Welcome and encourage Members to attend.

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Our Recycling and Trash service pick up day has changed to Thursday.

A Message to the Citizens from your of Platte
County Assessor

As your Platte County Assessor, I want to personally thank you for taking the time to stay informed and engaged with the work taking place across our county.

When I took office, I made a commitment to serve with integrity, transparency, and accountability—and that commitment continues to guide every decision we make. The work we are doing today is not always easy, and at times it requires change. But it is necessary work, grounded in the responsibility to uphold Missouri law, follow established statutes, and ensure fairness for every property owner.

Equalization is not just a process—it is a promise. A promise that your property will be treated no differently than your neighbor's. A promise that values will reflect accurate, current market conditions. And a promise that no one will carry more or less than their fair share.

We are staying focused. We are staying on track. And we are doing exactly what this office was elected to do.

As we continue forward toward the 2027 reassessment, my commitment to you remains the same:

- To communicate early and often
- To provide clear and honest information
- To apply the law fairly and consistently
- And to serve the people of Platte County with professionalism and respect

This is your office. This is your county. And it is our responsibility to ensure that the system works fairly for everyone.

Thank you for your trust, your patience, and your continued support.

Respectfully,

Marcus Farr

Platte County Assessor

Assessor's Website

Online Forms : Address Change, Waivers, set up New account

Property Search : Geographic search of properties in Platte Co.

Did you receive a 'Greater than 15% Increase Letter'?

File Online : Citizens can file both Personal & Business property online

Are you New to Missouri? : Waiver request and account set-up

Did you transfer from another county in Missouri? : account set-up

**Looking for News and information about Houston Lake and/or
the Venetian Gardens Homes Association (VGHA)?**

Check out the City's newly updated website: **www.houstonlake.gov**

Follow the City on Facebook: **Houston Lake, Mo**

Contact the Mayor and City Council members at: **city-council@houstonlake.gov**

Current and past issues of the Houston Laker:

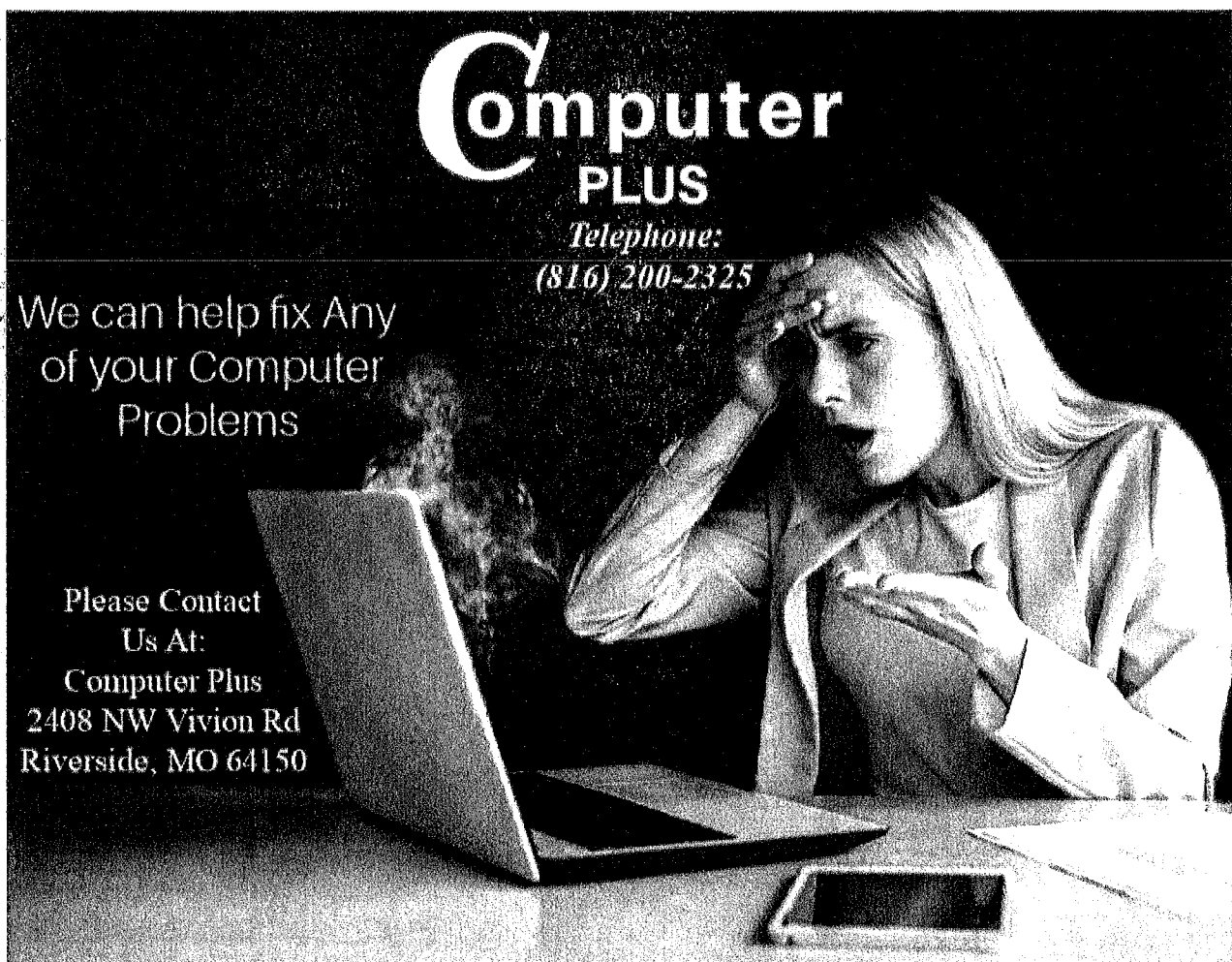
www.houstonlake.gov then select **Houston Laker**

Check out the VGHA's newly updated website: **www.vgha.community**

Follow the VGHA on Facebook: **Venetian Gardens Homes Association**

Contact the VGHA at: **pamelafreese@gmail.com**

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**Computer
PLUS**
Telephone:
(816) 200-2325

We can help fix Any
of your Computer
Problems

Please Contact
Us At:
Computer Plus
2408 NW Vivion Rd
Riverside, MO 64150

IS YOUR HOUSE NUMBER VISIBLE FROM THE STREET -

please take time to walk out to the street in front of your house. If you can't see your house number in daylight, and at night, from the street - PLEASE take time this month to refurbish the street numbers on your home. The City thanks you, the VGHA thanks you, and Emergency Services thanks you - especially if they need to locate your home to help protect you!!!



**There is no parking
on the streets
throughout
Houston Lake.**

**Public parking is
available on the gravel
lot next to CITY HALL.**

**Reminder: Houston
Lake's speed limit,
throughout the entire
city, is 15 miles per
hour. For everyone's
safety,**

PLEASE SLOW DOWN!



Watercraft Registration Form

Boaters: ALL watercraft, including kayaks, must be registered with the Venetian Gardens Homes Association. To do so, you may complete the Application form found on the reverse side of this notice (then submit it as instructed) **OR** you may complete the Application online by visiting:

www.vgha.community/home/online-watercraft-registration-form

You will enter your information. It will automatically generate an email to the VGHA Board. You will then be contacted to arrange an inspection of your boat(s). Once it passes an inspection, you will be assigned a number which is to be permanently affixed to the stern of the boat.

IMPORTANT: Please wear your 2026 wristband while enjoying the lake.

Maximum Horsepower permissible on the lake will be 7 ½ HP. It is recommended that 3 ½ or 5 HP be used. The maximum speed permissible on the lake by outboards will be FIVE (5) miles per HOUR. No wake around the swim area or if three (3) or more boats are in operation in the lake.

PLEASE NOTE: Houston Lake is dedicated to preventing the spread of Zebra Mussels. The Boat ramp is closed.

No watercraft will be allowed in the lake without being dry docked for fourteen (14) days so please plan accordingly. If you want to launch your watercraft (boats, kayaks, canoes, pontoons, etc.) into Houston Lake, you must contact Pam Freese at 816-726-4455. Even if you have lake front property from which to launch your watercraft, you must have your watercraft registered.

[The Application can be found on the reverse side of this notice,
if you wish to complete it and submit it via email
OR deposit it into the VGHA mail box at City Hall.]

VENETIAN GARDENS HOMES ASSOCIATION
APPLICATION FOR WATERCRAFT REGISTRATION

(PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY)

INSTRUCTIONS:

You may register your watercraft online or via this Application form.

If online, please go to **www.vgha.community/home/online-watercraft-registration-form**

OR please complete this Application then submit it to the VGHA Board of Directors.
This Application can be emailed to:

venetian.gardens.homes.assoc@gmail.com

OR put in the **VGHA mailbox** by the front door at:

City Hall, 5417 N Adrian, Houston Lake, MO 64151

OWNER(S) NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

LOT NUMBER _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

BOAT TYPE _____

MAKE _____

MODEL NUMBER _____

HORSEPOWER _____

_____/_____/_____/_____
Please Sign and Date

OPTIONAL: Are there any other special notes about your watercraft?
