

The Preserve at Stone Oak
Yard of the Month
Guidelines and Criteria – Revised 2012

The Preserve at Stone Oak HOA “Yard of the Month Contest” Guidelines and Criteria

The Preserve at Stone Oak has re-established our Yard of the Month Contest. This has been established to promote goodwill and reward exemplary lawn care in The Preserve at Stone Oak subdivision. The purpose of the program is to recognize neighbors who demonstrate above-average efforts in maintaining their property, thereby contributing to the overall appearance of the community at large. This is a great award and the program is administered entirely by volunteers.

For the months March through October, the committee will choose three lawns per month that best typifies the qualities of: uniqueness, beauty, appeal, as well as consistency with The Preserve of Stone Oak architecture and having all installations within our Architectural Control Committee (ACC) guidelines. Since the contest will mainly deal with "curb appeal," nominations will be for front and side yards jointly, as well as the exterior of the house. The committee will submit the nominations to the HOA Board, and they will vote on a winner during the last week of each month. The winner will be announced the first week of the month. The winner of the Yard of the Month will be provided with a decorative yard sign for display indicating their winning yard, one free month of HOA dues, as well as a posting on our community website which will include a picture.

- Three finalists will be submitted by the committee member via pictures to the Board by 3rd week of the month (4th week with those months having five weeks (5)).
- Board will have 7 days to vote and clear the finalists for fines, dues, etc
- Winner will be submitted to committee member, notified, and posted on the website by the first of the month.
- In the event of a tie (in case one board member does not vote, the committee member will vote)

Contest Guidelines

- All current Preserve at Stone Oak properties are automatically eligible.
- Award winners are selected based on the recommended judging criteria listed below.
- Key criteria include manicured yard, beautification, originality, and creativity.
- The upkeep of the yard can reflect the efforts of the residents themselves or that of a professional landscaper or groundskeeper.
- The same property cannot receive Yard of the Month more than once a year, meaning at least 12 months must elapse between awards for the same yard.
- Yard of the Month winners must be current with their Association dues with no outstanding fines due.
- While an individual's home is being recognized as a Preserve at Stone Oak "Yard of the Month" they are expected to maintain their yard in the same manner that allowed them to win the title.
- Winners may be disqualified if their property is in violation of any HOA covenants or ACC regulations.
- In the event the homeowner who is chosen to have Yard of the Month does not wish to participate, they must contact the committee chair as soon as possible. The committee will choose another yard.

- Homeowners can only keep the award sign in their yard for the month they were awarded the sign, even if the sign was placed in their yard late due to holidays or vacation of committee members.
- Advisory Board members and Yard of the Month committee members are not eligible for this award
- Judges decisions are final

Judging Criteria

- The Preserve at Stone Oak Yard of the Month candidates are judged solely on the total exterior appearance of their property and front/side yards as viewed from the street. General upkeep of the yard and property is paramount. Factors include the overall appearance, tidiness, and neatness of the front of the property as evidenced by pruned, trimmed, and shaped foliage, edged and defined lawns, borders & flowerbeds, and a visually appealing facade.
- Lawn: Healthy grass with no large bare spots or excessive weeds is necessary. Grass shall be mowed, edged and grass around foundations and fences shall be trimmed. Debris (garbage, pet feces, etc.) shall be picked up and removed. The lawn should have a unified, simple and balanced landscape design. It should be neat and natural.
- Landscape and Flower Beds: Beds weeded and edged. Flowers deadheaded and dead plants removed. Trees and shrubs pruned. Natural areas cleaned. Plantings should be in scale with the surroundings.
- Walkways and Driveways: Walkways and Driveways shall be clean, including trash containers removed from view. In addition, the area in front of the curb should be free from debris and dirt.
- Aesthetics: The overall look of landscaping color and textures should be in harmony with the community. The front entryway should be clean and show the homeowners creativity with special touches such as hanging baskets, pots, yard art, bird feeders, etc.
- Summary Note: While lack of strict adherence to the criteria above does not necessarily result in a disqualification, these principles offer general guidelines that are recognized by the Preserve at Stone Oak committee. The committee realizes not everyone has a 'green thumb'; therefore, a homeowner may still win Yard of the Month by making an extensive improvement to the curb appeal of their home.