

# Housing Programs & Services

NEWSLETTER

## Homemade Weed Killers

It is that time of year when weeds can quickly take over our yards. Here are eight inexpensive homemade weed killers.

**1. Pull Them** If you've ever tried it, you know that some weeds are much tougher to pull than others — particularly dandelions and other weeds of the taproot variety. To make it easier, water the area directly around the weed or pull them after a rainstorm, when the ground is softer. Insert a knife or screwdriver alongside the deep root to loosen it before pulling.

**2. Pour Boiling Water on Them** Drain pots of boiling water directly onto the weeds that invade your garden. A splash of scalding water will shrivel even the toughest weeds in a couple of days.

**3. Smother Them** Cover low-growing weeds like clover and crabgrass with several layers of newspaper and eventually the lack of sunlight will exterminate them. Similarly, putting down layers of newspaper (it's biodegradable) and covering it with mulch can prevent weeds from sprouting up in the first place.

**4. Salt Them** Stock up on discounted rock salt at the end of winter and sprinkle it on garden paths to fight weeds in the spring (table salt works, too). Salt also makes a good weed barrier along lawn edgings and other places a lawn mower can't reach, but apply it carefully. It can erode concrete surfaces and can leave the



ground barren for a prolonged period of time.

**5. Divide and Conquer Them** Physical barriers, like lawn edgings and retaining walls are a long-lasting solution for keeping weeds at bay. Make simple — and cheap — edging out of scraps of pressure-treated decking boards. Cut them into 8-inch "pikes" and hammer the pieces into the ground next to each other to form a continuous edge.

**6. Outnumber Them** In the garden, there is a competition for resources among your plants, where only the strongest survive and thrive. Plant ground covers, flowers, and garden crops that will naturally beat out weeds for sunlight, water, and nutrients. The same principle applies to your lawn: Maintain a thick, health lawn, and you'll have less weeds.

**7. Pour Vinegar on Them** Douse weeds with vinegar (or even the leftover liquid from a jar of pickles) and they'll be DOA a few days later. This is a good method for exterminating weeds with long taproots, like dandelions, dock, and plantain.

**8. Eat Them** Many weeds are edible, like the young greens of dandelions, dock, and chicory, which can be eaten raw in salads or cooked like fresh spinach. Pick up a copy of the classic wild-foods field guide *Stalking the Wild Asparagus* by Euell Gibbons (\$13, amazon.com) to help you identify edible sprouts in your yard. (But when in doubt, don't eat it. Many plants are poisonous when ingested.) *Country Living* by Jeff Yeager

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## Notable News

Exciting things are happening on Apache Trail because of you! The recent sales tax increase of .2% has enabled the city to bring Apache Trail back to life! Beginning in April work will start on the Trail including new ADA sidewalk ramps and updated crosswalks. In May the Trail will be repaved from Meridian to Idaho Road. For construction updates, please visit [www.ajcity.net/AJRoads](http://www.ajcity.net/AJRoads).

For more information, please contact Apache Junction's Public Information & Marketing Communications Specialist at (480) 474 – 5080 or [chalonon@ajcity.net](mailto:chalonon@ajcity.net).

## Calendar

- May 5th is Cinco de Mayo
- May 10th is Mother's Day
- May 25th is Memorial Day
- June 21st is Father's Day
- July 4th is Independence Day. Join the City of Apache Junction's celebration.

## Programs

### Housing Rehab Funds Available

The City of Apache Junction has funding available for homeowners within the City of Apache Junction city limits. Funding is available to make improvements to owner occupied homes where one of the occupants is either elderly, under the age of 18, or disabled. Improvements can include, but is not limited to, electrical, plumbing, roofing, heating and air conditioning, and ADA accessibility improvements.

Homeowners may obtain an application either:

- 1) online at [www.ajcity.net/rehab](http://www.ajcity.net/rehab);
  - 2) by phone at (480) 474-2635; or
  - 3) by picking one up at City Hall 300 East Superstition Blvd in the Development Services Building
- Funding is available on a first come first serve basis, so applicants are advised not to wait. For more information call (480) 474-2635.

### Rock-n-Roll Paint-a-Thon

The City of Apache Junction coordinates with a national organization to conduct the Rock-n-Roll Paint-a-Thon one Saturday in October in Apache Junction. The program brings together volunteers to help paint the exterior of a low income elderly or disabled homeowner. The city is seeking homeowners who are interested in having their homes painted. If you are interested, please contact Heather at 480-474-2635. Volunteers are also being asked to contact Heather to sign up.

### Property Maintenance Standards

Did you know the city has standards and requirements for yard maintenance? For example: All weeds/grasses/shrubs higher than 10 inches shall be removed; there must be a 30 foot buffer zone free of weeds around all residential structures; and landscaping visible to the public shall not be dead, uncontrolled, damaged or uncared for.

## Busy Bee Home Maintenance Tips

Vinegar is a versatile product you should keep around the house. Besides being effective, vinegar is cheap and widely available. It is non-toxic, lasts for a long time without losing strength, and is much safer to have under your sink than bleach, ammonia, or other toxic cleaning products. Try these 7 smart uses for vinegar.

1. Cleaning windows. Mix 2 table-spoons of white vinegar with a gallon of water. Use newspaper to clean your windows. Paper towels cause streaking.
2. Fresh laundry. Toss in a cap full of white vinegar to your wash.
3. Clean carpets. Mix vinegar and warm water to battle carpet stains.
4. Wash produce. Vinegar will remove bacteria and pesticides. Mix 3 parts water with one part vinegar. Spray on produce and rinse with water.
5. Dissolve stubborn glue. Pour on some vinegar and rub. Vinegar also cuts grease.
6. Fight hiccups. Swallow one teaspoon of vinegar.
7. Deter cats. Pour vinegar around the edges of any area you want cats to stay away from like gardens, flowers, and sandboxes.

*Bees Wishes*



## RESOURCES

The Apache Junction Landfill is offering AJ residents another FREE Dump Week May 11th through 16th. Each resident, with proof of residency, may bring one load of trash to the dump for FREE! The Landfills hours are Monday through Saturday from 6:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

For further information, call Apache Junction Landfill at (480) 982-7003 or the city's Public Works Department at (480) 982-1055.

### HOUSING PROGRAM GOALS:

1. Eliminate health and safety hazards in homes;
2. Benefit low to moderate income residents; and
3. Improve neighborhoods and encourage stability.



## Housing Funnies

Stay cool this summer by visiting the city's aquatic center, multi-generational center or library

If you have a question or comment about anything written in this newsletter, please contact:  
City of Apache Junction  
Housing Division  
300 E. Superstition Blvd.  
Apache Junction, Arizona 85119  
Phone: (480) 474-2635  
Fax: (480) 474-5102  
TDD: (480) 983-0095  
[www.ajcity.net](http://www.ajcity.net)  
[hpatel@ajcity.net](mailto:hpatel@ajcity.net)  
Monday to Thursday 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**ACCESSIBILITY** The City of Apache Junction invites and welcomes people of all abilities to use our programs, sites and facilities. Any question about our service for people with disabilities can be answered by Bryant Powell, ADA Coordinator (480) 474-5066, TDD (480) 983-0095, or [adacoordinator@ajcity.net](mailto:adacoordinator@ajcity.net). Additional information may be found at [www.ajcity.net/ada](http://www.ajcity.net/ada).