

# HIDDEN TRAILS HOA NEWSLETTER

February 20, 2020

## **PATIO COVERS, TRELLISES, GAZEBOS, DECKS, ETC. (Including PALAPAS)**

The following paragraph is pulled directly from the Architectural & Design Guidelines, one of the documents that govern life here in Hidden Trails.

- The DRC has the ability to approve any exterior building alteration.
- The following materials are **NOT** acceptable for patio covers, pergolas, gazebos & are not all inclusive: Plastic, Fiberglass, Plastic webbing, Split bamboo, **REED OR STRAW-LIKE MATERIALS.**
- Structures proposed to be located in a Fuel Management Zone shall be constructed of **NON-COMBUSTIBLE MATERIALS** & are subject to review & approval by the City of Escondido.

The flame retardant applied to palm fronds which are used to make palapas is a chemical which should keep the fronds from bursting into flame for a specific period of time after the fronds are exposed to fire. Companies that sell palapas will only warrant that the flame retardant has been applied to the palm fronds correctly. **They do not guarantee that the palapa is fire proof.** When a palapa burns down, it can take your home & possibly your loved ones with it. Fire safety is the reason that the DRC will not approve palapas.

Here is some further food for thought excerpted from an article by Michael Gaertner, an architect in Galveston Tx.

“Palapas are those thatch roofed huts that look so great on a tropical island. With a roof made out of palm branches lashed to a wooden frame, they are resistant to windstorms, shed water, rustle ever so softly in the breeze and just generally send us into an immediate state of bliss. So what’s the problem? Well, every now and then one of these palapas catches on fire. If not properly treated with flame retardant they burst into flame like a grass fire after a drought. Should you be unlucky enough to be under one or nearby, the consequences could be tragic if not downright deadly.

Safety regulations require that roof materials meet certain requirements with respect to flammability. To ensure that the requirements are met, the materials have to be tested and evaluated. Manufacturers of roofing materials send their products to special laboratories to have this work done. Palm leaves are not manufactured and there are no tests to determine if a palm leaf, treated with a fire retardant, will meet the minimum requirements for safety. The sales person will tell you that the leaves are treated with a spray-on fire retardant. Fire retardants have to be re-applied to the palm leaves regularly to maintain effectiveness.

Backyard palapas should either be made from synthetic materials (manufactured to be flame retardant) or kept 25 feet or more from any nearby structure. Putting your charcoal or gas grille underneath is not a good idea.”

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