

Colonial Heights “Yard of the Year” Contest

The “Yard of the Year” contest rewards neighbors who exhibit exceptional care in maintaining and improving their property. The purpose of the competition is to encourage civic spirit and recognize Colonial Heights residents who contribute to the overall appearance of the city.

Colonial Heights residents can nominate any residential property to be considered for a “Yard of the Year” award for the Spring, Summer, and Fall seasons. Each season, the City of Colonial Heights’ Beautification Committee will evaluate nominations based on the criteria outlined below and select five winners, one from each of the City’s five voting precincts. The Committee will choose lawns that best exemplify exceptional maintenance, design, and landscaping. During the Fall season, the Beautification Committee will select the annual 1st and 2nd place prize winners of the “Yard of the Year” contest from the list of properties that have been nominated in every season of the same calendar year.

Contest Rules:

1. All residential properties, either owner-occupied or leased, within the city limits are eligible.
2. There is no contest application fee.
3. Judging and announcement of winners will occur in June, September, and November.
4. Properties will be evaluated based on the condition of their front façade and front/side yard as viewed from the street.
5. All contest applications must include a photo of the nominated property. Judges will first screen nominees based on the photos submitted and make drive-by inspections of properties to determine winners.
6. Yards improved and maintained as part of service projects by neighborhood groups, community organizations, or nonprofits are eligible.
7. The upkeep of properties can reflect the efforts of the residents themselves or that of a professional landscaper.
8. Judges may nominate properties.
9. Judges’ properties may not be nominated.
10. A property can be nominated for each season of the year. No resident may receive more than one seasonal award in any calendar year.
11. A property must be nominated for each season of the year to be eligible for the annual “Yard of the Year” 1st and 2nd place awards.

Evaluation Criteria:

The City of Colonial Heights’ Beautification Committee will use the following criteria to select the “Yard of the Year” winners.

Maintenance

- Yard is well-groomed and maintained
- Shrubs, trees, and other plants are tastefully pruned and trimmed
- Yard’s lawn and plants are healthy
- Yard is free of debris and clutter

- Buildings, fences, porches, and patios are clean and in good repair
- Clean and clear stoop, walkways, driveways, and curb

Design and Landscaping

- Tasteful arrangement of planting and other yard elements
- Good use of color and texture
- Inviting front entryway
- Use of art, potted plants, birdhouses, patio or lawn furniture, or other decoration
- Attractive display of house numbers

Disqualifying Criteria:

The presence of any code violations automatically disqualifies the property from the competition.

Code Violations include:

1. Damage to or defacement of buildings, facilities, walls, fences, structures, and personal property (§129-5)
2. Garbage, refuse, rubbish, litter, clutter, and other substances which might endanger the health, comfort or general welfare of other residents of the City (§244-6)
3. Grass, weeds, or other foreign growth which exceeds 12 inches in height (§244-7)
4. Clutter - Lumber, scrap metal, construction materials, machinery components, equipment, appliances, furniture not designed and intended for exterior use, or any similar object which is not clearly intended for outdoor use on the exterior of the premises (§244-11.1)
5. Vehicle in excess of 7,500 pounds shall be parked or left standing in any street of the City in any residential district thereof between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., provided that between the hours of 6:00 p.m. on any Saturday and 7:00 a.m. on the Monday following, such parking shall be prohibited at all times (§273-27)
6. A trailer, boat or camper, including utility trailers, boat trailers and camper trailers, whose overall length exceeds 21 feet, or whose overall width exceeds eight feet, or whose overall heights exceeds nine feet parked on any public street or right-of-way while not engaged in loading or unloading (§273-27)
7. Any inoperable motor vehicle which is not shielded or screened from view by a vehicle cover (§273-36)
8. Any tractor-trailer combinations, tractors, trailers, tanker trucks, buses, dump trucks, or concrete mixer trucks (§286-518.05)
9. More than one box truck, bucket truck, flatbed truck, or tow truck (§286-518.05)
10. More than three of the following: recreational vehicles, recreational or utility trailers, boats, or campers in the side or rear yard, behind the front line of the principal structure (§286-518.05)

11. Recreational vehicles, recreational or utility trailers, boats, or campers in the front yard (§286-518.05)
12. Anything in excess of three feet in height constructed, placed, or permanently parked within the sight triangle (§286-530.18)
13. Vegetative plantings in the sight triangle that exceed three feet (§286-530.18)
14. Illegal fence (§586-530.20)
15. Solid waste placed outside the extended side lot lines of, and in back of, the residence unless some other public place, including but not limited to a location near or in an alley in the rear of the property, has been designated for a specific residence by the Director of Public Works in the interest of the public or convenience and safety (§244-14(E))
16. Solid waste placed in the right-of way prior to 12:00 noon the day preceding the scheduled collection day or after 7:00 p.m. of the day following collection (§244-14(E))

Contest Reward:

- A “Proclamation of Achievement” will be bestowed upon all “Yard of the Year” contest winners at a regular Colonial Heights Council meeting.
- A “Yard of the Year” award sign will be provided by the City to the contest winners to be placed in their front yard for a month.
- Each seasonal winner will receive a \$50 gift card. The “Yard of the Year” 1st prize winner will receive a \$150 gift card and the runner-up will receive a \$100 gift card.
- With winners’ permission, a picture of their yard will be posted on the City’s website and social media accounts.

Nomination:

Any resident of a residential property within the limits of Colonial Heights can nominate their own yard or someone else’s yard by submitting a “Yard of the Year” contest application. Applications can be submitted online through the Recreation and Parks portal. Residents may also pick up applications at the Department of Planning and Community Development. Residents may call the Department’s main line – (804) 520-9297 – for assistance.

The submission windows for contests are as follows:

- Spring: April 1 – May 31
- Summer: July 1 - August 31
- Fall: September 1 - October 31

Judging of the contest and the announcement of winners will occur in June, September and November.

Thank you for your interest in the Colonial Heights “Yard of the Year” contest.