The Biltmore Forest Chronicle

January 2026

Emergency Alert System Updates

As you have likely seen, the Town's CodeRED system was deactivated in the month of November. This resulted from the CodeRED system being compromised by hackers. This deactivation impacted many local governments across the nation, including Buncombe County. The company that operates CodeRED took the system offline entirely to ensure minimal user data was accessed. Since we were unable to send any type of alert, the Town published information about this change on our website. Onsolve, the company that owns CodeRED, informed us that no direct user data (names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses) were compromised, but encrypted passwords were accessed. While they do not believe any passwords would have been able to be viewed, Onsolve has advised anyone who may use the same password for multiple services to change their passwords to ensure other accounts and applications are not breached.

The vendor has been in contact with the Town regarding these changes and the issues surrounding the old CodeRED system. They have transferred the Town's account to their most advanced alert system called CodeRED by Crisis24. The Town has reviewed the security protocols for this new system and feels secure in the application and the support being provided. Crisis24 has migrated much of the Town's existing data over to the new platform and the Town has used the system several times. The Town is continuing to work out specific issues with Crisis24 for our citizens, and these are mainly related to how phone numbers show up for users.

In order to ensure that you receive alerts and messages from the Town in the manner you prefer, the Town highly encourages all residents to register for CodeRED. The link and QR code, on the right, will take you to the Biltmore Forest specific account activation, and allow each person to control whether they want phone calls, texts, emails, or some combination.

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To get signed up, scan the QR Code or visit: https://accountportal.onsolve.net/biltmoreforestnc

Public Works Update

BRUSH AND LEAF COLLECTION

The Public Works Department wishes everyone a Happy New Year! We are excited to announce a return to our normal, pre-disaster brush and leaf collection efforts. The brush and leaf collection program represents one of our most labor intensive programs we offer through the Town. As most residents know, we will be wrapping up our current leaf collection season on January 15, 2026, with normal brush collection beginning January 19th on the North Route.

Since we are returning to our normal pre-Helene brush and leaf collection program, we want to take this opportunity to remind residents of the following guidelines that will make collection quicker and easier for everyone:

BRUSH COLLECTION TIPS (January 16 through October 31)

- We have two routes for brush collection – North and South. Our North route begins on the 15th of each month (or closest working day after), and the South route begins on the 30th of the month(or closest working day after). It typically takes about 4 to 5 days to run the entire route for each side.
- Placement of brush more than 5 days before the start of the route is prohibited, so please do not place brush curbside before the 10th if you live North of the golf course, or the 25th if you live South of the golf course. A calendar showing the relevant dates is distributed to each home with the Recycling calendar.
- We ask that brush gathered by ***anyone other than the resident*** (outside tree, lawn, or landscaping companies) be removed by that same company. We simply cannot keep up with all the professional landscapers that work in our Town and maintain equitable service to all.
- ***Please do not mix woody debris and leaves***. These materials are required to be segregated at our disposal facility.
- ***No more than 15 cubic yards*** of brush (approximately ½ of our brush truck capacity) should be placed curbside per round. Again, to equitably serve ALL residents, there is a monthly limit.
- Please create your piles ***neatly stacked parallel to the roadway***. Limbs should be trimmed no more than 6-feet in length. This allows our crew to operate with maximum efficiency.
- ***Be aware of where your brush is placed***. Do not place brush in the public roadway, in a blind spot, on top of storm drain inlets, in front of fire hydrants, beneath shrubbery or trees where our equipment cannot reach, or underneath power lines. Keep our team safe!
- Please only place your brush ***on the lot where it was collected***. DO NOT place brush for collection on your neighbor's lot or on Town owned community property. Be a good neighbor.
- The Town ***does not collect any stumps or logs more than 12-inches in diameter*** and 6 feet in length. If you are generating material this large or larger, please have your service company arrange for its disposal.
- Grass clippings, bamboo cuttings, and dirt or topsoil are prohibited and cannot be collected.

Thank you for your attention to these tips, and we look forward to serving you in 2026! As always, do not hesitate to call the department at 828-274-3919 with any questions.

Harry Buckner
Director of Public Works



University Researchers Testing Ticks from Biltmore Forest

Great news! The data collection by our University Team is now complete. Over the last 12 months, UNC, USC and NC State, have sent teams to Biltmore Forest to collect ticks & review our survey results from two years ago. The team collected over 300 ticks across 25 locations. The ticks are now being processed at the university testing labs. This spring, we will hold a Town Hall meeting and the University Team will report their results. Continue to remain vigilant with common sense measures to lessen your exposure - proper clothing, tick checks, DEET or other repellant use and landscape maintenance and leaf collection.

Chief's Corner

As we move into the new year of 2026 just remember our everyday safety and crime prevention tips:

- With holiday celebrations please don't drink and drive. Impaired driving costs more in damage than all other crimes combined. Today, impaired driving is a preventable crime. With services like Uber, getting a ride is easier than ever. Call someone before driving so you won't have to make that call from jail after driving.
- Always be aware of your surroundings. We are all in hurry with the hustle and bustle of life and holidays but do not let your guard down. Focusing on your surroundings and staying alert will reduce your chances of becoming a victim.
- Be aware of solicitation scams both online and over the phone. If something seems too good to be true then it probably is. Anyone that contacts you asking for personal or banking information should be verified before giving this information. If it is a legitimate call they will have no problem with you calling them back or making some verification. Scammers will try to make you feel pressured or hurried into giving this information, do not fall into their trap.
- Always remove your valuables and secure your vehicle at night. Even if your car is in your driveway, it is a prime target to be rummaged through by a criminal looking to score. Most of the time if the door is locked and there is no valuable items in sight the thief will move on looking for an easier target.
- Investigate the feasibility of a security camera or alarm system. Prices have come down recently and these systems are very inexpensive for the returned amount of protection. No system is 100% guaranteed to prevent a crime but we have solved many incidents by starting with camera footage or a picture of the suspect.
- If you see something say something. Please call the police department with any suspicious activity you might observe. It is always better to be safe than sorry and many times your call might prevent someone from becoming a victim.

As always feel free to contact the police department for our crime prevention suggestions or with any other need that you might have.

Thanks,

Chief Chris Beddingfield
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Town of Biltmore Forest
P.O. Box 5352
Asheville, NC 28813

AT&T Fiber Optic Project in Biltmore Forest

AT&T has started an underground, fiber-optic installation in Biltmore Forest. This project began the week of December 15 and is anticipated to last for approximately 6-8 weeks. The Board of Commissioners initially heard from AT&T in May 2025 regarding this project and requested more information and details before agreeing to their proceeding. AT&T returned in August 2025 with revised project details and more increased underground utility research that received approval from the Town. While AT&T has started this work, the Town is remaining vigilant with their work to installation process goes smoothly. We have provided significant information and on-site work to ensure that AT&T's subcontractors do not damage any other utilities or private property.

AT&T distributed door hangars to residents prior to work beginning. This information included a direct contact number for anyone with concerns or complaints about the project. The Town encourages anyone to contact the number below if there are any issues related to this project whatsoever. If appropriate actions are not taken to mitigate any concerns, please let the Town know so we can attempt to help rectify the issue. **The phone number to call is (877) 245-6660.**

Utility Bill Schedule of Fees Changes begin January 1st

Beginning January 1st, 2026 the late charges within the Schedule of Fees will be updated. The Town approved changes to the Schedule of Fees at the December Commissioners' Meeting on 12/9/25: $15.00 flat fee for the first occurrence; $50.00 for each occurrence after. The fees will reset back to $15.00 for all residents on July, 1st each year. This coincides with The Town's fiscal year. For any questions or concerns, please visit biltmoreforest.org for more information.

Friendly reminder to those who mail in payments:

Mailing address is: PO BOX 5352, Asheville, NC 28813.

Physical address is: 355 Vanderbilt Road, Biltmore Forest, NC 28803

2025 Tax Reminder

Real estate and personal property taxes are due by January 5, 2026. If there has been a recent mortgage update, property sale, or deed transfer, please verify with the Town that taxes have been paid in full prior to January 5, 2026 to avoid late penalties. Payment arrangements are available, with the approval of the Tax Collector, and must be in place by February 1, 2026.