

Facts about our Street Lights

At a recent board meeting of Historical Preservation, Inc., our neighborhood association, the upcoming completion of the street lighting project was discussed, and it was decided to publish some facts regarding our lights in The Herald. We've had a large influx of newcomers who may not know about our lights – and some long term neighbors who may just be curious. It is the largest, in dollar amount, capital improvement to the neighborhood undertaken to date by HPI. Like everything else in Heritage Hills, our lights have a story. . .

- The neighborhood will have approximately 150 street lights when the latest phase of the lighting project is completed in the next few months.
- This project began in the early 1980s with the installation of lights on our east-west streets and around Harn Park. In the late 1990s, the neighborhood began installing lights on the north-south streets east of Shartel. Hudson and Harvey were completed in 1999. The last remaining lights are in the process of being installed.
- Each light today costs around \$6,000.00, including installation. This represents a significant capital improvement to the neighborhood over the past 25 years.
- The color of the poles is, appropriately, “Pole Green”, a color standard recognized by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. They get repainted every few years.
- Our light fixtures were custom designed by the neighborhood in the early 1980s to be reminiscent of lights that were in downtown Oklahoma City at the time many of our homes were built – based on old photographs. They are made by the Spring City Electrical Manufacturing Co. of Spring City, PA. They are heavy cast iron, requiring two men to lift them into place on their bases – or a portable crane.
- The poles are 18” in diameter at the base. At the top of the globe, the lights are 13’ high – a height selected specifically to coexist with our neighborhood trees. The concrete base, or foundation, for each light is 2’ in diameter and extends almost 3’ underground, and weighs about 1,500 pounds.
- The lights have been installed under a Revocable Permit from the city, since they are on city easements, and have received a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historical Preservation and Landmark Commission, as well as written permission of individual homeowners whose property is adjacent to the lights.

- Lights adjacent to private property – that is all of them except for those on city owned medians and parks – are each connected to a nearby home’s electrical system. Homeowners, by perpetual contract, have agreed to pay the incremental increase in their electrical bill. The fixtures, while large, only contain a single bulb, and are the electrical equivalent of leaving a table lamp on all night.
- Historical Preservation, Inc., our neighborhood association, owns the lights, and is responsible for all routine maintenance. If you notice a light out at night, or burning all day, or otherwise damaged, please contact our neighbor Buz Goodrich (525-8919) and he will come fix the problem – sometimes himself and sometimes by calling our contracted electricians. Do not attempt any repairs or bulb replacement yourself! Special commercial bulbs are used in these lights to give a pleasing glow – Buz keeps them in stock.
- Homeowners may landscape around the light, and many have, increasing their beauty. Sometimes the lights are decorated by homeowners for holidays like July 4th, and some hold banners advertising Home Tour on specially designed standards. The neighborhood association puts wreaths on each light during the Christmas holiday season. Please do not put any other signs or displays on the lights (such as “lost pet” posters).
- Homeowners who have had lights connected to their electrical systems have signed a deed addendum to their property, filed in the county deed records, that stipulates ownership and certain other mutual requirements related to the lights. These deed addendums transfer to new owners in perpetuity.
- A homeowner may not move, paint or change in any way the light adjacent to his or her property without express written permission of Historical Preservation, Inc. This includes accidentally cutting the buried power line between the light and electrical connection to the homeowner’s electrical system. A homeowner may not disconnect a light, except temporarily for electrical service to their house.
- If a homeowner is experiencing electrical problems thought to be related to a light, please contact Buz, and he will have our contract electricians trouble-shoot the situation. Be advised that the homeowner may be liable for the invoice from our contract electrician if the problem turns out to be unrelated to our light.
- If the buried power line between the house and the light is cut by the homeowner, or a contractor in the homeowner’s employ, the neighborhood will have the cut repaired at the homeowners expense. The neighborhood will issue an invoice, with a copy of the bill from the neighborhood’s electrical contractor to the homeowner for payment. Sprinkler installation seems to be the biggest culprit of

this, but landscape work and installation of invisible dog fencing have also caused cut lines.

- If you are considering installation of a sprinkler system, or any other trenching or digging in your yard and a light fixture is nearby, please attempt to locate the buried power line between the light and your residence, and notify any contractors of the buried power line. Some of the lines, particularly to the older east-west street lights, can be as shallow as 6", and all become shallow near residences. The neighborhood (again call Buz Goodrich) may be able to help locate the buried power line. If our electrical contractor's service is required to locate the line, the homeowner requesting the service will be invoiced. This will be cheaper than an emergency repair.
- All of the newer lights (those installed on the north-south streets since 1999) have photocells – electric eyes that turn the lights on at night and off in the day – installed either on the adjacent house, or at a location nearby, which can make finding the path of the buried power line easier. The earlier lights have photocells on the fixtures themselves, and sometimes it's not even clear which house they are connected to. Please call Buz to assist.
- The locations of the individual light fixtures were planned out from the beginning to create a pleasing "boulevard" effect, with lights alternating back and forth across the streets. The two newer phases of the lighting project have continued this placement plan. Finally, each light has been specifically located in its place to enhance the aesthetic sense of belonging. The biggest compliment we get is people believing that these lights have been here since the neighborhood began.