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# VDOT tests toll cameras

The Virginia Department of Transportation is currently testing several new cameras recently installed at county toll booths along Powhite Parkway. The cameras are designed to catch motorists who speed through the booths without paying tolls.

"The toll violation cameras became necessary because we were losing more than \$1.4 million annually [statewide] in toll violations," said Deborah Brown, VDOT's director of innovative finance and revenue operations.

Beginning early next year, toll violation notices will be sent out to motorists who don't pay at the booths. Notices will include the date of the violation and a photo of the license plate taken at the time of the violation.

Violators will be asked to pay the toll amount plus a \$25 administrative fee. There are appeals procedures to follow for cases of mistaken identity, sold or stolen cars and leased or rental vehicles.

To ensure the privacy of motorists, all records related to violations will be purged within 30 days of being paid.

Motorists with three or more violations who receive violation notices, but do not remit payments, will be subject to civil fines and could have their vehicle registration blocked when they attempt to renew at the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles.

"The good news is that the deployment of this technology will allow more toll facilities to provide 'express lanes,' which do not rely on gates or other physical barriers to ensure payment of tolls. This will reduce congestion associated with toll plazas," said Brown.

Smart Tag users will be able to go through many booths without stopping because of lowered gates.

## Mall sued over stabbing

A former employee of April's Treasure in Chesterfield Towne Center is suing the mall for a stabbing that allegedly took place there in November 2004.

According to court reports, DeJean Thomas was working at April's Treasure on Nov. 26 that year when she had a verbal altercation

with a co-worker. The co-worker allegedly called two men who followed Thomas from the store when she left during a break. Thomas says she was stabbed in the stomach by one of the men.

In her lawsuit, Thomas alleges the mall was negligent because it was obligated to "provide adequate security, provide a reasonably safe environment, and to protect [her] from such an assault." Additionally, she is suing for "intentional infliction of emotional distress." She is seeking \$100,000 in damages.

"We really don't have anything to say about [the lawsuit]," said Bill Siebenaler, mall manager. "It involved two employees at a store. It had nothing to do with the mall."

April's Treasure and Macerich Partnership, LP are also named as defendants in the case, which was filed in Chesterfield County Circuit Court earlier this month.

## Lowe's land condemnation

The Commonwealth Transportation Commissioner of Virginia is seeking the condemnation of land (.014 acre) owned by Lowe's at Hull Street and Winterpock roads. The commissioner says the land is needed to make improvements along that section of Hull Street Road.

The state is using the condemnation process because the parties have been unable to agree on a purchase price for the land.

## Flasher wanted

Police are searching for a man who is wanted in connection with four indecent exposure incidents that occurred in Midlothian within the last four months.

Police said the suspect has exposed himself to teenage girls in stores and in public areas. The incidents occurred at the Wal-Mart off Midlothian Turnpike on Aug. 18 and Nov. 20, the Burlington Coat Factory on Midlothian Turnpike on Oct. 24 and at the intersection of Pavilion Place and Waterford Cove Road on Oct. 30.

The suspect is described as a white male who is in his late teens or early 20s. He is about 6 feet tall and has black hair.

Anyone with information should call the Chesterfield County Police Department at 748-1251 or Crime Solvers at 748-0660.

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Think **SAFE**-ty  
before hosting  
a teen  
holiday party.



## Tips for parents hosting a teen party.

- Have a clear no-alcohol rule.
- Set a party time, including starting and ending times.
- Make some rooms in your home off limits to guests.
- Walk through the party area frequently, making your presence known.
- Don't let teens go back and forth to their cars.
- Ask uninvited guests to leave immediately.

**Keep your teen's party safe and alcohol-free.**

Substance Abuse Free Environment Inc. (SAFE) is a nonprofit community coalition in Chesterfield County. Its mission is to engage our community in working together to prevent substance abuse. For more information, call (804) 796-7100 or visit our Web site at [www.chesterfieldsafe.org](http://www.chesterfieldsafe.org).

# Townhouse project passes BOS after drainage solved

By Greg Pearson  
STAFF WRITER

A 121-unit townhouse development adjacent to Amberleigh in the Route 360 corridor east of Courthouse Road was approved by the Chesterfield Board of Supervisors after the applicant pledged to improve the drainage of one neighbor's driveway. Several supervisors expressed their concern when they saw photos of water pouring over the driveway following heavy rain, causing Bluestone Real Estate LLC to quickly huddle with Director of Environmental Engineering Director Dick McElfresh for a solution.

About an hour later, the applicant agreed to redesign the driveway so it would remain above the water at the 100 year storm level. The water drains to Gregory's Pond and then to Falling Creek.

The staff report said there "are no existing or anticipated on- or offsite drainage or erosion problems." The 29-acre rezoning request may have been in jeopardy as the board questioned the staff report. Both the planning commission and the planning staff had recommend board approval.

The upscale townhouses are expected to add another 64 students to Chesterfield

schools, and Bluestone agreed to proffer the county's maximum of \$15, 600 to pay for the cost of county services needed. Bluestone also proffered to pay for installing a traffic light at the intersection of Route 360 and Amberleigh Boulevard, but so far, the Virginia Department of Transportation has not agreed that a light is necessary.

## Otterdale development approved

By a 4-1 vote, the board also approved another 36 single-family homes on Otterdale Road near where Magnolia Green is to be built. Developer Vernon McClure plans on connecting this 18-acre parcel to Westerleigh, which the board approved for 314 single-family homes on 157.6 acres in early 2004.

Supervisor Art Warren agreed with the planning commission and wanted a denial of the rezoning because of the lack of adequate roads in the area and overcrowded schools. Earlier this year, the commission voted 3-0 with two abstentions against the rezoning. The planning staff, however, said the rezoning met the comprehensive plan and recommended approval.

New Midlothian Supervisor Don Sowder