

The Lagoon Is Open To Everyone, But Not Forever

May 8, 2019 by John Cotey



Aquatic activities, sandy beaches and the crystal clear water of the Crystal Lagoons® amenity by Metro Lagoons at Epperson are available (at a discount) to the public for a limited time.

One of the most asked — if not the most asked — questions in Wesley Chapel has an answer, and it is yes.

Or more accurately: YES!

The Crystal Lagoons® amenity by Metro Lagoons at Epperson (off Curley Rd.) is open, and you can use it, too.

At least for now.

The first of its kind in the United States, the first shining jewel of Metro Development Group's Connected City project, is already drawing huge crowds to its crystal clear water, sandy beach and variety of activities.

For a limited time, the public is welcome to attend for \$20 per person, up from \$10 in early April. The discounted rate will be in effect through Memorial Day, when it goes up to \$25 per person.

The lagoon has been allowing a limited number of non-Epperson residents in each day since April 8, and tickets are available while they last at LagoonInformation.com.

If you don't pre-order and decide to just show up, you run the risk of being shut out. According to Eric Wahlbeck, the managing director of Metro Lagoons, there have already been sellouts on almost every day with good weather, with more to come as summer rolls in.

"It's been awesome to watch," he says.



The lagoon is letting in 200-300 non-residents a day, and drawing nearly 2,000 visitors (including Epperson residents) on busy days, Wahlbeck added.

"It's limited, so we can control the numbers for our residents," he said, "but so far, it has been hugely popular. This is only a test market, so we are still trying to see what the facility can handle while affording the residents their space."

In time, the lagoon will be limited to residents only, who pay a \$25 a month fee per household to use the facility. Until Epperson is built out, the admission of non-residents will help supplement the costs of maintaining the lagoon.

Epperson currently has 1,200 residents (in 350 homes), with another 165 homes currently under contract or being built, which will bring the resident count to 1,800 within six months.

So far, those living in Epperson don't seem to have a problem sharing their most desirable amenity. Wahlbeck says he hasn't had to sort out any problems involving non-residents so far.

"There was a lot of fear in the beginning," he says. "But, since we started it, it has gone really well. We have made sure to make sure it's not a free-for-all. And there will be plenty of resident-only parties."

Please note that the lagoon doesn't allow any outside food, drink or coolers inside, nor are guests or residents allowed to bring their own chairs. Wahlbeck says the lagoon has more than 600 lounge chairs, a grab-and-go café for food, as well as a rotating schedule of food trucks, a bar that serves beer and liquor, kayaks and paddleboards for rent and, well, the clearest water around, thanks to a patented water-filtration process that uses up to 100 times less chemicals than a conventional swimming pool and 30 times less water than a golf course.

While not completely ready to open at our press time, Wahlbeck even hinted that the much-anticipated swim-up bar and tiki hut could be ready to go as this issue hits your mailboxes.

"There's no reason to bring anything, we've got you covered," he says. "Well, you might want to bring a few bucks."

The lagoon pavilion area also boasts what Wahlbeck says is a "really cool" 18-foot by 12-foot LED screen above its stage, which will be used for viewing sporting events, like the Kentucky Derby, and even television shows like "Jeopardy" — he says some residents are organizing a Tuesday night "Jeopardy" watch party.

There also are activities scheduled every weekend. Last Sunday, the lagoon held a cornhole tournament, there is a Kentucky Derby party planned and there's always plenty of music. There also are aquatic activities planned, and the lagoon has a giant inflatable water slide like the one at the Tradewinds Resort on St. Pete Beach.

"It's the same idea as Disney resorts," he says. "You come for the water, but there are plenty of activities to take part in as well."

Although it has had a few starts and stops due to permitting and other issues, the lagoon is now pretty much 100-percent functional.

Following a few grand openings, as well as its share of controversy, Wahlbeck says the lagoon has evolved into everything Metro said it would be when it first introduced the concept back in 2014.

If you want to check it out, hurry over to LagoonInformation.com and get your tickets now!

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