

# Phoenix Community Eruv Inc.

## Eruv Guidelines

### QUICK INFO

The Phoenix Community Eruv Inc. provides a halachically reliable eruv for the benefit of the Jewish community in the North Central Phoenix area please refer to the map below for current boundaries. Rabbinic guidance is given by Rabbi Nota Greenblatt, שליט"א. PCE is an independent community organization, not associated with any synagogue or other community institution.

✧ PCE is supported by donations from the community to operate and maintain the Eruv. PCE is a 501.c.3 organization. The suggested contribution for the PCE is \$100 per household. To ensure the tax-deductibility of your donation, make your check payable to:

**Phoenix Community Eruv**

Mail it to: **c/o Beth Joseph Congregation**  
**515 E. Bethany Home Rd.**  
**Phoenix, AZ 85012**

✧ The eruv is inspected before every Shabbos (usually on Friday). We cannot know ahead of time if the eruv will be up. If we ever know in advance that it will be down, we always announce that as soon as possible. Never put yourself in a position where you "must" have the eruv "up". Learn how to cope if the eruv is "down". To volunteer to check the Eruv please contact Rabbi Michael Dubitsky 602-277-8858 [bethjoseph@aol.com](mailto:bethjoseph@aol.com)

✧ As with any area of halachah, instruction and guidance should be sought from a competent Rabbi. We offer the following general guidelines to help you formulate questions:

- If the eruv is "up", items may be carried in the "public domain".
  - NOT items which are otherwise impermissible (muktzah - e.g. umbrella).
  - Only items needed for that Shabbos may be carried (e.g. a siddur to shul is OK, but NOT sneakers for when Tisha B'Av falls out Saturday night).
  - Ball playing is a particular issue for Rabbinic guidance.
- Never assume that the eruv is up; check a reliable source before carrying on Shabbos
  - Do not assume that "the eruv is always OK."
  - Our weekly inspections often reveal needs for repair.
  - Do not rely on the eruv if it has not been inspected.
  - There are special concerns when Friday (and Thursday) is (are) Yom Tov.
- Even if the eruv has been declared up for a Shabbos, do not rely on the eruv if there are damaging winds (e.g. trees or wires down in the region of the eruv).

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## I. WHAT IS AN ERUV?

The Torah permits carrying within an enclosed "private" area on Shabbos and Yom Kippur. Such an area enclosed and considered "private" may vary in size from a small home to an entire community. The Talmud specifies both the definitions of an enclosure and how to render an entire area a private domain. All these conditions have been met in order to create the Phoenix Community Eruv, and it will therefore be permissible, within the area described below and according to the conditions herein detailed, to carry on Shabbos and Yom Kippur.

At the same time, it continues to be the responsibility of parents to teach their children the Halachos and restrictions of carrying on Shabbos. It is only because of the Eruv that we are allowed to carry within the area contained in the Eruv. Everyone, including children, should be aware of the proper Halachic behavior in areas where there is no Eruv.

## II. ERUV GUIDELINES

### *A. THE ERUV: A SOURCE FOR COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT*

The Eruv will be helpful to families with young children and to individuals who are unable to walk, as carriages, strollers and wheelchairs may be wheeled within the area of an Eruv. Others will find it convenient to bring a Talis or Siddur to Shul, or a Sefer to a class or Shiur, or to carry glasses, house keys, water or other permitted items necessary for Shabbos. Please note that items required for use after Shabbos may not be carried on Shabbos. **It is the obligation of each individual who wishes to use the Eruv to ascertain, every Friday, that the Eruv is indeed functional. It is not adequate for one to assume that the Eruv is functional if there have been no storms or major adverse weather conditions during the previous week. Many factors can invalidate an Eruv, and only specific authoritative confirmation on Friday validates the Eruv for use each week.**

### *B. THE LIMITS OF ERUV ENHANCEMENT*

The purpose of the Eruv is the enhancement of Shabbos observance, not its diminution. Therefore, the existence of the Eruv should not be considered a dispensation to enter places not consistent with maintaining the sanctity and spiritual character of Shabbos. Whether a community does or does not have an Eruv, one may not enter the following on Shabbos: business establishments, stores, offices, places of entertainment (movies, etc. - even if payment has been made in advance) and libraries. The following activities are never permitted on Shabbos: athletic activities, bicycle riding, tennis, swimming, skating, sledding, ball playing, watering the lawn, gardening, playing with water, putting trash out for pickup, picking flowers, fruits, etc., playing in a sprinkler, playing in a sandbox, bringing gifts to hosts on Shabbos or Yom Tov, mailing letters, etc.

Even within the Eruv there are a number of common articles which, because they are classified as Muktzah, may not be carried or handled on Shabbos at home. Following is a partial catalogue of Muktzah items. All other questions regarding Muktzah should be addressed to each person's Rabbi.

1. Any item whose main use is prohibited on the Shabbos, e.g. hammer, writing implement, wallet, purse, pocketbook, etc.
2. Any item which is neither food nor a utensil that has a practical use on the Shabbos, e.g. money, animal, stone, credit card, etc.
3. Any item so valuable that one expends extra care for its safety, e.g. passport, check, expensive painting, merchandise set aside for sale, etc.
4. Any item attached to its source of growth at the onset of Shabbos but which fell from its source of growth during Shabbos, etc.
5. Any item which cannot be used on Shabbos or whose intended use is for after Shabbos, e.g. car key or office key.
6. An umbrella may not be carried even if opened before Shabbos or Yom Tov.
7. Gardening equipment, tools, athletic equipment and sleds.

### **C. THE ERUV MAY BECOME TEMPORARILY INVALID**

In order to assure that no joyous event be marred by disappointment or, G-d forbid, inadvertent transgression of Hilchos Shabbos, no Kiddush, Bar Mitzvah, Aufruf or other Shabbos affair should be planned with the assumption that the Eruv will be operational, as last minute storms, telephone company construction, etc. could render the Eruv invalid. Therefore, since events must be planned far in advance, all celebrations should be planned as if there were no Eruv. Food should be brought to the location of a Simcha before Shabbos, a copy of a Bar/Bat Mitzvah boy/girl's D'rasha should be brought to Shul before Shabbos, etc.

### **D. WEEKLY ERUV INSPECTION**

The Eruv will usually be inspected on Thursday afternoon. Repairs will be made on Friday. An official voice message on the "Eruv Status Line" (602-264-ERUV) will notify everyone of the Eruv's status each week. In case of a major storm beginning anytime after preparation of the message-generally around 3 PM on Friday, (or after 3 PM on Wednesday, when Yom Tov precedes Shabbos), the Eruv should be presumed to be non-operational. Heavy rains, wind, snow, or other weather conditions can frequently invalidate an Eruv. To eliminate the chance of inappropriate reliance on a damaged Eruv, it is best to assume that the Eruv is invalid in the aftermath of any severe storm.

Multiple dwellings (e.g. two or three family houses, apartment houses, etc.) should have an additional Eruv Hatzairos (merging of courtyards), made without a Bracha, in order to permit carrying from apartment to apartment if the community Eruv fails. An Eruv Hatzairos is appropriate in a courtyard, hall or staircase that is shared by the residents of a two or three family house, condominium, or apartment house because it is forbidden to carry from the private dwellings into the shared area on Shabbos or Yom Kippur. The Eruv Hatzairos is a procedure whereby all the dwellings opening into the shared area are considered as owned by a single consortium. This is achieved by each of the residents placing Matzah in one of the dwelling units, symbolizing that all participants are legal residents of that unit. Guidance and assistance in establishing this type of Eruv is available from each person's Rabbi.

The Phoenix Community Eruv is a joint project of all of the North central Phoenix Orthodox Congregations and a beneficiary of a generous grant of the Jewish Community Foundation.