



# City of Oak Park Heights

Tree City USA

Second Quarter 2009 Newsletter

## Inside this issue:

What is Included In Trash Pickup	2
Paper Recycling	2
Notes from Public Works	3
City Meetings	3
State Frontage Road Update	4
Pet Owner Reminders	4
Is a Building Permit Required	5
House Numbers Are Required	5
Carbon Monoxide Alarms Required	5
Police Files	6
Arborist News	7
Reserve a City Park Shelter	8

## City Hall Facility Update

Following an extensive Pre-qualification process to develop a listing of general contractors with similar and documented work histories, the City received ten bids for the construction of the City Hall Facility. Base bids ranged from \$6.3 to \$6.8 million and with several possible alternate options. Unfortunately, these bid amounts were above the architect's estimate of \$5,370,000.

The City Council examined options for re-bidding, but it was determined that such action would not have necessarily guaranteed a dollar-for-dollar savings and/or would have significantly reduced the square footage lessening the required efficiencies of the total project as intended.

On April 6, 2009 the City Council awarded the City Hall Facility Contract to Jorgensen Construction for a base-bid amount of \$6,319,000 and various alternates totaling \$39,500 including the use of Andersen Windows. To make up for this shortfall, the City Council will be applying available reserve funds to fund the construction.

The City will be holding a ceremonial "Groundbreaking" event on **May 12 at 6:30 pm** at the City Hall location – 14168 Oak Park Boulevard North. Full construction is estimated to begin in May once all contracts are executed and final permits are issued.

## Traffic and Trail Patterns Near City Hall During Construction

In order to better ensure the safety of the construction crews working at the City Hall Facility as well as the general public, it is anticipated that the eastern entrance into the City Hall Facility, located at the intersection of 57<sup>th</sup> Street and O'Brien Ave. will be closed during the construction and will re-open in summer 2010. The City apologizes for any inconvenience.

Additionally, the east-west walking trail between Oldfield Ave. and Oakgreen Ave (lying just north of the City Hall Facility project) will also be impacted by Project. Temporary closures will be setup to facilitate the installation of the geothermal well field. Exact timing on this temporary closure is unknown, but is also anticipated to be this summer (2009).



## What's included in trash pickup?

In addition to the typical garbage and recycling pickup, the City also covers the disposal of yard waste, large household items, and 'white-goods' such as televisions, refrigerators, couches, chairs, desks, water-heaters, stoves, dishwashers, dryers, etc. In order to have these items picked up in a timely fashion, please contact Judy Tetzlaff at City Hall, 651-439-4439, at least two days prior to collection day so that the special truck may be dispatched to your home.



Some items are not included in your monthly fee are extra bags of garbage not placed in your container. The City's waste hauler, Veolia, will bill you \$1.50 per bag. Some other items that are picked up for a fee are carpet, sinks, toilets and construction debris. You will be billed by Veolia at a regulated rate as monitored by the City.

In the event you receive any billing from Veolia, except for the Annual Washington County Environmental Charge, please contact the City Administrator at 651-439-4439 to ensure that the billing is correct.

### REMINDER!!

Waste and Recyclable pick-up is every THURSDAY, unless the week contains one of the six holidays – New Years Day, Memorial Day, 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas. During those weeks, collection will fall on FRIDAY.

## Wanted: more recyclable paper

It's time to rethink recycling. You can recycle more kinds of paper than you think. Approximately 21% of household garbage in the Twin Cities metro area is recyclable paper. This includes items such as unwanted mail, office and school paper, phone books, magazines, catalogs, cardboard and other boxes, and newspapers.

Why does paper recycling matter? The demand for recyclable paper is greater than the supply. Recyclers and manufacturers in Minnesota and the Midwest are looking for more paper, because they can't get enough of it!

Demand for recycled paper is high for several reasons:

- We're using more paper than ever. Global paper use is more than six times greater than what it was in 1950.
- Paper mills need recycled paper to produce new products. Recycled paper supplies more than 37% of the raw materials used to make new paper products in the U.S.
- Paper is a valuable export. In 2003, more than 25% of U.S. recycled paper was exported, much of it to China and sold overseas. It is expected that by 2007 one-third of recycled paper will be exported.

So why can't supply keep up? Recycling collection rates in the Twin Cities metro area have been at a stand-still since 1998. Many factors contribute to this, but one of the main reasons is that many people are uncertain about what items are recyclable, particularly what types of paper products.



## Notes from Public Works

### Pot holes on city streets

Pot hole repairs will begin when the streets are swept and dried and road restrictions are off. This has been a very rough winter with numerous hard frosts and freeze thaw cycles. Please watch for workers and staff working around vehicles and in the streets to avoid accidents. Slowing down helps us all be safer.

### Damage to the curb from the snow plow

Snow plow operations are done by an outside contractor. Minor damage is addressed by the city with placement of black dirt and new seed along curbs. Damage to mail boxes or major damage is addressed to the contractor. The home owner is responsible for watering new areas of sod if needed.

### Roadway and right-of-way trim and maintenance requirements

The City of Oak Park Heights, like most cities, has road right of way and pavement placed for neighborhood use, transportation and emergency access. The adjacent homeowner maintains this boulevard portion of the city property in exchange for the added yard and lawn use.

#### Homeowner Responsibility

Hedges and bushes should never be planted within 10 feet of the road. If older plantings have started to encroach in to this area they must be removed or pruned and maintained so that there is always a minimum of 6 feet of boulevard available on the side of the street and/or so that visibility is maintained.

The homeowner is responsible for mowing and controlling the grass in the boulevard area. Low level plantings may be placed and maintained in the boulevard, however, they must never interfere with visibility of signage or other traffic. The city has no liability if they are damaged. If these become a nuisance they will require removal. The city does some snow sod repairs each spring by adding black dirt and grass seed only. The homeowner must water the repairs as part of their maintenance requirements.

Utility and road work in the right of way requires contractor restoration of the grass. There is no claim available for other types of plantings. Irrigation lines in this area are strictly the homeowner's responsibility.

Do not fill or plant items in a drainage area. These are designed to move storm water off site at a controlled rate to purify the water, remove contaminants and avoid erosion or damage downstream. The city must calculate the total amount of water and speed at which that water will move during a rain event to protect the lakes and rivers around us. All storm water is discharged to the St. Croix River. Please re-

### Sewer lines

The city contracts for main line sanitary sewer cleaning and televising to minimize the potential of sewer backups. The sewer line between the house and the city lines is the homeowner's responsibility. We notify homeowners if we find areas of concern when we televise city lines, but our view from the pipe is pretty limited. Please avoid flushing grease or solid items to your sewers. The grease solidifies in the lines and plastic and solid items can start a dam that eventually can block the line. No one is happy when that happens. The city will check the city lines if you are having problems and clear the city line if any issues are found there.

## State Frontage Road Update

For several years the City has requested that the Minnesota Department of Transportation provide an adequate repair to the south frontage road (60th Street), as the roadway condition has lapsed into an unsafe condition and is well beyond simple pothole patching. This is a State of Minnesota roadway.

As agreed by the Minnesota Department of Transportation, this frontage road will receive a two inch mill and overlay this summer (likely August according to MnDOT) from a point ap-

proximately 1,000 feet east of Osgood Avenue to Norell Avenue.

To hasten this project, the City of Oak Park Heights has committed to accepting the plowing responsibilities for as long as the road does not revert to its current condition. While the proposed project is not a full re-construction, the outcome of the project is expected to result in a surface that is similar to the north frontage road.

## Attention Pet Owners

### Leash Law Reminder

The City of Oak Park Heights has a leash law in effect that prohibits pets from running at large. Any dog or cat that is off the premises of the owner and not under the physical control (by leash or by voice) of the owner or another designated person is in violation of this Ordinance.

When you are out walking your pet, please remember to bring a plastic bag. Pet owners are required by City Ordinance to clean up pet waste on public and private property. Removal and proper disposal of pet waste helps keep our City clean and healthy.

### Pet Licenses

All dogs and cats in the City for more than 30 days are required to have a City Pet License. There is no charge for this service and it could save your pet from a trip to the animal shelter. Bring proof of your pet's rabies vaccination to City Hall to receive a pet license and tag.

## Yellow Ribbon Communities

The Minnesota National Guard has pioneered a program which employers community leaders to synchronize efforts and build an enduring network of support for service members and families throughout the deployment cycle. The Yellow Ribbon Community Campaign is a reminder that supporting service members cannot end when they return home from deployment and the yellow ribbons are untied. A Yellow Ribbon City develops an action plan and organizes groups to support military families.

The City of Oak Park Heights would like to form a Citizen's Committee to start working on an action plan. If you are interested in serving on the Citizen's Committee, please contact Councilmember Mary McComber by e-mail at [marymcomber@aol.com](mailto:marymcomber@aol.com) or by phone at 651-351-7879.

## Spring has finally sprung!

If you are thinking about a home improvement project, please remember to get your improvement permit.

Decks, fences, pools/hot tubs, roofing, siding, fireplaces, storage sheds, driveway alteration, parking pads, additions and window replacements are just some examples of projects that require a permit.

Check to be sure your general contractor has applied for and been issued all the appropriate permits for the project. With the issuance of the permit, the contractor will receive a yellow inspection record card. This card should be posted in a location that it is visible from the street and accessible to the inspector. On this card the inspector will record all of the inspections made and when they were made.

If you aren't sure if your project requires a permit, contact Building Official, Jim Butler at 651-275-9590 or email him at [jbutler@cityofoakparkheights.com](mailto:jbutler@cityofoakparkheights.com).

## House Numbers Are Required

Not only are house numbers required by the City's Zoning Ordinance, they are essential for people to find you. Not only is it important that the pizza delivery person find you, it is critical for emergency response groups, such as the police department, fire department and emergency medical responders to assist you as quickly as possible.

To make it easy to locate your home, your house numbers should be:

- o A minimum of 3 inches in height
- o Made of a durable, weather resistant material such as metal, glass, plastic, etc.

- o A color that stands out with the house or background upon which they are placed such as dark numbers against a light background
- o Easily and clearly seen from the street when approached from any direction. You may want to consider having the numbers coated with a reflective material for better visibility at dark or locating them beneath a light source
- o Attached to your home or a sign post that faces the street

If your home does not have house numbers on it, please make it a priority to get them put on today.

## Carbon Monoxide Alarms — Now Required!!!

Minnesota Statute 299F.50 requires approved carbon monoxide (CO) alarms in all single family homes and multifamily apartment units with effective dates as follows:

- All new construction single family homes and multi-family dwellings where building permits were issued on or after January 1, 2007
- All existing single family homes effective August 1, 2008
- All existing multi-family or apartment dwelling units effective August 1, 2009

Every residential dwelling shall have one approved and fully operational carbon monoxide alarm installed within 10-feet of each room lawfully used for sleeping. Installation shall be as specified by the manufacturer of the alarm and not located in "dead air" pockets such as room corners, at the junction of walls & ceilings or within 36-inches of ventilation ducts. Combination smoke/carbon monoxide alarm devices are available at many retail outlets; be sure to select an approved device.

## Oak Park Heights Police Files

### From the desk of Chief Brian DeRosier



The police department has been busy during the past few months since the last newsletter with training and daily calls for service.

The department received a hand-held thermal imaging device and training at no cost to the city through grant funding from the Federal Government. Officer Zwach attended three days of training to become certified and return to the department to train all the officers on the department. The device detects differences in temperature and shows the operator a black and white image through a video display. This allows the device to be fully functional in daylight and darkness. The device will be utilized by the department in various ways including evidence recovery, search and rescue events in a disaster, searches for missing or lost persons, suspect detection, and other benefits to the citizens.

I attended two two-day conferences in Washington DC at no cost to the city, under other Federal Grants. The Center for Missing and Exploited Children, the Department of Justice, Department of Homeland Security, and FEMA presented valuable information as well as assistance available to the department if needed.

I have placed a high priority on ensuring our officers are well trained and updated to provide us all with a professional effective police department, minimizing the city exposure to liability. Our officers complete re-certifications and training on a regular basis. Some recent training the officers have received includes: juvenile criminal justice issues, alcohol intoxilyzer re-certifications, investigative techniques and evidence processing, hands on defensive tactics and subject control, and legal updates.

We have replaced the old shoulder patch worn by our officers. Community and staff input was sought to develop a patch that branded our department with the city. The previous patch was a generic patch issued to many departments across the state and country. I felt it was important for our citizens and officers to have pride and ownership in our department. The patch is being implemented as officers replace their old shirts. Look for the new patch displaying the city logo of the green oak leaves as seen at the top of this article.

We have also completed our mandated transition to the 800mhz radio system. This system was costly, but will provide increased reliability, officer safety, and interoperability. This was a mandated transition for the city, trickling down from the federal, state, and county government. I have been able to recover some of the costs to the city through grants from the federal government.

I always encourage you to assist us in providing service to you. Call or email concerns and suggestions.

## Boulevard Trees

Each year, the City of Oak Park Heights plants trees on the boulevards, either to fill in a spot where a tree has died or been removed, or to plant a location which has not yet had a boulevard tree. Boulevard trees currently being planted on boulevards are the following species: American linden, bicolor oak, red maple, thornless honeylocust, hackberry, white ash, and, in more restricted locations, flowering crabapple or Japanese tree lilac. There must be room

on the boulevard to keep trees at least ten feet away from mailboxes, driveways and utility boxes, and twenty feet away from other trees. The city plants boulevard trees the end of August and there is no charge to residents for this service. If you have a space on the road frontage of your property, and are interested in having a boulevard tree planted, please contact the Oak Park Heights Arborist at 439-4439, Ext. 252, prior to July 10.

### *Tree Problems?*

*If you are an Oak Park Heights resident, and have a problem with a tree or shrub, such as an insect or a disease, have planting questions, or just want to have a plant identified, call Dr. Kathy Widin, the OPH Arborist, at 439-4439 Ext. 252. She can either answer your question over the phone or make an appointment for a site visit. This service is paid for by the City of Oak Park Heights.*

## Oak Wilt

Do not prune oaks between April 1 and September 15 to avoid creating wounds which attract the insects that spread the oak wilt fungus (the cause of a fatal disease of oaks). If oaks are pruned or wounded during this period (especially those wounded April 1 to July 1, paint the wound immediately with either a tree wound dressing, varnish, or latex house paint. Painting wounds will keep them from being attractive to the insects which spread oak wilt. All oak species are susceptible to this disease. If you have an oak which looks sickly or suddenly wilts from the top down, contact the Oak Park Heights Arborist at 439-4439 Ext. 252, for an inspection and management information. The city will remove currently diseased red or pin oaks from both public and private property.

## Tree City, USA

For the past 26 years, the City of Oak Park Heights has received the Tree City, USA award designation from the National Arbor Day Foundation. This award requires that a city, each year, have a tree ordinance, a tree board (the Oak Park Heights Parks Commission), issue an Arbor Day Proclamation, have a ceremonial tree planting, and spend at least \$2.00 per resident on tree-related expenditures: planting, pruning, removal, a forester or arborist, etc.. This award designation shows that the City of Oak Park Heights has a strong commitment to trees and tree maintenance in this community, which spans more than a quarter of a century.



**City of Oak Park Heights**

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Police non-emergency: 651-439-4723  
Police Emergency: 911

Office Hours:  
Monday through Friday  
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
excluding legal holidays

MAYOR  
David Beaudet

COUNCILMEMBERS  
Les Abrahamson  
Mary McComber  
Mike Runk  
Mark Swenson

CITY ADMINISTRATOR  
Eric Johnson

Visit our Website!  
[www.cityofoakparkheights.com](http://www.cityofoakparkheights.com)

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newsletter  
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Comments are welcome.  
651-439-4439*

**RESERVE A CITY PARK SHELTER!**  
NO RESERVATION FEE

Are you thinking about having a get-together or a family reunion? The Brekke, Valley View, and Autumn Hills Park shelter buildings can be reserved free of charge for your event. The Autumn Hills Park Shelter does require a refundable \$100 deposit.

Brekke Park is located on Omar Avenue south of the former St. Croix Mall. The park has a covered shelter building with restrooms as well as a tot lot, baseball diamonds, playground equipment, and barbeque grills.

Valley View Park is located on Osgood Avenue at the edge of the city limits. This park has a covered shelter building, picnic areas, playgrounds and a beautiful passive park area with trails, a prairie restoration area and wetlands.

Autumn Hills Park is located at 5697 Norwich Parkway off of 58th Street adjacent to the Boutwells Landing campus. The park contains meandering trails, trail access parking, and playground equipment. It has a 2,000+ square foot shelter, which includes a covered gathering area with a small kitchen/serving area, men's and women's restrooms, and a water fountain.

You may use the City's online reservation form to reserve either the Brekke Park or Valley View Park shelters. You may obtain the Autumn Hills Park Shelter reservation documents and information online as well. Or, you may call or visit City Hall anytime to reserve any of the shelters for your next event!

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