



City of Oak Park Heights

Tree City USA

Fourth Quarter 2010 Newsletter

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City Hall Open House and Dedication—October 9

The City Council for the City of Oak Park Heights will be hosting an Open House and dedication ceremony at the new City Hall facility. Mark your calendar for **Saturday, October 9 at 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.** This event will provide an opportunity for residents to view the administration, finance, public works, and storage areas of the new City Hall facility. Light refreshments will be provided. If you have any questions about the event or about City Hall, please contact City Administrator Eric Johnson at 651-439-4439, or by e-mail at eajohnson@cityofoakparkheights.com.

2011 Budget

The City is presently working on the 2011 City Budget and the related tax levy. The State of Minnesota continues to reduce the aid that the City has received and relied upon in the past. The 2011 Budget reflects a reduction of \$103,000 of Utility Transition Aid and an anticipated loss of \$92,000 in Market Value Homestead Credit reimbursements. Due to loss in state revenue and the constant concern to keep property tax increases at a minimum, the City has proposed budgeted expenditures for 2011 with a one-quarter percent increase as compared to the 2010 budget. This will allow the City to continue to provide services as expected by City residents.

The preliminary tax levy proposed reflects an increase in levy of 5.6 percent over the 2010 tax levy; which results in a net tax increase of less than one percent. This results in an approximate increase of \$2.00 per year on a residential home with a market value of \$100,000 or a \$5.00 per year increase on a residential home with a \$250,000 market value. These amounts are estimated based on the preliminary tax capacity values given to the City by Washington County. Final values may change these estimates.

State law restricts the city from raising the tax levy amount higher than the preliminary tax levy amount that is used in the Truth-In-Taxation notices. The City will continue reviewing and working on the budget as more information is received from the State and Washington County.

The 2011 budget and tax levy will be discussed at the Truth-In-Taxation public meeting, held on December 14, 2010, 7:00 p.m., at City Hall, 14168 Oak Park Heights Blvd N. The Proposed 2011 City Budget and Summary is available on line at www.cityofoakparkheights.com or at the Oak Park Heights City Hall. If you have any questions about the budget or the process, please contact the City Administrator, Eric Johnson at 651-439-4439.

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. For more information, please call City Hall at 651-439-4439. City Ordinances can be viewed on the City's website: www.cityofoakparkheights.com.

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. for single family residences and complexes with four units or less in Oak Park Heights. 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. If you receive a bill from Veolia for these additional services, please call the City Administrator at 651-439-4439 as most, if not all, of these items are covered under the City's contract, and you should not be billed.



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 sinks, toilets and construction debris. You will be billed by Veolia at a regulated rate as monitored by the City.

REMINDER!!

Waste and Recyclable pick-up is every THURSDAY. However, if one of the six holidays—New Years Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas—falls on a weekday, collection may occur on FRIDAY of that week.

Oak Park Heights Energy Fair

The first ever Oak Park Heights Energy Fair went off with a bang on August 3rd, 2010. Several households were able to join us at the event and were able to go home with their free Compact Fluorescent Light bulb (CFL). Although we gave away over 350 energy efficient CFL bulbs we have many cases left to distribute to residents.

Please feel free to come to City Hall and receive your free CFL bulb today, while supplies last. If you bring in an incandescent light you will receive and additional CFL bulb. It is made possible by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the Minnesota Office of Energy Security. This promotion is only open to Residents of Oak Park Heights.

A word on parking pads

No Parking on the grass or yard ~

By City Ordinance cars, trucks, trailers, boats, snowmobiles, water-skis, four-wheelers, motor homes and other similar items shall be parked in your garage or other accessory building, upon your driveway or an approved parking pad.

An approved Parking Pad shall be hard surfaced constructed of asphalt, concrete, cobblestone, paving block or crushed rock that meets minimum Class 5 material specifications and has at least a 4 inch deep base. Designated parking pads shall extend directly from the driveway, away from the house and may be located within the front, side or rear yard setback. Parking pads must be set back at least 5 feet from rear yard property lines.

Parking Pad Parking Has Limitations ~

Your parking pad may be used for the placement of:

- No more than a total of two (2) recreational vehicles (boats, snowmobiles, etc.) or pieces of equipment (trailers, etc.), not including racing cars.
- Registered and operable passenger vehicles.
- No more than one (1) truck and/or trailer not to exceed a gross vehicle weight of 12,000 pounds, except when loading, unloading or rendering a service.
- Construction and landscaping materials currently being used on the premises.

NOTE: Firewood Storage shall not be on a parking pad. Firewood shall be neatly stacked and stored in the side yard or rear yard or residential premises.

I have too much stuff, what do I do?

If you need a parking pad and/or shed, contact the City Building Department to review your options and learn about permit requirements.

Oak Park Heights Recognized as a Beyond the Yellow Ribbon City

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 was recently recognized as a Beyond the Yellow Ribbon

Community for its effort in supporting military members and their families while defending the democratic values of the United States of America. The City is proud to recognize, appreciate, and say thank you to our military members and their families for their service sacrifices and all they do.

If you are interested in helping with this initiative or want more information, please contact Oak Park Heights Councilmember Mary McComber by e-mail at marymccomber@aol.com or by phone at 651-351-7879.

Yard Waste Collection

As of January 1, 2010, yard waste can only be collected in paper or compostable bags. Compostable bags include Kraft bags (large brown paper bags) or compostable plastic bags. Compostable plastic bags are usually clear or tinted a translucent shade of green, white or pink; however the color is not the sure way of determining the compostability of a plastic bag. Compostable plastic bags should clearly state that they meet ASTM D6400 standards for composting and that they are "compostable." Bags marked "biodegradable" or "degradable" do not meet the state law. If yard waste is not bagged in accordance with the new law, your yard waste will not be collected.

City Meetings (subject to change)

City Council:
2nd and 4th Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m.

Planning Commission:
Typically the 2nd Thursday at 7:00 p.m.

Parks Commission:
3rd Monday at 6:30 p.m.

Agendas and Minutes are posted on the City's website:
www.cityofoakparkheights.com

Third quarter utility bills

Utility bills for the second Quarter of 2010 (July–September) will be mailed to residents soon and are due November 9, 2010.

Auto pay is available. With auto pay, there is no need to waste time writing and mailing a check. Paying your utility bill electronically allows you to save time and money on stamps and late fees. The amount you owe on your utility bill is automatically withdrawn from the account you designate on the billing due date each month. You will continue to receive your bill so that you know the date and amount to be withheld from your account.

If you are interested in participating, please call or stop by City Hall to obtain an enrollment form. The form is also available on the City's website, under City Information, Forms & Handouts. Call Judy Tetzlaff at City Hall, 651-439-4439, if you have questions.

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)

At the time of this writing, emerald ash borer (EAB) has not yet been found in Washington County. We do not know if the insect is already in this area, so everyone with ash trees should be examining them for signs of EAB activity. If larvae are under the bark, one might see a lot of woodpecker activity and feeding holes on the tree along the trunk and larger branches, particularly in the top half of the tree. Looking closely, you might also be able to

see $< \frac{1}{4}$ long "D-shaped" exit holes in the bark if adult EAB exited the tree in 2009.

If you have any ash trees which are dying from the top down, or you see any other signs of EAB activity, please contact the arborist to come out and take a look. Do not move ash wood from one area to another, as this is one way that emerald ash borer is easily spread.

Oak Wilt

Oaks, particularly red and pin oaks, which have lost their leaves within a few weeks are most likely infected with the oak wilt fungus. These wilting oaks are potential spore producing trees next spring, when oaks are very susceptible to insect transmission of the oak wilt fungus to fresh wounds on healthy oaks. Diseased trees should be isolated from nearby healthy oaks, of the same or similar species, via root cutting or root graft disruption, to prevent the fungus from spreading underground also. If you need to cut root connections, diseased trees should not be cut down until root graft disruption has been done. Please contact the arborist if you have any questions regarding oak wilt.

Buckthorn

Fall is a good time to remove European buckthorn from native woodlands. This non-native woody plant crowds out native understory vegetation and damages our native plants. Buckthorn stays green longer than native trees and shrubs and can easily be identified in the fall. Pull or cut buckthorn to remove it. Treat cut stumps with 18-25% glyphosate, the active ingredient in the herbicide

"RoundUp" and other similar weed killers, to prevent re-sprouting. Washington Conservation District in Valley Ridge Shopping Center, Stillwater, loans out "Weed Wrenches" to residents for pulling buckthorn up to 1.5-2.0 in. in diameter. Contact the arborist if you'd like more information on controlling buckthorn and other non-native invasive plants.

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. 1106. 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.



City Parks Commission Vacancy

Applications are now being accepted for consideration to fill a vacancy on the Oak Park Heights Park Commission. This vacant term is anticipated to expire in December 2012, however is subject to final City Council appointment length. The Parks Commission is a board of five members, appointed by the City Council, who meet regularly on the third Monday of each month, and other occasions, when needed. The objectives of the Parks Commission are to make recommendations to the City Council, which will guide the development of city parks, trails and related services and facilities.

Interested citizens can pick up an application at Oak Park Heights City Hall, 14168 Oak Park Blvd. N. or on the City's website at www.cityofoakparkheights.com.

For additional information contact City Administrator Eric Johnson at 651-439-4439 or via e-mail at erjohnson@cityofoakparkheights.com

Completed applications are due not later than 2:00 pm on October 14, 2010.



City parks could use your help!

As the City's Park budget is limited, the City is always seeking volunteers to aid in the up-keep and maintenance of its Parks and Trail systems. If you, your family, or organization would like to offer a hand or even complete a service project, the City would greatly appreci-

ate such assistance and would endeavor to facilitate such efforts. Please give Public Works Director Andy Kegley a call at 651-439-4439 to discuss any such projects you may be interested in performing or assisting with.



Oak Park Heights designated as a Playful City

Playful City USA is a national recognition program honoring cities and towns across the nation who are creating an agenda for play. The Playful City USA program is a unique self-assessment tool that assists communities in identifying local play assets and play deficits, and in developing a rigorous action plan driven towards increasing quality, quantity, and access for play in your city or town.

Oak Park Heights was one of only 118 cities across the county to be awarded the 2010 Playful City USA designation. The City is committed to providing the community with areas to play and increase physical activity and has developed a local action plan to increase the quantity and quality of play in the City.

The City of Oak Park Heights was selected for the designation because of its commitment to children.

Recreational Fires

Recreation fires are permitted in Oak Park Heights but there are a few things you should know. First of all, your fire pit must be thirty six inches or less in diameter and flames should be no higher than two feet. The fire should be monitored by a competent adult with a garden hose or fire extinguisher readily available in the event of an emergency. Make sure your fire is completely extinguished when you are done and never, ever leave a burning fire unattended!

Only clean, dry wood should be used for a recreational fire. It is especially hazardous to burn material such as treated wood in your backyard fire pit because recreational fires burn at a low temperature which produces a large volume of smoke. The smoke carries toxic fumes which can be harmful to people gathered around the fire. Painted wood, plastic and rubber will also give off toxic fumes if burned. Materials such as leaves and other yard waste will cause excessive smoke which is prohibited by City ordinance. In addition, it is illegal in the State of Minnesota to burn household waste.

Lastly, be a good neighbor—locate your fire where it won't send smoke into your neighbors yard or house and also be aware of wind conditions and burning bans.

Protect your house from frozen meters and pipes

You can take easy and inexpensive steps to prevent the damage, expense and inconvenience associated with freezing pipes and meters. Temperatures are colder along the floor and cement block wall of the basement than near the ceiling. Circulating the warmer air can help prevent frozen meters. In some homes, meters are in separate unheated rooms or boxes; open the doors to rooms or open a meter box to allow warmer air to circulate. Simply keeping your home and basement warm enough will help prevent freezing. In addition:

- Check along the foundation for areas where cold wind can enter the basement or a crawl space and plug them with insulation.
- Close off crawl space vents and doors.
- Replace broken or cracked basement windows or doors.
- Install a storm window or cover basement windows with weather insulation kits
- Make sure basement doors and windows close tightly.
- Seal or caulk cracks in the walls.
- Insulate pipes.
- **Don't forget to turn off the water supply and drain all outdoor faucets!**

Fall Street Sweeping

Fall street sweeping will occur after the majority of the leaves fall from the trees. We expect to sweep the streets in approximately mid – the end of October.

Please help keep hydrants visible

To aid the Fire Department in the unfortunate case of a fire, it would be extremely helpful to keep the hydrant in your yard visible and clear of snow piles.

City of Oak Park Heights

14168 Oak Park Blvd. N.
PO Box 2007
Oak Park Heights, MN 55082
Phone: 651-439-4439
Fax: 651-439-0574

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: 439-2582

COUNCILMEMBERS
Les Abrahamson: 351-0807
Mary McComber: 351-7879
Mike Runk: 439-5458
Mark Swenson: 439-1479

CITY ADMINISTRATOR
Eric Johnson

Visit our Website!
www.cityofoakparkheights.com

*The Oak Park Heights
newsletter
is published by the City
of Oak Park Heights.
Comments are welcome.
651-439-4439*

WINTER PARKING REMINDER

It is that time of year again when we start to think about the coming winter. With winter comes snow and snow removal.

The winter parking regulations begin November 1st through March 31st. No parking is allowed on City streets during the hours of 1:00am and 6:00am.

Winter parking restrictions are put in place in an effort to enable snow removal equipment the opportunity to do a top quality and efficient job in removing snow from city streets. Please be aware that these parking restrictions are in place AND ENFORCED regardless of whether or not there has been recent snowfall. Vehicles left parking on the streets may be removed without notice by the Oak Park Heights Police Department. Move off the streets for overnight parking for the winter to avoid citations and towing. Please help us by obeying the winter parking restrictions.

WINTER WARMING HOUSE HOURS

The City of Oak Park Heights Public Works Department will maintain hockey rinks again for the 2010-2011 season once temperatures are low enough. Warming house hours will be as follows:

Weekdays:	3:30pm- 9:00pm
Weekends:	9:00am-9:00pm
Holidays:	9:00am-9:00pm

Presorted
Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
Stillwater, MN
Permit No. 558

City of Oak Park Heights
14168 Oak Park Blvd N, Box 2007
Oak Park Heights, MN 55082