



City of Oak Park Heights

Tree City USA

Fourth Quarter 2009 Newsletter

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City Hall Facility Update

Progress has been steady on the construction of the New City Hall Facility. The final shape and layout of the building are now evident. Interior finishes are being finalized as are the logistics related to the actual act of moving from the current facility to the new building without a disruption in services. The current timeline for such move is in March/April 2010.



The construction of the GEOTHERMAL system is anticipated to begin in September. Due to possible installation conflicts related to the high-voltage transmission lines, the City relocated the well-field from a location lying entirely north of the new building to a split location lying both east of the facility and southwardly under the new parking lot. These new locations will require the City to temporarily reduce the cooling load in the lower level of the City Hall Facility next summer while the project is being completed and balanced. This split system was selected to save the significant majority of the tree cover lying east of the new building.

As part of the transition from the current building, the City did secure a full asbestos (and lead) investigation survey and which indicated that there are very limited amounts of such possible contaminate and is consistent with a building of the 1960's era; being found in certain floor tile, carpeting mastic and insulation. These items will require full remediation and removal prior to any demolition activities.

While the City is hoping to re-use many items in the new building there will likely be some surplus property such as old tables, desks, chairs, bookcases, etc. It is anticipated that these items will not need to be immediately discarded, but perhaps can find a re-use in a non-commercial application. The City will be considering a surplus property auction or other methods to avoid disposal. Similarly, prior to the demolition of the current building, a salvage contractor may find use of old steel doors, jambs and other mechanisms. The City will be creating a Request for Proposals for such services to be provided by reputable firms with the goal being to reduce the amount of waste from the old building.

The City's website contains updated photos of the construction process, www.cityofoakparkheights.com. Construction site tours are available for any interested parties. Contact the City Administrator, Eric Johnson at 651-439-4439 for questions or to schedule a tour.

City Meetings

City Council:

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

Planning Commission:

2nd Thursday at 7:00 p.m.

Parks Commission:

3rd Monday at 6:30 p.m.

City meetings are broadcast live on cable channel 16.

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

Washington County Environmental Center now open

The Washington County Environmental Center, at 4039 Cottage Grove Drive in Woodbury, is now open.

The center replaces the county's Household Hazardous Waste Collection Site which closed in Oakdale at the end of June. It is at the corner Bailey Road and Cottage Grove, four miles south of Interstate 94 and south of the county's public works building.

The Environmental Center will be open the same hours as the former site, noon to 7 p.m. Tuesdays and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Thursdays and Saturdays. The county lost its lease at the former site in the Oakdale Public Works Garage earlier in the year when the city of Oakdale determined it needed the space for its own needs.

The new facility will continue to accept household hazardous waste and electronics. A drop-off service for residents and small businesses will be added for common recycla-

bles including paper, cardboard, bottles, and cans. This service will be available during service hours only.

The Environmental Center will feature a large Free Product Room where useable household products, such as paints, automotive products, and cleaners will be available for residents to take for free.

For additional information on the Environmental Center, call 651-430-6655 or visit the website: www.co.washington.mn.us/envirocenter.

The county will also have two remote hazardous waste collection programs this fall. The first will be 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 19, at the Forest Lake Transit Center, Washington County Headwater Service Center, 19955 Forest Road N. The second will be 8 a.m. to noon Saturday, Oct. 3, at City of Hugo Public Works Building, 6900 137th St. North.

Oakgreen Avenue Practice Burns—Bayport Fire Department

In late June, the Bayport Fire Department held six practice burns of the homes along the west side of Oakgreen Avenue. The City and the Bayport Fire Department do appreciate the opportunity to have such a valuable training available locally. Despite small disruptions, the training was generally an overall success and offered many other local fire departments, involving over one-hundred volunteer staff, live training. Many people came to watch the events and can now visualize how quickly a small fire can become a significant, life-threatening episode.

Additional thanks go out to Buffalo Wild Wings and Kowalski's for their donations of lunches and refreshments to the volunteers who took part in the training.



2010 City Budget

At this time, the City is in the process of establishing the 2010 City Budget. The 2010 budget will be additionally challenging as the City will be losing over \$440,000 in revenue due to cuts by the State of Minnesota. Specifically, the MN Dept of Revenue has determined that the City will not receive \$361,000 in Utility Transition Aid and as in previous years, the City is anticipating an additional loss of over \$80,000 in Market Homestead Credit reimbursements – via further Governor’s un-allotment. As a result of this lost revenue, the City will be required to make additional budgetary cuts to ensure that taxes and levies are reasonable and proportional, without impacting core services.

Under the statutory budget process, the City must certify a maximum LEVY AMOUNT to Washington County for truth-in-taxation purposes by September 15, 2009. Unfortunately, at this time the City has not received all required data to prepare a final budget as significant information is still needed on final property valuations, including utility properties, which have major impacts on final City tax rate and levy amount. Utility property accounts for better than thirty percent of the City’s total valuation.

With these unknowns, the City Council has set its levy to the maximum amount as allowed by State law and to provide budgetary flexibility, as once the levy is set, it cannot be increased only lowered. This action will result in initial tax notices from Washington County showing an unusual increase in an average homeowner’s property tax levy compared to 2009. However, once general property and utility valuations are known, the City Council fully anticipates that there will be significant reductions made in order to maintain a more stable levy. Again, the initial levy amount is elevated to provide budgetary flexibility due to unknown general and utility property valuations, but is likely to be significantly reduced as the budget process concludes late this fall when all property valuations are known.

The City will be holding its truth-in-taxation public meeting on December 1, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. at the City Hall where the budget will be discussed in detail. Additionally, the full 2010 City Budget and summary is available online at www.cityofoakparkheights.com or at the Oak Park Heights City Hall. Please take the opportunity to contact the City Administrator, 651-439-4439 if you have any questions about the city budget process or the proposed budget.



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.

Winter Street Plowing

Raleigh Trucking is contracted to plow the city owned streets for the upcoming winter season. Please help maintain a safe operation by keeping trash and recycling receptacles off of the street during a snow event or until curb to curb plowing is complete. Also remember winter parking restrictions take place in November.

Summer Park Programming

2009 saw the initiation of various Oak Park Heights Summer Park Programming activities. Events included Movies in the Park, various game and craft events, a disc golf tournament, and even a short nature program. Many families participated and attendance grew throughout the summer.

The City looks forward to offering similar programming in 2010! For more information on future events or if you have any programming ideas, call City Hall at 651-439-4439 or email: gzeuli@q.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, five foot rolls of used carpeting, 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. 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, unless the week contains one of the six holidays – New Years Day, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas. During those weeks, collection will fall on FRIDAY.

Emerald Ash Borer Update

At the time of this writing, emerald ash borer(EAB) has not yet been found in Washington County. Some residents have asked whether or not they should treat their landscape ash with insecticide to protect against the borer. This treatment is currently the only management tool for EAB. The recommendation is to only treat ash which are an important landscape asset to your property, are healthy, with good form and no serious defects or decay. If trees are over 12 in. in diameter, it's best to hire a tree service to treat, either with a soil drench or a trunk injection. In many cases, it's an economic decision, and one has to decide whether to treat the tree,

which will have to be repeated every year or two, depending on the treatment method, or remove and replace the tree with another species. If planning a new landscape project, plant a variety of tree species to protect against serious insect and disease problems such as EAB.

If you have any ash trees which are dying from the top down, especially if they have suckers sprouting from the trunk or base, please contact the city forester 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.

Trees & Shrubs for Winter Wildlife Food

When planting new trees and shrubs in your yard, consider species which provide food in the winter for birds and other wildlife. Serviceberry, mountain ash, crabapples with small, persistent (hangs on tree throughout year) fruit, are all good small trees which provide food for wildlife during fall and winter. Shrubs such as hazelnut, grey dogwood, highbush cranberry, and black chokeberry, also provide food for wildlife.

Prune Trees in Fall or Winter

To prevent insect and disease problems on trees, such as insect transmission of the oak wilt fungus, fungal canker diseases and insect borers, prune shade trees during the dormant season, Oct. 1-March 15. Fruit and ornamental trees are best pruned in late February – early March. Avoid pruning any trees during the spring leafing-out period, since both putting leaves on and

sealing wounds require energy inputs from the tree. Fall and winter, without leaves obscuring the trunk and branches, is also a good time to check for broken and rubbing branches, cracks and decay in trees. If you see a tree structural issue that you are concerned about, call the city arborist to come out and take a look.

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 Park Heights Police Files

From the desk of Chief Brian DeRosier



What happens when you call for help? Should you call 911 or 651-439-4723 or 651-439-9381?

The first thing I would like to address is that you do not hesitate to call for suspicious persons and activity, or if you need assistance. Your call may be the bit of information needed to help solve or catch a suspect in an incident you are not even aware of. I often hear, "I do not want to bother you with this." We are busy, this is true, and at many times there is only one officer on duty; however, your call of information is important to us. We need your assistance; we cannot be effective without community involvement. We also want to assist you if we can. We will respond in person or by phone to all calls for service.

The OPH P.D. does not dispatch our officers to emergency or in progress calls. The Washington County Sheriff's Office under law has a Public Safety Answering Point that is required to dispatch police, fire and medical assistance. This is part of what we as citizens of Washington County all pay for in the county portion of your taxes as well as state and federal grants and funding to the county specifically to maintain these PSAP's or 911 centers. So when you call 651-439-9381 and you hear the dispatcher answer Washington County Dispatch, you have reached the correct number for OPH P.D. as well. We do take information and dispatch non emergency and not in progress issues of; neighbor complaints, parking issues, requests for the officer to call the complainant back, records requests etc., if you call 651-439-4723 during the hours city hall is open. 911 is intended for emergency situations in progress affecting health and safety of persons or serious property damage and go directly to the WC Dispatch PSAP. Records and administrative type requests can only be handled by our office during the normal business hours of City Hall.

A call taker first takes the information. This information is then passed off to a dispatcher, who then prioritizes this call with all other calls within the entire county and all jurisdictions that also need to be dispatched at that time. This often times creates a time delay before the officer even gets the information on the street. The local officer is given the information of the type of call and the location. The officer then makes a determination on his response dependant on several factors; is the incident in progress or not, is there a risk to persons, is the officer already handling a call. So understand that if you are waiting for an officer to respond there are many factors involved in the possible time delay of an officer arriving at the scene. Many of which we at OPH P.D. cannot control. If you feel you had to wait too long, or were treated rudely, please ask the officer about it and he may be able to explain his response time after receiving the call. It may be something I need to look into administratively why the call may have been delayed in dispatching or response, or why you were treated that way. You may email me, call me, or post the issue to our TIP line, so I am aware and can look into the situation.

651-439-4723 = Police Administration and Records

651-439-9381 = Request an Officer to Respond non-emergency

911 = Immediate response needed for life or serious property safety.

2010 Census

In March 2010, more than 130 million addresses across the nation will receive a census questionnaire. One of the shortest census forms in history, the 2010 Census questionnaire asks 10 questions and takes about 10 minutes to complete. Completing your census questionnaire is easy, important and safe, and your participation is essential to ensuring a brighter tomorrow for our community.

Required once every 10 years by the U.S. Constitution, the census will count every person living in the United States, both citizens and noncitizens. Census data are used to reapportion the U.S. House of Representatives, re-district each state and determine the distribution of the Electoral College. Census data also directly affect how more than \$400 billion per year in federal funding is distributed to state, local and tribal governments. Most importantly, census data is critical in determining locations for new hospitals, improving schools, building new roads, expanding public transportation options and creating new maps for emergency responders. **For those residents who leave the area during the winter months, please be sure to indicate Oak Park Heights as your home address, regardless of where you receive your questionnaire. This is vital for potential local road funding and city population counts.**

By participating in the census, you can help create a better future for you and those important to you. Complete and return your form when it arrives. To learn more, visit 2010census.gov. Census workers will visit the homes of those who do not return the questionnaire. Please be sure they have appropriate credentials.

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!**

Winter Parking Restrictions

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. Please help us by obeying the winter parking restrictions.

****No parking on city streets from November 1 through March 31
between 1:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m.****

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*

OAK PARK HEIGHTS FALL CLEAN-UP

The City of Oak Park Heights will be hosting a
Fall Clean-up on Saturday, October 10, 2009
from 7:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The Clean-up will be in the southwest corner of the former St. Croix Mall (Andersen Corporation) parking lot, 14167 59th Street North in Oak Park Heights. Please enter off of Osgood Avenue.

City Clean-up events are an excellent opportunity for residents to dispose of unwanted items at no cost. Please only bring waste generated within the City of Oak Park Heights. Bringing in waste generated by non-residents only drives up cost which could mean higher taxes for City of Oak Park Heights residents. Proof of residency such as a utility bill or driver's license will be required. Common items disposed of include appliances, brush, construction materials, furniture, cardboard, scrap metal, carpet, CRTs, televisions and computers.

Hazardous waste (such as paints, stains, oil, gas, pesticides, or other chemicals from your home), tires, stumps, and firewood will not be accepted. For information on disposal of hazardous waste, contact Washington County Environment at 651-430-6655.

If you have any questions please call City Hall at 651-439-4439 or Veolia Environmental Services at 651-459-3029.

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