

MINNETONKA MEMO

A publication from the City of Minnetonka



Supporting Minnetonka's unique natural environment

Supporting Minnetonka's distinctive character and making it a special place for everyone are key pieces of the community's strategic profile. That work is perhaps felt strongest by the Natural Resources Division. Tasked with everything from community education to noxious weed removal, the team is acutely aware of sustainability as a priority.

"Protecting our natural resources, including plants, trees, soil, water and air creates a more sustainable and resilient community," said Leslie Yetka, natural resources manager. The department ensures that natural resources are abundant for future generations and those resources will be able to withstand challenges from climate change and human impacts.

Minnetonka residents are already seeing the effects of climate change in their own yards: invasive species push out native plants, soil erosion and more. "As a division, we are focusing our efforts on public lands to ensure healthy ecosystems that are more sustainable and resilient, replanting trees where we have more open areas susceptible to heat island impacts, and educating and incentivizing individuals to take action on their own property," Yetka said.

Sustainability remains a key factor for everything the division does. "We want to strive for sustainability in our everyday jobs," said Yetka. "Whether it's reusing reclaimed wood from the community for city projects or planting native species to reclaim habitat lost over time."

Sustainability in action

This spring, Minnetonka Natural Resources built a gravel bed nursery. Filled with gravel, rather than soil, the nursery contains bare root trees, which will be planted in Minnetonka parks. Bare root trees are less expensive to purchase and more sustainable, as there are no plastic containers to throw away. Learn more on the city's YouTube page.



Track progress on the city's Strategic Profile, including sustainability and natural resources strategies, at [MinnetonkaMatters.com](https://www.minnetonkamatters.com).

EV-Chargers installed at Minnetonka City Campus

Crews are putting the final touches on the installation of four electric vehicle chargers at city hall and the community center. These chargers, maintained by ChargePoint, will give residents a new spot to top off their vehicle.



"Users will find the ChargePoint App very useful," said Kevin Maas, Minnetonka's facilities manager. The app allows residents to see when the chargers are available. The city can also send out promotions or restrict users that abuse the chargers. "It's a very robust system," said Maas.

The city has installed two level 2 chargers and two level 3 chargers on the city hall campus. Both types can restore battery charge quicker than a regular at-home plug in, and the level 3 chargers can charge batteries in less than 45 minutes.

Offering these chargers give both residents and visitors a reason to stop near the city hall campus. Nearby attractions will also benefit from the installation. "Minnetonka seniors will have a place to recharge while they do yoga or participate at the community center," Maas said.

The city plans to install more chargers at Williston Fitness Center and Minnetonka Public Works, adjacent to Big Willow Park, in the coming months, with more eventually coming to the Minnetonka city campus.

Absentee voting begins Sept. 23

Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 8, and voters can begin casting absentee ballots Friday, Sept. 23.

Here's how you can vote absentee:

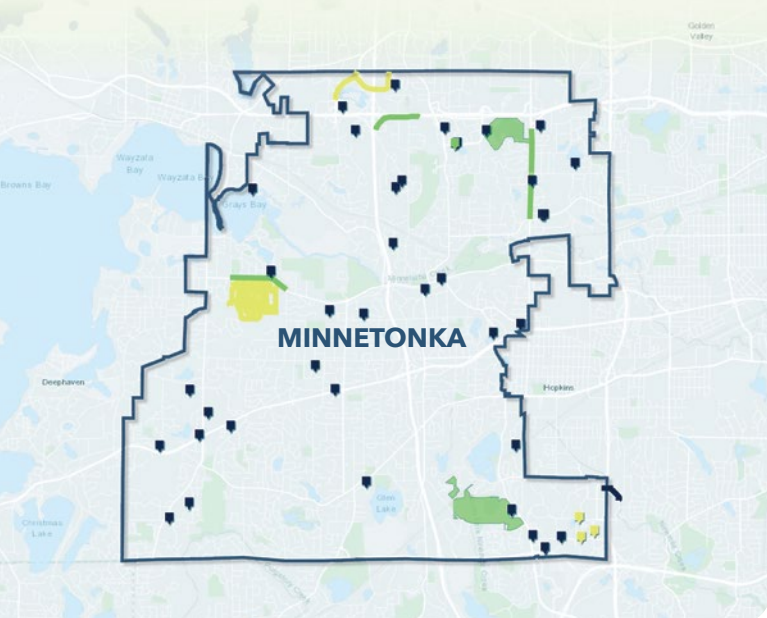
Last day to pre-register to vote: Oct. 18

- **By mail** – Learn how at minnetonkamn.gov/election
- **In-person at Minnetonka City Hall** beginning Sept. 23
 - Sept. 23–Nov. 7, Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Extended hours in November.
 - Direct balloting begins Nov. 1.

If you're planning to vote in-person in November, please note some precinct and polling locations have changed. Visit minnetonkamn.gov/election to learn more. Call 952-939-8200 or email elections@minnetonkamn.gov to ask questions.

What's happening around the city?

Check out the city's interactive projects map at minnetonkamn.gov/current-projects. You can also sign up for updates on current development, parks and trails, street and utility projects.



Clarke joins Minnetonka as senior diversity, equity and inclusion coordinator

Keith Clarke is no stranger to diversity, equity and inclusion. It's been a part of his life since he was a teen growing up in central Florida. "Since I was 12, I've worked with non-profits, the NAACP and Urban League on Civil Rights and policy work," Clarke said.

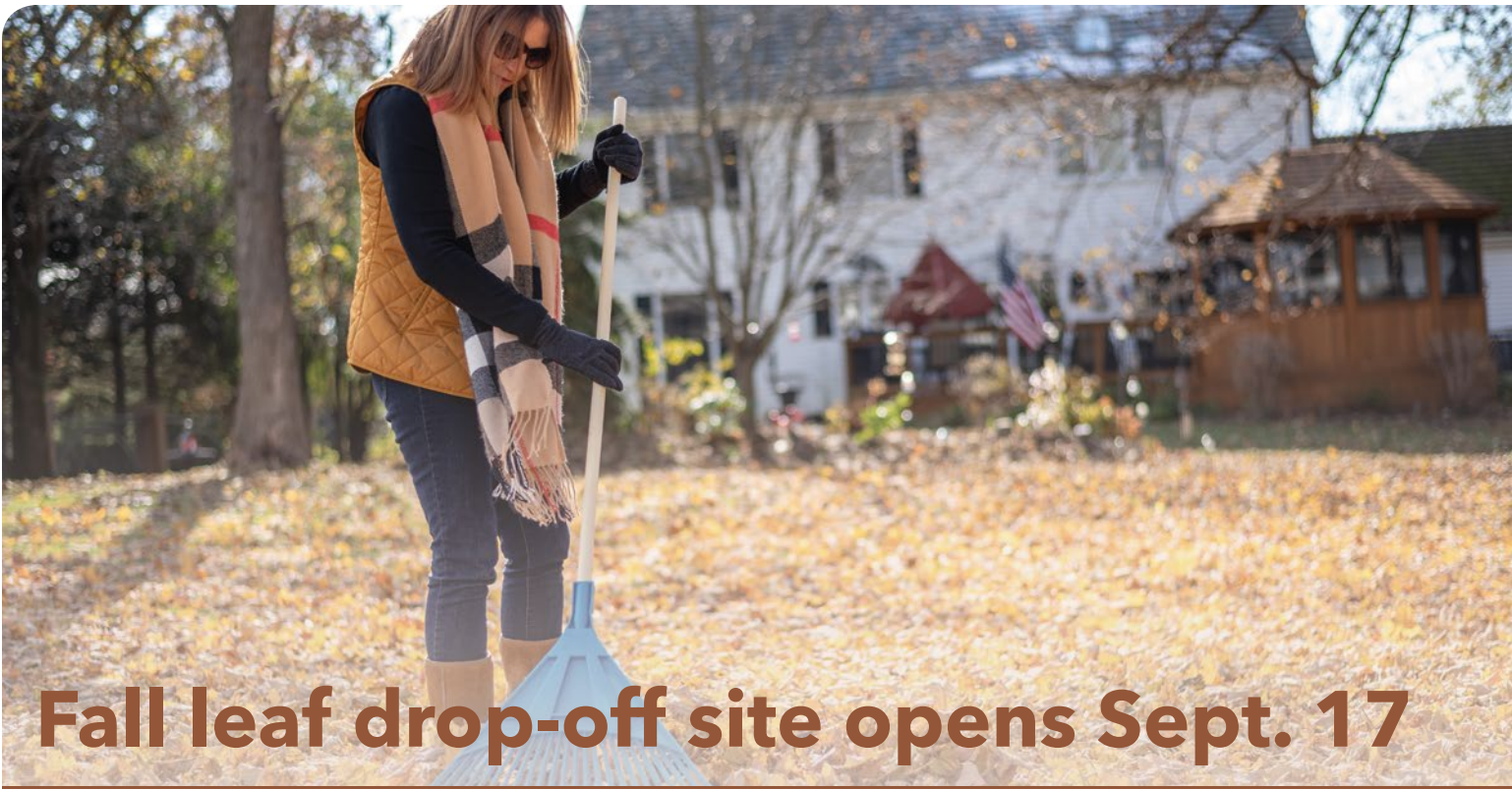
Hired in June, Clarke is Minnetonka's new senior diversity, equity and inclusion coordinator. In his role, he's tasked with initiatives to activate voices of color in the community, get the city's new DEI initiatives off the ground and train employees to work with an increasingly diverse population.

The training component, he explained, is an area he has specific interest in. "That component is driven through my time in the military," he said. As a sergeant in the US Army, Clarke served in platoons tasked with handling ammunition. "There are many types of training in the military," Clarke said, "and they are important, yet sensitive." Clarke knows that discussions about race, sexuality, socioeconomic status and more can be just that – important yet sensitive.



Inspired by his family, particularly his wife and parents, Clarke has set out to find common ground. "I was always taught to be proud of the history that might not have been shown to you," he said. "Do actual research, study and find out how to be more educated about who you are, and find ways to bridge gaps. Often, that means working hard to be that bridge."

Clarke said he's most looking forward to working with community members. Sometimes residents, especially residents of color, may see a disconnect between city administration and themselves. "I'm excited to be an accessible, engagement arm for all stripes to allow for communications, togetherness and healing," Clarke said.



Fall leaf drop-off site opens Sept. 17

LEAF DROP-OFF SITE

Sept. 17–Nov. 19

Saturdays 7 a.m.–3 p.m.

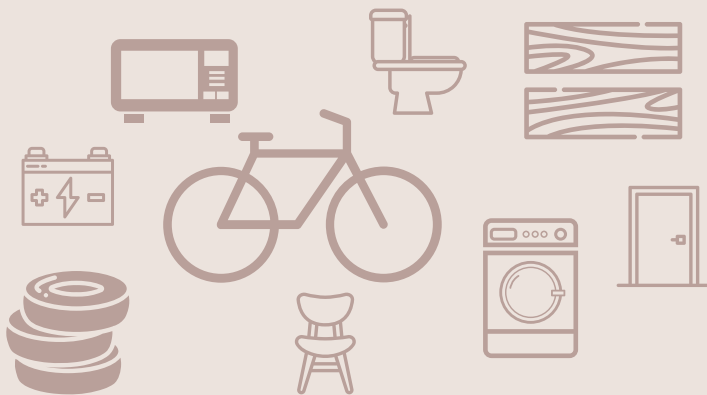
Mondays 11 a.m.–7 p.m.

Tuesdays 11 a.m.–7 p.m.

Brush drop-off, which includes tree limbs and branches, is available now through Nov. 19. More information is available at minnetonkamn.gov/yardwaste.



SPECIAL COMMUNITY DROP-OFF DAY



Get rid of all the junk you accumulated over the summer! Dispose of your unwanted appliances, carpet, furniture and more at Minnetonka Public Works Saturday, Sept. 10 from 8 a.m.–3 p.m.

New this year, used medical equipment, such as crutches and wheelchairs, will be accepted.

Visit minnetonkamn.gov/dropoffday for accepted materials and prices.

A new fire apparatus with Minnetonka in mind

Residents will see a new pumper truck from Minnetonka Fire this fall. The Pierce Enforcer is the 3000th pumper truck manufactured by the company, which is based in Appleton, Wis. Pumper trucks are like three apparatus in one. They are used to transport firefighters to the scene of a fire, along with the equipment they need and a water tank should a hydrant not be readily available.



Minnetonka Fire worked directly with Pierce to design a pumper that would fit the community's needs.

- Hose and nozzle trays are built to exact measurements ensuring quick deployment.
- Since 80 percent of fire calls are medical emergencies, the apparatus is rigged with first responder tools.
- Handles and foldable step stools help firefighters reach up for equipment.
- The Pierce Enforcer was built with cul-de-sacs in mind. A low wheel base offers better maneuverability.



Visit minnetonkamn.gov/fire to see Battalion Chief Derek Metzger's in-depth look at the new fire apparatus.



Fire Department

OPEN HOUSE

Minnetonka's popular Fire Department Open House returns this fall.

Explore the Central Fire Station, and enjoy fire truck rides, interactive demonstrations and refreshments.



Tuesday, Oct. 11

5-8 p.m.

**Minnetonka Civic Center campus
14600 Minnetonka Blvd.**

Learn more about the open house at minnetonkamn.gov.



Catalytic Converter Marking Event

This October, Minnetonka police and public works departments are teaming up to deter the increasingly common theft of catalytic converters.

During the catalytic converter marking event, the city will use special stickers and etching paint to mark converters with unique identification numbers. The marking kits are provided through a state program administered by the Department of Commerce.



Wednesday, Oct. 12
3-7 p.m.

Minnetonka Public Works
11522 Minnetonka Blvd.

The event is open only to Minnetonka residents who own one of the state's 15 most frequently targeted vehicles. Registration is required.

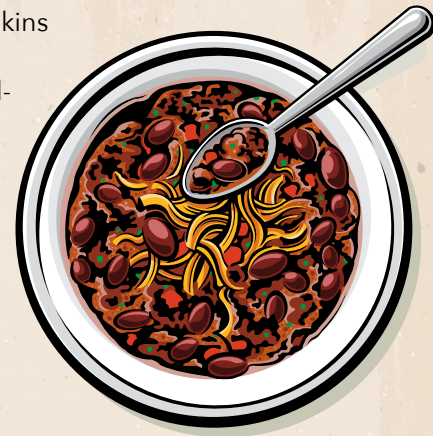
More information:

minnetonkamn.gov/catalytic-converter



Who makes the best chili in town?

The Minnetonka and Hopkins police, fire and recreation departments will go head-to-head in a Community Chili Cook-off to benefit ICA Food Shelf.



Saturday, Sept. 24
11 a.m.-2 p.m.

(rain or shine)

Faith Church
12007 Excelsior Blvd.
Minnetonka

For \$5, attendees can taste chili from five participating teams and vote for their favorite. Donations of non-perishable food, cash or other ICA-needed items also requested.

Participating Teams



Join the Minnetonka Police Explorers

Are you a young adult (age 14-21) interested in law enforcement and serving our community? The Minnetonka Police Explorers are recruiting new members for 2022-23!

Visit minnetonkamn.gov/police-explorers for more information and check out the PD Notebook to hear from current explorers.



Ridgedale Commons

- a community gathering place

Construction of Ridgedale Commons - a new, city-owned park adjacent to Ridgedale Center - continues this fall.

Concrete is in place for the park's large plaza and crews are completing work on the park building. Landscaping is also underway on the park's large, grassy lawn and along its meandering sidewalks. Ridgedale Commons will be a community gathering place for events and programs, including as the new site of the Minnetonka Farmers Market beginning in summer 2023.

"We envision Ridgedale Commons as a central hub for nearby residents and city visitors," says Recreation Director Kelly O'Dea. "The park will be place for playing, meeting up with friends and enjoying the respite of nature."

The park is an integral piece in Ridgedale's continued transition from retail center to a livable, mixed-use community that meets residents' full needs. It has connections not only to Ridgedale Center, but also to Ridgedale Library and the future Eagle Lake Regional Trail.

More info:

minnetonkamn.gov/ridgedalepark

About the park

- Two acres located at 12590 Ridgedale Drive
- Rentable park building
- Plaza
- Grassy lawn
- Interactive water feature
- Wooded lounge area



Join Williston in September and pay zero joining fee!

Become a member at the city-owned fitness center and enjoy our fabulous amenities at a rate that can't be beat!

- Indoor tennis courts
- 25-yard swimming pool
- Whirlpool and sauna
- Baseball and softball cages
- Basketball court
- Fitness center
- Group fitness classes
- Splash pad
- Treehouse indoor playground
- Child care

Visit minnetonkamn.gov/williston for details and membership rates.



MOVIES in the Park

Don't miss your chance to watch a movie under the stars!

Thursday, Sept. 1

(approximately 8:05 p.m.)

Encanto

Friday, Sept. 9

(approximately 7:50 p.m.)

Sing 2

Outdoor amphitheater on the civic center campus, 14600 Minnetonka Blvd.!

Movies take place 15 minutes after sunset.

Call the weather hotline at 952-939-8355

or visit minnetonkamn.gov for weather-related updates.



NATURAL RESOURCES HAPPENINGS

October
2022

Advance registration is required for these events.
Visit minnetonkamn.gov/NRevents for details.

Volunteer with us!



Try out new skills and meet fellow Minnetonka residents working to protect our natural environment. Fall dates are posted at the link above.

Buckthorn Workshop

Thursday, Sept. 15
or Thursday, Oct. 6
6:30-8:30 p.m.
Minnetonka Community Center



The city's restoration specialist teaches strategies and timing to tackle this invasive plant on your property. Attend in person, or watch any time at youtu.be/CPuLI7Ru8Qs.

Save the soil

The words "soil" and "dirt" are often used interchangeably, but there's a world of difference between them.

Soil is a complex ecosystem that supports much of life on Earth. **Dirt**, by contrast, is made of loose soil particles moved by wind, water or other forces. Think of it this way: You garden in the soil. You sweep dirt from the floor.

Digging deeper

Healthy soil is a rich, layered mix of ingredients, including water, gases, minerals, dead plants and other organic material. A stunning variety of living creatures - from microbes and fungi to insects, snails and worms - break down the organic material, releasing nutrients for reuse by living plants and animals. Like a sponge, healthy soil can hold, filter and release fresh water. Soil also stores carbon, reducing its harmful effects on the climate.

Build it up!

Human activities can damage the soil or preserve and build it. Here are a few tips to protect this valuable resource:

1. Avoid excess road salt, which can limit plants' ability to absorb water and nutrients they need to grow.
2. Don't leave soil bare, especially on slopes or near water. Exposed soil erodes easily, polluting the air and local waterways. Trees, wildflowers and other plants help to hold the soil in place.



3. Add organic compost to feed the whole soil ecosystem (rather than fertilizer, which only feeds plants), and mulch to help soil retain moisture



Rain Garden and Shoreline Buffer Workshop

Tuesday, Oct. 25 | 6:30-8 p.m. | Discovery Point, 12800 Gerard Dr., Eden Prairie

Learn how rain gardens and buffer plantings can capture stormwater runoff on your property, reducing water pollution and absorbing more water into the soil.

City of Minnetonka Calendar

- 1 Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.
- 5 Labor Day, city offices closed
- 7 Park Board, 6:30 p.m.
- 8 Economic Development Advisory Commission, 6 p.m.
- 10 Special Community Drop-off Day, 8 a.m.
- 12 City Council & Economic Development Authority, 6:30 p.m.
- 13 Senior Advisory Board, 10 a.m.
- 15 Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.
- 19 City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m.
- 20 Sustainability Commission, 6:30 p.m.

City meetings are held in person. Visit minnetonkamn.gov/participate to learn how to participate remotely. Watch meetings live and on-demand at minnetonkamn.gov/tv.

For up-to-date information, visit minnetonkamn.gov/calendar or call 952-939-8200.



14600 Minnetonka Blvd.
Minnetonka, MN 55345
952-939-8200 | minnetonkamn.gov

Mayor
Brad Wiersum 612-723-3907
bwiersum@minnetonkamn.gov

Council
At Large: Deb Calvert 612-205-5399
dcalvert@minnetonkamn.gov

Kimberly Wilburn 952-222-8142
kwilburn@minnetonkamn.gov

Ward 1: Brian Kirk 952-451-6251
bkirk@minnetonkamn.gov

Ward 2: Rebecca Schack 612-590-3735
rschack@minnetonkamn.gov

Ward 3: Bradley Schaeppi 612-770-7447
bschaeppi@minnetonkamn.gov

Ward 4: Kissy Coakley 952-486-9670
kcoakley@minnetonkamn.gov

City Manager
Mike Funk 952-939-8200
mfunk@minnetonkamn.gov

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
CITY OF MINNETONKA

ECRWSS
POSTAL PATRON



Get ready for the Photo contest

Take out your camera and start snapping pictures for the city's annual photo contest!

Check out the October Minnetonka Memo or stay tuned to minnetonkamn.gov/photocontest for timeline and details. Winning photos will be featured on the city's website, social media accounts and in the Minnetonka Memo.

Sign up for youth basketball

Join the Hopkins-Minnetonka recreational youth basketball league for new and experienced players in partnership with the Plymouth Parks and Recreation Department.

- Grades 2-6
- Weekday practices (grades 3-6) begin week of Nov. 7
- Saturday games begin in December
- Registration deadline: Monday, Oct. 3



Volunteer coaches needed!

Visit the Recreation Services website or call 952-939-8203 to register for the league or volunteer to coach.