

MINNETONKA MEMO

A publication from the City of Minnetonka



MINNETONKA VOLUNTEERS

The Hammills find community helping restore city parks and open spaces

As Jim and Mary Hammill searched for a new home in Minnetonka a few years ago, they spotted people walking along a trail near an apartment complex. The trail led them into Meadow Park and, eventually, down a path filled with new friendships and the rewards of volunteering in their new community.

"I personally have a long history of volunteering because it offers as much back to me as I give to it," said Mary.

The Hammills are just two of the more than 1,000 people who volunteer each year with the city. Nearly half of them work on ecological restoration by helping re-establish the native landscapes historically found across Minnetonka's prairies, wetlands and forests. Jim and Mary work through Friends of Minnetonka Parks, a nonprofit organization that coordinates volunteer events with the city.



Jim and Mary Hammill

"The Friends' opportunity to participate in buckthorn events came along, and I found that, despite my balance issues, I could sit on the ground to do what I needed to do," Mary said.

Whether sitting, standing or walking, removing buckthorn takes a certain level of commitment. Volunteers also sow seeds and help with native plantings.

"When we started, it was pretty uphill and it looked like an impossible job," said Jim. "But when you clear an area, it looks so much better that it inspires you to keep going."

The Hammills credit the city's natural resources employees who inspire and guide the work of the volunteers.

"It's been so helpful to learn from them," said Jim. "They are always there whenever we have questions."

For the Hammills, the biggest reward of all is simply being in nature. A few weeks ago, they saw their first barred owl while walking in an area of Purgatory Park recently cleared of buckthorn by a forestry mower.

"It was absolutely breathtaking," Jim said. "We are very hopeful that a lot of other people will be able to see a marvelous sight like that."

Earth Day is April 22

If you're looking to become more sustainable this Earth Day, consider some of these initiatives:

- Page 4** • Energy assessments net results
- Solar isn't out of reach
- Page 8** • Minnetonka programs to help you Recycle, Reduce and Reuse

Climate Action Plan advances to council

After a year of conversation with staff, residents and community leaders, Minnetonka's Climate Action and Adaptation Plan is nearly complete. The final draft will go before the city council at its April 22 meeting. The plan is split up into strategies for three main audiences:

- Residents
- Business owners
- City government

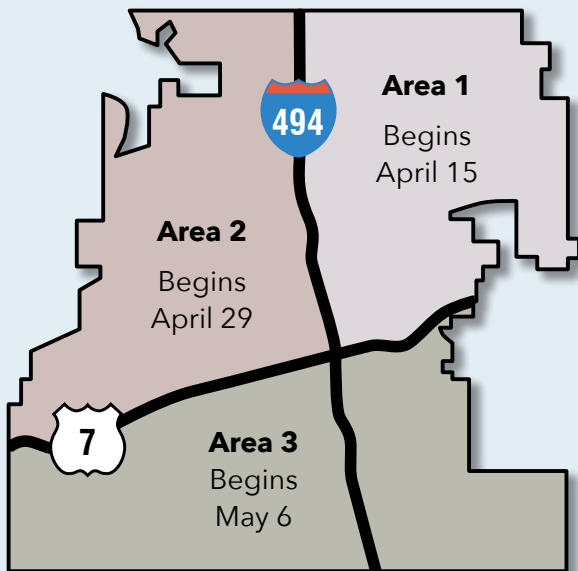
The plan includes goals for protecting the natural environment and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Minnetonka aims to reduce community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 63 percent by 2030 and achieve net zero emissions by 2050. These science-based, fair-share goals were developed with guidance from the Sustainability Commission with additional input from city staff and community discussions.



Learn more at minnetonkamatters.com/climate-action-plan.

Water main flushing starts Monday, April 15

Minnetonka Public Works will conduct annual water main flushing throughout the city from April 15 through May 9. Flushing will occur on weekdays from 5:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. in most areas.



Flushing in the areas listed below will occur at these special times:

April 15

Ridgedale business area:
5:30 a.m.-5 p.m.

April 29

**Minnetonka Industrial Road,
Twelve Oaks Center, Carlson
Parkway:**
5 a.m.-5 p.m.

May 7

Hutchins Drive:
4 a.m.-5 p.m.

May 9

**Opus, Beachside, K-Tel,
Clearwater Drive,
Whitewater Drive,
Culligan Way:**
3 a.m.-3 p.m.

Flushing schedules may be adjusted due to weather conditions. It is normal to experience some discolored water. This water is safe to drink and can be cleared up by running the cold water from a faucet without a screen. If you experience problems, contact Minnetonka Public Works at 952-988-8400.

Leaf and brush drop-off

Dispose your yard waste and brush at Public Works beginning April 1. Brush, which includes tree branches and sticks up to eight feet in length, are accepted through Nov. 23. Yard waste and leaves, which includes grass, pine cones, garden materials and more, are accepted through May 11.



Spring schedule (April 1 - May 11)

DAY	HOURS
Saturdays	7 a.m.-3 p.m.
Mondays	11 a.m.-7 p.m.
Tuesdays	11 a.m.-7 p.m.

Residency is required. Drivers will be asked to provide a state-issued ID. Contractors must provide proof that materials came from a Minnetonka address.

Visit minnetonkamn.gov/yardwaste for more guidelines. The disposal site is located at 11522 Minnetonka Blvd.

Street sweeping

Minnetonka Public Works crews began street sweeping Monday, March 25. This project usually lasts four weeks or until all city streets have been swept.

- Crews work in 10-hour shifts from 5 a.m. to 3 p.m. and work to avoid residential areas in the early morning hours.
- Help Public Works crews by removing debris from storm sewer grates.
- Ensure trash and recycling containers are not placed in the street.
- Water main flushing begins once sweeping has concluded.



Special election for Hennepin County Board



Minnetonka voters will head to the polls this spring for a special election for Hennepin County Commissioner District 6.

The special election will fill a vacancy on the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners, following a resignation of the District 6 seat last fall. The entire city of Minnetonka is represented by Hennepin County District 6.

Primary special election:	April 30, 2024
Absentee voting:	April 12-29
General special election:	May 14, 2024
Absentee voting:	May 6-13

For more dates and information about the special election, visit minnetonkamn.gov/elections.

Polling place change for all Minnetonka voters

For the April 30, 2024 and May 14, 2024 special elections, all Minnetonka voters will vote at the

**Minnetonka Community Center
14600 Minnetonka Blvd.**

This is a combined polling location for all Minnetonka precincts.

The 2024 August primary and November general elections will return to your normal voting place. More info: pollfinder.sos.mn.us

Remembering Sgt. Piper

The Minnetonka Police Department celebrates one of its own with a special tribute on department squad cars.

The purple cancer ribbon honors police Sgt. Ryan Piper, who died in February after a long, courageous battle with cancer. Piper joined the Minnetonka department in 1999 and held numerous roles, including patrol officer, K9 officer, field training officer, SWAT member, traffic unit officer, investigator and most recently as a detective sergeant.

The police department and city remember Piper's life of service and dedication to his family, friends and the community.



CONGRATULATIONS!

Best wishes to these long-time employees celebrating a recent or upcoming retirement with the City of Minnetonka:

**Police Sgt.
Karen Thoele
28 years**

**Utilities Superintendent
Tom Pletcher
27 years**

**Police Capt.
Andy Gardner
30 years**

We thank you for your years of dedicated service to our community.

St. David's Episcopal Church's energy assessment nets immediate results

Residents aren't the only ones who can benefit from energy assessments. This winter, Minnetonka city staff contacted St. David's Episcopal Church to discuss energy savings. The city connected the church to EnerChange, a non-profit on a mission to help other non-profits identify energy savings.



"Everyone was really easy to work with and very helpful," said Randy Schwichteneerg of St. David's building and grounds committee. "[The energy assessment] helped us identify things we were already doing well and a couple opportunities that we can do better."



Through the assessment EnerChange identified that St. David's was paying taxes on energy bills as a tax-exempt organization. The church will be reimbursed nearly \$3,000 over the next three years.

Schwichteneerg recommends other organizations participate in an energy assessment from EnerChange. "Anything we can do to help our energy use also helps the environment, and it keeps our costs down," Schwichteneerg said.

For more information about EnerChange visit enerchange.org, or contact us at minnetonkamn.gov/green

Solar isn't out of reach

Learn how you can benefit.

Join Solar United Neighbors, a non-profit advocating for solar access, for a presentation on tapping into solar energy. Learn how buying panels in bulk with your neighbors can make switching to solar more affordable.



April 9
7-8:30 p.m.
Community Center
14600 Minnetonka Blvd.

Silver Skates Ice Revue May 2-4

Join us for a journey into "A World of Imagination" at Minnetonka Ice Arena's 49th annual Silver Skates Ice Revue.



Featuring nearly 200 skaters from Minnetonka's All Season Skating School and the Lake Minnetonka Figure Skating Club, the show includes performances by national, state and U.S. Figure Skating medalists, as well as four synchronized skating teams, culminating in a spectacular finale.

Show times

Thursday, May 2, 6:30 p.m.

Friday, May 3, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 4, 2 p.m.

Minnetonka Ice Arena

Tickets are \$7 in advance or \$10 at the door; free for children age 5 and under. Contact the arena office for advance ticket sale times.

The Marsh celebrates a new anniversary

Join us to celebrate the one-year anniversary of the city's operation of The Marsh health and wellness center.

Saturday, May 4

9 a.m.-1 p.m.

15000 Minnetonka Blvd.

- Pop Up Market
- Café Anna Lisa
- Meet the tenants from the spa and Embody Health and Performance
- Self-guided tours and membership information



Career building: From summer job to career

When Andrew Sanvick started as a seasonal public works employee in 2007, he could hardly imagine 15 years later he'd be leading the city's streets crew. But Sanvick's experience as a seasonal employee opened the door to his future career.

"We offer a lot of different work here," said the full-time streets field supervisor. "The people who work here are very skilled and knowledgeable ... [so] the skills and experience you learn here can be applied in any type of construction role."

With summer around the corner, the city will hire more than 200 seasonal employees to mow parks, run recreation programs, inspect trees, operate Shady Oak Beach and much more.

These jobs are not only a great opportunity to earn money and work a convenient summer schedule, but also learn specialized skills and make a difference in the community.

Third-grade teacher Amanda Mathison said her experience working in the city's summer child care program, Kid's Corner, provided practice in leading groups, communicating with staff and planning lessons.

"I use those skills every day in my career and feel like I can be a more confident leader because of the experience I had working at Kid's Corner," she said.

Mathison, who has worked with several recreation programs over the years, credits the city with giving her opportunities to feel welcome and part of the team. "Everyone is so welcoming and are always willing to help when you need it," Mathison added. "Overall, it's just a great environment to work in."



Apply today at minnetonkamn.gov/jobs.

No lights and sirens
Sensory-Friendly

OPEN HOUSE

Saturday, April 20
10 a.m.-1 p.m.

- No lights and sirens
- Fire trucks, ambulance and police car display
- Inflatable slide
- Meet a firefighter
- Cookies for all



Minnetonka Fire Station 1
14550 Minnetonka Blvd.



Severe Weather Awareness Week

April 8-12



Severe Thunderstorm Warning

- Winds 58+ mph
- Hail 1"+



Tornado Warning

- Radar or spotter indicated
- Minnesota averages 28 tornadoes each year



Flash Flood Warning

- Life and property threat from high water within next six hours

Statewide Tornado Drill

April 11

Outdoor sirens and NOAA weather radios will sound twice on Thursday, April 11.

- 1:45 p.m. drill for schools and businesses
- 6:45 p.m. drill for families and businesses



NATURAL RESOURCES HAPPENINGS

UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Tree and Shrub Sale

Applications are accepted April 1-26. Visit minnetonkamn.gov/treesale for a list of available items, pricing and application details. Supported in part by grant funding from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

Online Native Plant Sale

Find a wide variety of native plants and seed mixes, with a discount for Minnetonka residents (while funding lasts). Open April through September at mnlcorp.com/product-category/events/minnetonka.

Resilient Minnetonka program

Access education and resources, technical assistance and incentives to make your yard more climate-resilient and pollinator-friendly (while funding lasts). Learn more at minnetonkamatters.com/resilient-minnetonka.



Online Workshop: Resilient Yards

Thursday, April 18, 6-8 p.m.

Learn how to beautify your yard, create habitat for pollinators and improve resilience to climate change and other stressors. Advance registration is required at bluethumb.org/events.

In-Person Workshop: Garlic Mustard

Tuesday, May 7, 6:30-8 p.m.

Minnetonka Community Center - 14600 Minnetonka Blvd.

Get tips and strategies to control this invasive plant on your property. Advance registration is required at minnetonkamn.gov/NRevents.

VOLUNTEER WITH US!

Habitat Restoration

Work with others to reduce the impact of invasive species in our parks and try out new skills you can apply on your own property. Visit minnetonkamn.gov/NRevents for specific dates and locations.

Tree Stewards

Learn about tree biology, planting and maintenance and use your skills in city parks. Volunteers will do a training session on May 4 and are asked to commit at least 12 hours in 2024. For more information, contact Diana Preisen at dpreisen@minnetonkamn.gov.

City of Minnetonka Calendar

- 1 Minnetonka Tree & Shrub Sale Opens
- 4 Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.
- 8 Local Board of Appeal & Equalization 6 p.m.
- 8 City Council & EDA, 6:30 p.m.
- 9 Senior Advisory Board, 10 a.m.
- 11 Economic Development Advisory Commission, 6 p.m.
- 15 City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m.
- 18 Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.
- 20 Fire Dept. Sensory-friendly Open House, 10 a.m.
- 22 Local Board of Appeal and Equalization, 6 p.m.
- 22 City Council & EDA, 6:30 p.m.
- 30 Primary special election, 7 a.m.

City meetings are held in person. Visit minnetonkamn.gov/virtual-meetings 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.



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952-939-8200 | minnetonkamn.gov

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City Manager
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PRESORTED
STANDARD
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PAID
CITY OF MINNETONKA

**ECRWSS
POSTAL PATRON**

Sustainable Minnetonka

RECYCLE, REDUCE and REUSE

RECYCLE your organics in your home

- Curbside organics recycling is offered to all Minnetonka residents. Contact your garbage hauler to get your cart. Haulers in Hennepin County are required to offer this service.
- Due to a change in state law, haulers now charge all customers for organics recycling whether or not they use it.
- Recycle fruits, veggies, meat, bread, pasta and more. These items are used to make nutrient-rich compost.



REDUCE the impact of hazardous waste

- Minnetonka Public Works will host Hennepin County's Household Hazardous Waste event on May 3-4 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. each day.
- Bring old paint, pool chemicals, gasoline and more for safe, free disposal.
- Learn more about items that are accepted.



REUSE items rather than buying new

- Sustainable Minnetonka will host a Reuse Swap Event on May 11 from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
- Exchange gently used clothing and shoes. No items may be sold; they must be given and taken freely.
- A limit of five boxes of items may be brought to the swap.
- Items not accepted: linens, towels, blankets and undergarments (including swimsuits).
- If you have items you'd like to donate, visit minnetonkamn.gov/swapsignup

