

MINNETONKA MEMO

A publication from the City of Minnetonka



Acomb elected to state office, will resign from city council seat

After seven years as a Minnetonka city councilmember, Patty Acomb will continue her career as an elected official in a new capacity. Acomb won the November election for the District 44B seat in the Minnesota State House of Representatives.



She will take the oath of office for her new role on Tuesday, Jan. 8, and will resign from her at-large city council seat on Monday, Jan. 7. Acomb served on the Minnetonka Park Board from 2009-2012. She won a special election to join the city council in 2012, and was re-elected in 2013 and 2017.

The city council is expected to decide how to fill the vacancy in January. Options include an April special election, or a temporary appointment followed by a November special election. Stay tuned for more details and subscribe for email/text updates at eminnetonka.com/news.

Save money on your utility bills

The Home Energy Squad is a team of energy consultants that will visit your home and evaluate opportunities for you to save energy. The city will pay half of the \$100 fee for the first 120 homes to schedule an evaluation.

Your visit from the Home Energy Squad includes:

- Free installation of LED bulbs, a programmable thermostat, weather stripping, high-efficiency showerheads and faucet aerators
- Insulation inspection
- A blower door test and thermal imaging to identify cold spots or leaks in your home
- A combustion safety test and carbon monoxide check
- A customized report with additional recommendations



Schedule your appointment

To schedule a Home Energy Squad appointment call 651-328-6220 or visit mncee.org/hes.

About the Home Energy Squad

Home Energy Squad is provided by CenterPoint Energy and Xcel Energy and delivered by the Center for Energy and Environment (CEE), a Minnesota nonprofit. The city has partnered with the CEE to promote the program.

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Council will consider city utility fees increase to maintain water, sewer infrastructure

In an effort to fund necessary improvements without special assessments, the Minnetonka City Council will consider adjusting city utility rates, recycling and storm water fees at its Jan. 7 meeting.

Due to aging infrastructure, the city averages close to 100 water main breaks a year, and that number is climbing. Water main breaks result in expensive repairs, damage for homeowners and businesses, and inconvenient interruptions to a vital service. Funds from utility and storm water fees allow the city to proactively rehabilitate and replace this important infrastructure.

Proposed 2019 rate changes

If approved, rate changes would appear on bills dated after Jan. 8, 2019 and would include the following:

- The average residential water and sewer customer (using 15,000 gallons per quarter) would experience a rate increase of around \$2.30 per month in 2019. Commercial meter maintenance fees will increase proportionally. Account fees and state of Minnesota testing fees remain the same.
- Storm sewer rate increases would help fund local street reconstruction projects, upgrades to county road projects and federal water quality mandates. Increases also help maintain the health of Minnetonka's many wetlands.
- The recycling fee would be raised from \$4.15 to \$4.40 per month.
- The adjacent table shows complete rate changes under consideration for 2019. Nearly 75 percent of residential customers fall in the range of 0-to-18,000 gallons range of water used per quarter.

More Information

For more information regarding 2019 rates, contact Finance Director Merrill King at mking@eminnetonka.com or 952-939-8200.

Rate Changes	Rate per 1,000 gallons	
	Old	New
Residential Water Rate		
Tier 1 (0-18,000 gallons)	\$2.96	\$3.07
Tier 2 (18,001-40,000 gallons)	\$3.37	\$3.50
Tier 3 (40,001-70,000 gallons)	\$4.22	\$4.38
Tier 4 (70,0001+ gallons)	\$5.86	\$6.08
Sewer Rate		
	\$2.34	\$2.43
Base Fee - Residential	\$65.94/quarter	\$68.41/quarter
Base Fee - Commercial	\$21.98/month	\$22.80/month
Special class base fee*	\$24.35/quarter	\$25.26/quarter
Commercial/Industrial Water		
Base rate	\$2.96	\$3.07
Summer surcharge (May-Sept.)	\$3.34	\$3.47
Commercial/Industrial Sprinkler Accounts		
Sprinkler I (0-75,000 gallons)	\$3.37	\$3.50
Sprinkler II (75,001-175,000 gallons)	\$4.22	\$4.38
Sprinkler III (175,001+ gallons)	\$5.86	\$6.08
Stormwater		
Open space, undeveloped (acre/month)	\$3.09	\$3.19
Single family, 2-3 family, residential (unit/month)	\$6.87	\$7.08
Churches, schools, government (acre, month)	\$18.56	\$19.12
Apartment, condos (acre/month)	\$20.62	\$21.24
Commercial, industrial (acre/month)	\$51.97	\$53.53
Recycling		
	\$4.15	\$4.40

*Discontinued for new entrants into the program

Reduce water consumption

Minnetonka residents pay a base fee for water and sewer utilities, and incur additional charges based on usage. If you want to save money and help the environment, check out these ideas to reduce your water consumption.

- Don't let water run when brushing teeth or shaving.
- Use a dishwasher instead of handwashing, and only run the dishwasher when it's full.
- Showers account for 30 percent of home water use. A low-flow shower head and shorter showers can make a big difference.
- Fix leaks. A constantly dripping faucet can waste up to 20 gallons a day.
- Don't use running water to thaw foods.





Ask a city planner

In each issue of the *Minnetonka Memo*, our planners answer a common question to help residents and businesses learn more about the planning process and available city resources.

Question:

What do I need to know to install a fence on my property?

Answer:

Fences can generally be built along the property line, but a fence taller than seven feet requires a building permit. Before you begin the project, locate your property lines and contact a city planner to find out if any existing easements or natural features will affect the project.

Fences must:

- be located outside of easements that contain public improvements or utilities.
- be placed at the property owner's risk when placed in easements that do not contain utilities.
- maintain minimum setbacks from natural features, such as lakes, streams, floodplains and wetlands.
- maintain visibility at intersections by limiting the height to 2.5 feet tall within 25 feet of the intersection.
- be placed around all residential pools and spas.

Call 952-939-8290 with questions or for more information about fences.



Have a question?

Do you have a planning or zoning question? Email us at zoning@minnetonka.com, call 952-939-8290 or visit minnetonka.com/planning for more information.

Public works director honored

For 24 years, Brian Wagstrom's leadership has made an undeniable impact on the city's public works department, and throughout Minnetonka. Recently, Wagstrom was honored as the state's Public Works Director of the Year.



Wagstrom was selected for the honor by the Minnesota Chapter of the American Public Works Association. He was nominated by a group of colleagues from the city, Hennepin County and Metropolitan Council.

Wagstrom was nominated for his outstanding service to residents and his innovative approach to managing the duties of the department. A recent example of his innovative leadership is his role in the city's solar energy partnership - the first in the state - that will benefit the environment and save the city approximately \$15 million over 25 years.



The public works department is responsible for maintaining the city's infrastructure and includes streets, water and sewer utilities, natural resources, parks and trails, buildings and fleet. Wagstrom was hired as the director in 1994.

Congratulations to Wagstrom on a well-deserved honor, and thank you for your leadership and service to our community.

Caring Youth award nominations due Jan. 11

If you know a young person in grades 7-12 who cares for others through volunteering or other activities, consider nominating them for a 2019 Caring Youth Award.

Nominees must live in – or volunteer in – Minnetonka, Hopkins or Golden Valley, or attend school in Minnetonka or Hopkins. They must be nominated by the organization they serve.

The nomination deadline is Friday, Jan. 11. For more information, including nomination guidelines and forms, visit <https://goo.gl/WWTd99> or call Hopkins Schools Youth Programs Coordinator Lisa Walker at 952-988-4098.

Nominees and winners will be recognized at the Caring Youth Recognition Event on Thursday, Feb. 21 at 7 p.m. at the Minnetonka Community Center.



Christmas tree disposal options

Minnetonka residents have two options for live Christmas tree disposal.

- Check with residential garbage collectors for tree pick up and recycling options. There may be an additional fee.
- Trees are accepted at the city's brush drop-off site, open five Saturdays in March, 7 a.m.–3 p.m. at the Public Works facility (11522 Minnetonka Blvd.). Until then, plant Christmas trees in a snowbank as a habitat for birds.



Sunday, Feb. 10
11 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
Minnetonka Community Center

This free event has dog sled rides, ice sculptures, a DJ, face painting and much more. Look for complete details in the February *Minnetonka Memo* and on eminnetonka.com.

View concept plans for new park at Ridgedale and Crane Lake Preserve

Thanks to community input, the city is moving forward with concept plans for a new park at Ridgedale Center and improvements to Crane Lake Preserve.

Join us for an open house to view the concept plans and provide feedback.

Thursday, Jan. 31 | 5-8 p.m.
Minnetonka Community Center
14600 Minnetonka Blvd.

We also plan to hold additional open houses and gather online feedback beginning Jan. 31 at minnetonkamatters.com.

Visit eminnetonka.com/newpark for more information and to sign up for email or text notifications. The concept plans will be available online by Jan. 31 and future open houses will be added to the website as they're scheduled.





Williston's 8-WEEK WEIGHT LOSS CHALLENGE

Learn to let go of old habits and replace them with healthy ones. The challenge kicks off Jan. 13!

Program includes:

- Five private personal training sessions
- Four one-hour nutrition classes
- Eight weekly group boot camp classes on Saturday mornings at 7 a.m.
- Twelve group fitness classes for Weight Loss Challenge participants only
- Small Group TRX/Cardio tennis for Weight Loss Challenge participants only
- Weigh-ins, including BMI measurement and chest/waist/hip measurements
- Food demonstration by Lisa O'Connell
- Female and male winners, based on largest percentage of weight loss

Jan. 14-March 9

Various Times

\$199 Member/\$249 Nonmember

eminnetonka.com/register

Course#: 2063801-01

Location: Williston Fitness Center

Size: Max. 50

Apply now for summer seasonal employment opportunities

It's already time for high school and college students - or anyone looking for a part-time job - to start thinking about summer employment. City of Minnetonka summer 2019 seasonal positions will be posted Jan 2. These are great opportunities for anyone interested in gaining valuable experience and training.



We're looking for:

- Swim instructors and lifeguards
- Shady Oak Beach staff
- Grays Bay Marina attendants
- Kid's Corner leader, coordinator and assistant coordinator
- Park Adventures (playgrounds) coordinator (hiring two; must be 18 or older)
- Park Adventures (playgrounds) leaders
- Inclusion specialists

For more information or to apply online, visit **eminnetonka.com/employment** on or after Jan. 2.

Father Daughter Dance

Friday, Feb. 22

6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Minnetonka Community Center

Ages 5-11



Learn more and register online at **eminnetonka.com/register**.

Cost is \$40 per pair (registration code 2200301-01), \$10 for each additional daughter (2200302-01).

Important information about smoke and carbon monoxide alarms

Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are inexpensive, easy to install and can save your life. Here are some important things to know about these essential devices.

Smoke alarms

- Install one on every level and in every bedroom; place on ceiling or high on the wall
- Interconnected alarms are best – if one sounds, they all sound
- Replace smoke alarms every 10 years; replace immediately if yours has turned yellow with age



Carbon Monoxide (CO) alarms

- Install in a central location, within 10 feet of all bedrooms
- A digital display is recommended
- If it sounds, immediately move everyone outdoors
- After a snowstorm, ensure vents (dryer, stove, furnace, fireplace) are clear of snow and ice
- Warm up vehicles outside – do not run in the garage, even with the door open

General reminders

- Always call 911 in the event of an emergency, even if an alarm has given you advance warning
- Test monthly
- Replace batteries every six months
- Replace aging alarms
- When an alarm intermittently sounds, it needs new batteries or to be replaced. The label on the back will tell you what the sounds mean.

Adopt a fire hydrant this winter

Our fire department depends on quick and easy access to fire hydrants throughout the city. This winter, please lend a helping hand and “adopt a fire hydrant” in your neighborhood!

After a snowfall, shovel out a fire hydrant near your home to ensure it’s easily accessible. This will save our fire department precious time in an emergency.



Did you know?

Minnetonka has more than 3,500 fire hydrants. The space between each hydrant is approximately 500 feet.

Year-round

Though snow is the main perpetrator in our climate, consider adopting your hydrant year-round. In the summer, trim plants nearby to keep hydrants easily visible and accessible.

Thank you!

The Minnetonka Fire Department thanks you for your help with hydrants. With teamwork, we can keep our community safe!

Home Remodeling Fair

Sunday, Feb. 10
10:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Eisenhower Community Center
1001 Highway 7, Hopkins

A free event featuring more than 75 contractor exhibits, seminars and an “Ask the Pro” booth. For more information visit homeremodelingfair.com.

WEST METRO HOME REMODELING FAIR

Enter remodeling contest by Feb. 4 to win \$1,000

Enter the Operation Rescue Room contest for a chance to win \$1,000 toward remodeling a room. Fair visitors vote for the room most in need of a rescue, must be present to win. Entries are due Monday, Feb. 4. Enter online, learn more and see previous winners at homeremodelingfair.com.

Prepare for the city's annual tree sale

The city's tree sale takes place every February and offers a wonderful variety. Minnetonka homeowners and businesses can buy up to two trees per property.

The selection changes from year to year to promote a diverse community forest that is equally lovely and resilient in the face of future environmental stress, including diseases, pests and changing climate.

Here are important dates to remember for the 2019 tree sale:

- **Late January** - Look for a list of available species and instructions to order online in the February *Minnetonka Memo* and at eminnetonka.com.
- **Jan. 29** - Tree Sale Preview, hosted by the city forester, 6:30-8 p.m. (see below for details).
- **Jan. 30** - Check out available species and set up or check your online account in advance of the sale. Pricing will be available when the sale begins.
- **Feb. 4** - The online tree sale begins at eminnetonka.com and will remain open through February, or until stock is sold. Buy early for best selection.
- **May 17-18** - Pick up trees at Minnetonka Public Works. *(Please note: pickup only, no trees available for purchase)*



Tree Sale Preview

Jan. 29, 2019 | 6:30-8 p.m.

Minnetonka Community Center

Before online tree sale ordering opens Feb. 4, learn about each tree species offered, determine which would do best in your yard and receive expert tips from the city forester. Space is limited and **advance registration is required** at 952-988-8400 or eminnetonka.com/NRevents.

Thank you to 2018 natural resources volunteers

Minnetonka's natural resources staff sincerely thanks the many volunteers who contributed hundreds of hours in 2018.

Volunteers assisted with invasive species removal, habitat restoration and tree planting. Adopt-A-Spot volunteers worked independently to maintain specific public landscapes, and Wetland Health Evaluation Program teams gathered data on the health of Minnetonka's wetlands.

Two projects highlight 2018 volunteer impact:

- Volunteers from Marks Group Wealth Management offered to help wherever needed.



They worked with staff to remove buckthorn at Victoria-Evergreen Park to make room for native species to flourish. They also readied the site for future projects - look for a new wildflower enclosure near the parking lot.

- Rotary Club members worked with city staff to plant 65 young trees - one for each member of the club - beside Minnehaha Creek at Civic Center Park. Fifty young ash trees were removed to prepare the site and reduce the risk of emerald ash borer. The new trees represent 13 diverse species, will absorb stormwater runoff and provide more benefits to pollinators and wildlife.



Want to help?

Call 952-988-8423 if you or your group is interested in volunteering, or visit eminnetonka.com/subscribe to sign up for email or text notifications about upcoming opportunities.

MINNETONKA MEMO

City of Minnetonka Calendar

- 1** New Year's Day, city offices closed
- 3** Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.
- 7** City Council, 6:30 p.m.
- 8** Senior Advisory Board, 10 a.m.
- 14** City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m.
- 17** Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.
- 21** Martin Luther King Jr. Day, city offices closed
- 24** Economic Development Advisory Commission, 6 p.m.
- 28** City Council, 6:30 p.m.

All meetings are open to the public. Meeting dates and times are subject to change. Visit eminnetonka.com or call **952-939-8200** for the latest information. Meetings are available live and on-demand at eminnetonka.com/tv.



14600 Minnetonka Blvd.
Minnetonka, MN 55345
952-939-8200 | eminnetonka.com

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SAVE THE DATE

State of the City Address

Wednesday, Feb. 6 | 7:30-9:30 a.m.
Minnetonka Community Center

Attend the 2019 State of the City Address by Mayor Brad Wiersum Wednesday, Feb. 6, 7:30-9 a.m. at the Minnetonka Community Center. A continental breakfast will be served. Please RSVP by Jan. 31 to Perry Vetter at pvetter@eminnetonka.com or 952-939-8216.



Make it a musical New Year

The Music Association of Minnetonka has a place for musicians and music lovers of all ages. Join or audition for one of the groups below, or attend a free performance. Visit musicassociation.org for a concert calendar and more information.

- Youth Choir: Grades 2-5, now enrolling
- Civic Orchestra: Openings for strings, French horn, trumpet and percussion
- Symphony Orchestra: Openings by audition for strings and percussion
- Concert Band: Openings by audition for French horn and percussion
- Chorus a la Carte: Openings for adult singers of all ages
- Senior Chorale: Free, daytime choir for singers ages 55-plus