

# minnetonka memo

A Newsletter from the City of Minnetonka  
October 2003

## City-wide Open House HT

Please join us in celebrating our Minnetonka community at the 10th annual city-wide open house Tuesday, October 7, 5 to 8 p.m. You'll find interesting and fun activities for everyone inside and outside, in city hall, the community center, and the police and fire departments.

- Department tours
- Display of city vehicles and equipment
- Strolling characters
- Fun activities for the kids – bring your camera
- Free treats for all
- Kids' mini-golf
- Musical entertainment
- Senior woodcarving demonstrations
- Information on city departments, boards, commissions
- Information from non-profit participants: schools, services, providers, more

For additional information, call (952) 939-8200 or refer to the city web site, [www.eminnetonka.com](http://www.eminnetonka.com), click on Hot Topics, then Upcoming Events.



## Fire Department Open House HT



Minnetonka firefighters and Sparky, the fire dog, invite you and your family to attend the fire department open house on Tuesday, October 7, 5 to 8 p.m. at Fire Station #1 next to city hall. There will be free hot dogs and pop, free fire truck rides (must be at least four years of age), demonstrations, and fun learning techniques for the entire family. Over the past few weeks, members of the Minnetonka Fire Department have visited area grade schools to promote this year's fire prevention theme, "Get Out and Stay Out!"

Sparky hopes you'll join him at the open house and reminds you to "check your smoke detectors regularly!"



## 2003 City Open House Drawing

Complete this form and bring it with you to the City Open House on Tuesday, October 7 to be eligible for some great prizes. (City employees and their families are not eligible.) Entry boxes will be located in the lower level of the community center, council chambers, in the city hall lobby, and in the police department. Winners will be notified by mail.

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## Council sets guidelines for 2004 budget HT

THE MINNETONKA CITY Council recently set guidelines for the 2004 budget which will be adopted later this year. Providing basic public services like police, fire, and streets is an increasing challenge as cities face significant state funding cuts.

The City of Minnetonka always takes a responsible long-term perspective with financial planning and management. We don't just patch things together to get through one year. We make decisions with the future in mind to ensure our ongoing capacity to provide quality services to our residents and businesses.

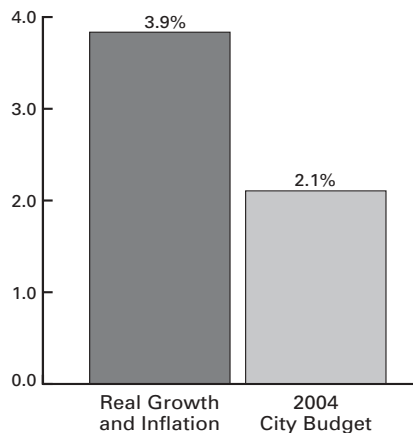
During recent years, we've taken significant steps to build a solid fiscal foundation for years to come, including restoring our capital fund balances and bringing ongoing revenues and spending into balance. In anticipation of pending state revenue cuts, the City of Minnetonka also adopted a "Responsible Fix" last year to help ensure our future capacity to provide essential local services. That strategy included: (1) spending caps that will save \$3 million over the next five years, and (2) capital reprogramming that cut 10% from our five-year Capital Improvement Program.

Our Responsible Fix assumed that property taxes could continue to increase by about 3.25% annually, as has been the case for well over a decade. We've traditionally kept the growth in property taxes to about the rate of inflation and real growth — both in good times and in bad. Despite absorbing \$1 million in state cuts in 2003 and a requirement to fund an \$800,000 state program next year, property taxes will be limited to a 3% increase in 2004.

In order to do this, growth in our 2004 budget will be held to far less than normal. The targeted 2.1% spending increase is only about one-half the real growth and inflation that drive our service costs.

Next month's *Minnetonka Memo* will include detailed information on the proposed budget, as well as likely property tax impacts on our residents and businesses. The City of Minnetonka believes strongly that our citizens should be provided accurate information on how we are managing their tax dollars.

State budget problems are posing a serious challenge to all local governments, and Minnetonka is no exception. Fortunately, our tradition of responsible, long-term fiscal management enables us to continue to provide quality public services at a reasonable price.



*Minnetonka's budget growth will be less than normal for 2004.*

## General Election will be November 4 HT

MINNETONKA RESIDENTS WILL go to the polls on Tuesday, November 4, to elect city council representatives from Wards 1, 2, 3, and 4. The ballot will include the following names:

**Council Ward 1:** Robert L. "Bob" Ellingson  
Dick Allendorf

**Council Ward 2:** Tony Wagner

**Council Ward 3:** Brad J. Wiersum

**Council Ward 4:** Al Thomas  
Dave G. Larson

The ballot will also include names of individuals running for school board positions in the Hopkins, Minnetonka, and Wayzata School Districts. In addition, the Wayzata School District will have a levy question on the ballot. Check your district's web site or local newspapers for more information.

### Basic election information

**Absentee voting** — Absentee ballots will be available beginning Friday, October 3. If you can't get to the polls on election day, you can vote absentee:

- In person at Minnetonka City Hall during regular business hours (8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday). Extended absentee voting hours will also be available on Saturday, November 1 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and on Monday, November 3 until 5 p.m.
- By mail by requesting an absentee ballot application by fax (952) 939-8244, phone (952) 939-8219, or through [www.eminnetonka.com](http://www.eminnetonka.com). Upon receipt of your completed application, a ballot will be mailed. Be sure to allow sufficient time for postal delivery because ballots must be received by the city by election day in order to count.

**Registering to vote** — If you have moved, or changed your name or address since the last election, you will need to register. Pre-registration is available until October 14. Registration forms are available on the city's web site, or by calling or stopping by city hall. Pre-registering will save you a great deal of time when you vote at the polls. If you have not registered by the October 14 cut-off date, check [www.eminnetonka.com](http://www.eminnetonka.com) for the types of identification the law allows for election day registration, or call city hall.

**Polling place locations** — If you don't know where to vote, you can find your polling place by:

- Referring to the map in this newsletter
- Checking out [www.eminnetonka.com](http://www.eminnetonka.com)
- Calling city hall, (952) 939-8200

**General election day** — Polls will open at 7 a.m. and close at 8 p.m. on Tuesday, November 4.

Be sure to exercise your right and privilege to vote.

## What's on the web?

By Becca Harris, Web Coordinator

ARE YOU INTERESTED in Minnetonka City Council, Planning Commission, and/or Park Board meetings? Our city web site, [www.eminnetonka.com](http://www.eminnetonka.com) offers up-to-date agendas and minutes. Simply click on "City Services" and you can also review meeting topics, supporting material, and the official city calendar.

## Would you like to serve on a board or commission?

THE MINNETONKA CITY Council is looking for volunteers to serve on various city advisory boards and commissions. Applicants must be residents of Minnetonka, have a desire to serve their community in a volunteer capacity, and be willing to contribute the number of hours necessary for the particular group to which they are appointed. Applicants are interviewed by members of the city council, and selections are made as openings occur throughout the year.

Advisory groups include *Planning Commission, Park Board/Joint Recreation Board, Economic Development Authority (EDA), Charter Commission, Community Heritage Commission, Police Advisory Committee, Senior Citizen Advisory Board.*






For additional information, or to obtain an application form, please call (952) 939-8211, or you can learn about the duties of each group and/or download an application from the city web site, [www.eminnetonka.com](http://www.eminnetonka.com), City Services, Boards and Commissions. Applications should be returned by November 14, 2003.

## School memories recalled

THE MINNETONKA HISTORICAL Society invites residents to its annual meeting Tuesday, October 14, 7 p.m. in the Minnetonka Community Center to renew their school memories, local or otherwise.

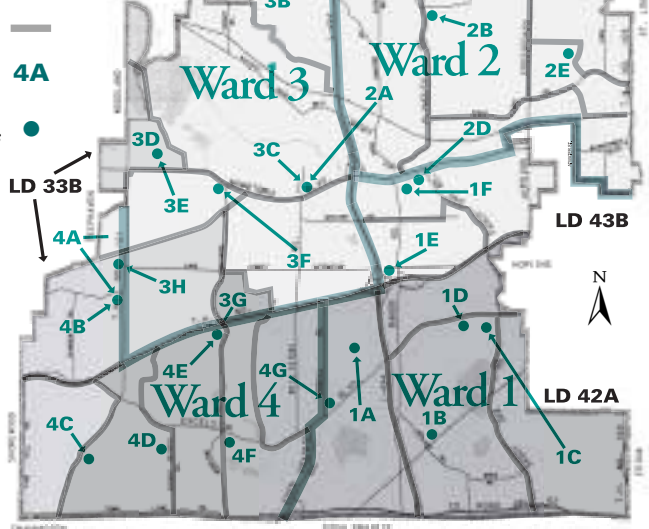
In its early days, Minnetonka was dotted with independent schools covering grades 1–8. These schools served not only to educate the young people in the area, but also as the center for communities such as Oak Knoll, Minnetonka Mills, Shady Oak, and Glen Lake. You're invited to come to this meeting and hear stories of their classes, teachers, games, friendships (and pranks!), or share memories from your own school. For more information, call Dorothy Welch, (952) 476-6542.

## Minnetonka Wards and Precincts

**Ward Boundary**  **Precinct Lines**   
**Legislative District Boundaries**  **Precinct Numbers**   
**Polling Locations** 

### Polling Locations

- 1A Glen Lake Elementary School**  
4801 Woodridge Rd.
- 1B Old Apostolic Lutheran Church**  
5617 Rowland Rd.
- 1C Cross of Glory Baptist Church**  
4600 Shady Oak Rd.
- 1D Faith Presbyterian Church**  
12007 Excelsior Blvd.
- 1E St. Paul's Lutheran Church**  
13207 Lake St. Ext.
- 1F Minnetonka Community Church**  
13215 Minnetonka Dr.
- 2A Minnetonka Community Center**  
14600 Minnetonka Blvd.
- 2B Ridgedale Hennepin County Library**  
12601 Ridgedale Dr.
- 2C Oak Knoll Lutheran Church**  
600 Hopkins Crossroad
- 2D Episcopal Parish of St. David's**  
13000 St. David's Rd.



- 2E Lindbergh Center**  
2400 Lindbergh Dr.
- 3A Epoch Assisted Living**  
500 Carlson Parkway
- 3B Minnetonka Fire Station No. 5**  
15155 Wayzata Blvd.
- 3C Minnetonka Community Center**  
14600 Minnetonka Blvd.
- 3D/3E St. Luke Presbyterian Church**  
3121 Groveland School Rd.
- 3F Minnetonka Lutheran Church**  
16023 Minnetonka Blvd.
- 3G Redeemer Bible Church (formerly Woodland Hills)**  
16031 Woodland Curve
- 3H Minnetonka United Methodist Church**  
17611 Lake St. Ext.
- 4A/4B Ridgewood Church (formerly Minnetonka Baptist)**  
4420 Co. Rd. 101
- 4C Clear Springs Elementary School**  
5701 Co. Rd. 101
- 4D Scenic Heights Elementary School**  
5650 Scenic Heights Dr.
- 4E Redeemer Bible Church (formerly Woodland Hills)**  
16031 Woodland Curve
- 4F All Saints Lutheran Church**  
15915 Excelsior Blvd.
- 4G Glen Lake Activity Ctr.**  
14350 Excelsior Blvd.



## Tips offered for Halloween safety

THE MINNETONKA POLICE Department has provided the following safety tips for parents as well as trick-or-treaters. Parents, please share this information with your children.

### Youngsters

- Do your trick-or-treating while it is still light outside and have a responsible older person accompany you.
- Be sure your costume is bright and reflective; can you walk easily in it?
- Wear a reflective blinker light or glow-in-the dark neon. Consider make-up instead of a mask.
- Stay in your own neighborhood and go only to those homes where you know the people.
- Never enter a stranger's home or take a ride from a stranger.

- Carry a flashlight so you can see and be seen easily.

### Parents

- Know the route your children will be taking.
- Be certain there is adult supervision present (both trick-or-treating or at parties).
- Leave your outside light on.
- Keep pets inside.
- Advise your children not to eat any treats until you have examined them. If something doesn't look right, throw it away.
- Remember, children look forward to the good things about Halloween. It is your responsibility to alert them to the possible dangers and show them how to avoid accidents.



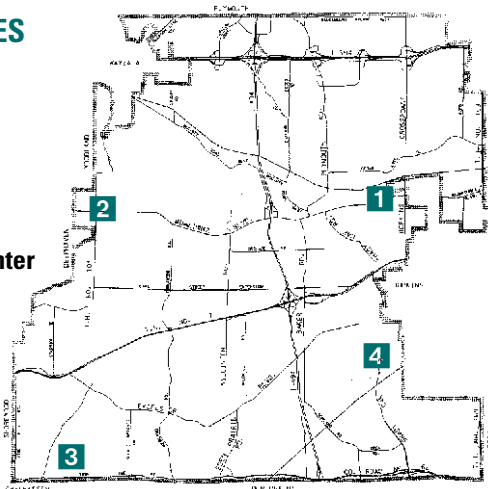
# Fall Leaf Drop-off Program HT

**Minnnetonka residents may bring bagged leaves, yard and garden materials to one of the four drop-off sites on the dates and times shown below. Brush larger than 1/2" in diameter will not be accepted at leaf drop-off sites. (See the Brush Drop-off article.)**

**SATURDAYS: 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. • October 18 and 25, November 1 and 8**

## SATURDAY LEAF DROP-OFF SITES

- 1 Public Works Facility Parking Lot**  
(11522 Minnetonka Blvd., 1/4 mile west of Co. Rd. 73)
- 2 Groveland School Parking Lot**  
(Minnetonka Blvd., east of Hwy. 101)
- 3 Minnetonka Public Schools Service Center North Parking Lot**  
(5621 Hwy. 101)
- 4 West Oaks Community Church Upper Parking Lot**  
(Excelsior Blvd., west of Shady Oak Rd.)



## **BAGGED LEAVES** accepted at all sites on Saturday dates (10/18, 10/25, 11/1, 11/8)

City staff will assist residents with unloading bags of leaves on Saturdays. Residents will be asked to take empty bags home for reuse or disposal. *Please tie bags loosely for easier emptying.*

## **BULK LEAVES** truck and trailer loads of bulk leaves accepted only at the public works site during brush drop-off hours

(Monday/Tuesday, noon to 8 p.m.; Saturday, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.) on the following dates: 10/6, 10/7, 10/11, 10/13, 10/14, 10/18, 10/20, 10/21, 10/25, 10/27, 10/28, 11/1, 11/3, 11/4, 11/8, 11/10, 11/15 (site will be closed on 11/11 for Veterans' Day holiday). Loads of leaves must be covered during transport.

Enter on the west side of the building across from the Big Willow ball fields. Residents will unload their own leaves onto the bulk pile (*bring proper equipment to unload your own leaves*). Using many layers of tarps between a foot or two of leaves makes unloading your leaves easier and faster.

If you have other means of handling your leaves such as collection by your garbage hauler or backyard composting, please use that option. All garbage haulers offer curbside collection of yardwaste on the same day as garbage collection for a reasonable annual or monthly fee. Check with your garbage hauler for details.

Information about composting and yardwaste management is available from the Recycling Coordinator, (952) 939-8217, or leave a message anytime.

## Brush drop-off ends in November

**T**HE BRUSH DROP-OFF program will end November 15. On Monday and Tuesday the site is open from noon to 8 p.m. On Saturdays, the site is open from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Branches up to 6" in diameter are accepted.

This service is only available to Minnetonka residents and a valid I.D. is required. No brush will be accepted from commercial tree or lawn services.

Please note: trash, grass, loose leaves, lumber, or wood scraps are not accepted. Loose leaves, pine needles, straw, plant and garden materials go into the leaf drop-off program. (The brush is ground into the mulch that the city gives away to residents for landscaping.)

Please call the Recycling Coordinator, (952) 939-8217, during business hours, or leave a message anytime.

## Minnetonka Police Reserves begin fall recruitment

**I**F YOU ENJOY community service and would like to know the workings of your police department, here is a great volunteer opportunity—you're invited to join the Minnetonka Police Reserves.

Applicants must be 21 years of age with no criminal or misdemeanor traffic convictions. Requirements include 10 hours of volunteer time per month, as well as an initial training session that lasts one night a week for 10 weeks. Training is on-going; uniforms and equipment are provided.

Please complete a city application (available at city hall or on line at [www.eminnetonka.com](http://www.eminnetonka.com)) and send it to Sgt. Chuck Schauss, Minnetonka Police Department, 14600 Minnetonka Blvd., Minnetonka, MN 55345. If you have questions, contact police officers Chris Mack, Scott Reis, or Chuck Schauss, (952) 939-8500. Application deadline is Tuesday, November 4.

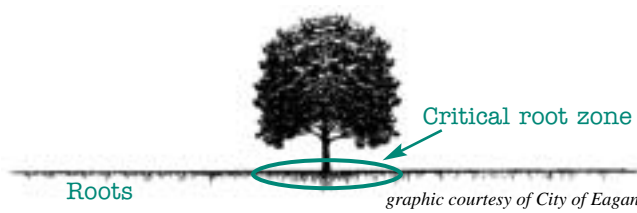
# Natural Resource Notes

## Don't hug that tree to death

If you are building a house, garage, or addition and there are trees in your yard, you are probably thinking that you would like to save as many trees as possible. Just looking around Minnetonka, it is obvious that trees are important to the residents. They add to property values due to their beauty, shade, and majesty. Many of our large native trees started their lives in the 1800s, and can never be replaced in our lifetime.

It's tempting to want to design a house around a big tree so that it will be in the curve of the driveway or just outside the front door. But trees can be loved to death, and trying to cozy up to them usually results in an unfortunate outcome. You need to give trees plenty of breathing space if you want to save them.

Trees depend on their roots to gather water and nutrients, and the roots need oxygen to do their work. That means tree roots need porous soil, which can be penetrated by air and water, in order to survive. Although young trees can adapt and eventually grow large in confined areas, mature trees cannot be stuffed into small spaces. If the roots are killed, the tree will decline, sometimes taking several years to lose branches and then die.



Tree roots are destroyed in three major ways during construction projects:

- **CUTTING.** The roots are cut when, for example, a basement is put in, a hill is cut down, or utilities are installed.
- **FILLING.** Fill or pavement is placed over the roots, sealing them off from sources of air and water.
- **COMPACTION.** The soil around the roots is compacted by heavy equipment or soil stockpiles, squeezing the soil pores shut so air and water cannot penetrate.

It's very hard to protect a tree from these impacts when it is close to the construction area. But how much space does a tree need? Important tree roots are generally found near the surface of the soil, where they have easy access to the water and oxygen they need. As the tree grows, the roots spread further out. Studies indicate that tree roots can extend a distance equivalent to 2.5 times the height of the tree. But the critical root zone —

the minimum area recommended for protection — is about the size of the drip line (the extent of the branches).

A rule of thumb for estimating this area is to take the diameter of the tree in

inches, and keep all disturbance that many feet away from the tree. For example, a 25-inch tree would have a critical root zone extending 25 feet from the tree in each direction. The size of that protected area is 1,963 square feet — it's like having another house on your lot!

Drawing these critical root zones on your plans before locating the building can help you decide where to site it. Sometimes you have to make choices and sacrifice some trees to save others. Pick out one or two of the most healthy and beautiful trees, or a group of closely spaced ones, and then move the house and driveway as far away from them as possible.

Before construction starts, fence off the critical root zone. Talk to the contractors and watch that they don't dump dirt or run equipment over the fencing. If you give a tree plenty of space, you will be able to enjoy it in future years, rather than having the heartache and expense of cutting it down. □

## Light rail transit alternatives will be studied

THE STUDY OF several alternatives for rail transit along the Southwest Corridor from Minneapolis to Eden Prairie resulted in four light rail transit (LRT) routes being recommended for further evaluation:

- A route from downtown Minneapolis and along the Southwest Corridor to I-494, then on to the Southwest Transit Station located on Highway 5 in Eden Prairie
- A route from downtown Minneapolis and along the Southwest Corridor as far as downtown Hopkins
- A route from downtown Minneapolis and along the Southwest Corridor to Hopkins, then south through the Opus area in

Minnetonka and the “Golden Triangle” area in Eden Prairie, and on to Eden Prairie Center and the Southwest Transit Station

- A route from downtown Minneapolis and along the Southwest Corridor all the way to Highway 312 in Eden Prairie (the least-preferred route)

All options include keeping a bike trail along the Southwest Corridor routes. Hennepin County staff reported the study results to the Minnetonka City Council on August 25, and the Hennepin County Board will decide in the fall when to proceed with further evaluation. □

# Calendar

City of  
Minnetonka

October  
2003

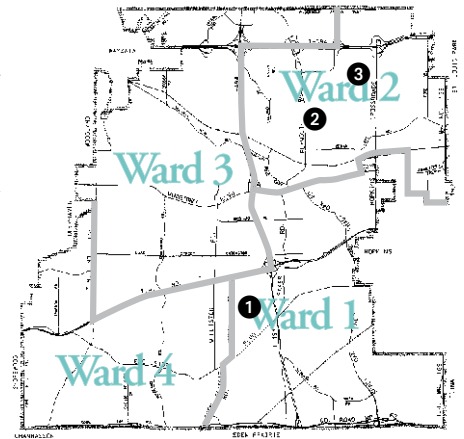
Call (952) 939-8200  
for meeting  
locations.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
		1	2	3	4		2 Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	7 City-wide Open House, 5–8 p.m.
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	13 City Council, 6:30 p.m.
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	14 Senior Advisory Board, 10 a.m.; EDA, 6 p.m.
26	27	28	29	30	31		16 Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.
							20 City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m.; Community Heritage Commission, 6:30 p.m.
							27 City Council, 6:30 p.m.

## NEW DEVELOPMENTS

The following items are tentatively scheduled to come before the Minnetonka Planning Commission in October. Please call (952) 939-8200 for updated information or visit the city web site: [www.eminnetonka.com](http://www.eminnetonka.com). Meeting agendas are posted on the site the Friday prior to each commission meeting.

- 1 Variance to build a garage for Del Holmes at **4742 Forest Circle** (03035.03a)
- 2 Preliminary plat, wetland alteration permit for a seven-lot subdivision for Lecy Construction at **2501 So. Plymouth Rd.** (94045.03a)
- 3 Preliminary plat for three lots for James R. Tice, Jr. at **11600, 11610 Timberline Rd.** (03058.03a)



## DID YOU KNOW?

You know that the City of Minnetonka has its own health and fitness facility, but did you know that the Williston Fitness Center at 14509 Minnetonka Drive offers its amenities at less than half the cost of comparable facilities? Amenities include a full size pool, cardio equipment, aerobic classes, tennis courts, batting cages, free weights — and being a Minnetonka resident gets you a 20% discount on membership rates! For more information, call (952) 939-8370. □

## HT Hot Topics HT

ITEMS IDENTIFIED WITH HT are listed as Hot Topics on the city web site, [www.eminnetonka.com](http://www.eminnetonka.com). Please refer to the site for additional information on these selected topics. For more information, call Minnetonka Mike, (952) 939-8586, leaving your name and address. □

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memo *October 2003*



PRESORTED  
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CITY OF MINNETONKA

A publication of the City of Minnetonka  
14600 Minnetonka Boulevard, Minnetonka, MN 55345 • (952) 939-8200  
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday – Friday

### Mayor

Karen J. Anderson .....(952) 939-8389  
Home: (952) 938-2808  
kanderson@eminnetonka.com  
Meetings with the Mayor may be scheduled  
by calling the Mayor's office, (952) 939-8389.

### City Manager

John Gunyou .....(952) 939-8200

### Newsletter Editor

Joan Post

E-mail: .....comments@eminnetonka.com

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### Council

*At Large:* Janis Callison ... (952) 935-7010 jcallison@eminnetonka.com  
Terry Schneider ..... (952) 934-9529 tschneider@eminnetonka.com  
*Ward 1:* Dick Allendorf ... (952) 935-6017 dallendorf@eminnetonka.com  
*Ward 2:* Ken Tauer ..... (952) 546-9114 ktauer@eminnetonka.com  
*Ward 3:* Brad Wiersum ... (952) 930-3681 bwiersum@eminnetonka.com  
*Ward 4:* Al Thomas ..... (952) 949-9027 athomas@eminnetonka.com  
**Minnetonka Mike** ..... (952) 939-8586 mike@eminnetonka.com

**POLICE-FIRE: Emergency** ..... 9-1-1  
**Non-emergency** ..... (952) 939-8500 or 9-1-1

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