

MINNETONKA MEMO

A publication from the City of Minnetonka



City unveils new public safety facility

In early September, the City of Minnetonka officially opened its new fire and police facility, capping off an 18-month construction project dedicated to improving public safety.

The project included the construction of a new fire station and repurposing of the existing police and fire facility into a remodeled police station.

priorities, particularly in the delivery of emergency response services," said former City Manager GERALYN BARONE, who retired in September.

The facility also emphasizes firefighter health and wellness with the addition of a decontamination area that will reduce exposure to toxic agents.

With the fire department shifting to its new home, its former station and the police facility were remodeled to accommodate the needs of a 21st-century police department.

The revamped police building features modern technology and additional meeting space to provide increased training and information sharing opportunities.

"The layout of the building is much more efficient," said Police Chief Scott Boerboom. "We can now maintain all our equipment in one secure location and better serve our residents."



The new facility also highlights the city's continued focus on sustainability by using local materials, low-energy fixtures and a white roof to improve cooling efficiency. One of the building's most unique features is the wood wall accents milled from onsite trees removed during the expansion.

The improved stations are the latest evolution in the city's ongoing investment in public safety, ensuring departments are best equipped to serve the community for many years to come.

*See page 6 for info on our Open House!



The new fire station addresses the needs of a growing fire department while lowering firefighter response times. The facility's layout and state-of-the-art alerting system allow trucks to leave the station faster, thereby better protecting our community.

"A safe and healthy community is one of the city council's top



Vote early in the 2021 election

Three city council seats are up for election this year – mayor and two at-large seats. Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 2, but anyone can vote absentee early.

Vote absentee in-person

Cast your absentee ballot in-person now through Nov. 1 at 14600 Minnetonka Blvd., Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Direct balloting – where you place your ballot in the tabulator – begins Oct. 26. While direct balloting is faster, our lines are generally longer.

City hall will be open extended hours Saturday, Oct. 30 (10 a.m.–3 p.m.) and Monday, Nov. 1 (8 a.m.–5 p.m.) to accommodate voters.

Absentee voting by mail

Hennepin County manages absentee (early) voting by mail. You can download an absentee ballot application form at hennepin.us/residents/elections/absentee-voting or call 612-348-5151. Ballots must be returned by Election Day to count.

Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 2

Polls will be open from 7 a.m.–8 p.m. Two polling locations have changed from 2020:

- Ward 1: Precinct E voters will vote at Minnetonka Public Works, 11522 Minnetonka Blvd.
- Ward 3: Precinct B voters will vote in the Minnetonka Council Chambers, 14600 Minnetonka Blvd.

Learn more at minnetonkamn.gov/elections or call 952-939-8205 or email elections@minnetonkamn.gov with questions.

Ranked choice voting

Minnetonka voters will use ranked choice voting (RCV) to identify their candidates of choice. A sample ballot and information about the RCV process was mailed to all Minnetonka residences in mid-September. Residents can also find a sample ballot at myballotmn.sos.state.mn.us.

Learn more about RCV at minnetonkamn.gov/rankedchoicevoting.



City council focuses on public safety with 2022 property tax levy

Each September, the city council is required to set a maximum preliminary tax levy before approving the following year's budget. This year, the council set the 2022 preliminary tax levy at its Sept. 13 meeting.

The levy calls for a 5.6 percent increase, due in part to a focus on public safety. To improve emergency response times, the fire department is looking to hire a minimum of nine full-time staff. The city has applied for a federal Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant, which would fully fund 13 positions for three years and reduce the city's 2022 preliminary levy impact.

"Increasing our full-time staffing will allow us to remain proactive and reduce the response time of fire crews first arriving on scene," said Fire Chief John Vance.

The council will continue to review and discuss 2022 city property taxes and finances prior to final adoption in December.

Property owners will receive proposed 2022 tax notices from Hennepin County in November.

Learn more and provide input

Learn more about the city's budget process and timeline at minnetonkamn.gov/budget. View the Sept. 13 council meeting online at minnetonkamn.gov/tv.

To provide feedback on the 2022 budget:

- Submit feedback online at minnetonkamn.gov/request.
- Attend the public meeting Monday, Dec. 6, at 6:30 p.m. Stay tuned for updates and how to watch, participate and submit comments.
- Email Finance Director Darin Nelson at dnelson@minnetonkamn.gov.

2022 budget process

- Aug. 16, 2021: Council discussed levy proposal
- Sept. 13, 2021: Council set preliminary levy
- Nov. 15, 2021: Council to discuss budget proposal
- Dec. 6, 2021: Public meeting

Stay safe and have fun this Halloween!

October means Halloween, and Halloween means candy, costumes and good times. Mostly candy. Stay safe while trick-or-treating with these tips from your friends in the Minnetonka Police Department.



- Only go out in pairs or small groups.
- Always send a responsible adult with young children.
- Never go into anyone's home while trick-or-treating.
- Let a friend or family member know your trick-or-treat route, or share your location.
- Wear a reflective or bright garment if you're heading out after dark.
- Always carry a cell phone - you never know when you may need it.
- Stay in well-lit areas.
- Turn your lights on if you're inviting trick-or-treaters.
- Check candy before devouring it (we know, easier said than done!).
- Mostly ... have fun! Boo!

Meet your police department's newest recruit

This summer, the Minnetonka Police Department's newest recruit hit the ground running - on all four paws.

Meet Mattis! He's an 11-month-old Belgian Malinois, who arrived from the Czech Republic in early August. Mattis is the department's second K9 and will partner with Minnetonka Police Officer Eric Finnvik.

Mattis isn't ready for the field quite yet. He and Officer Finnvik are currently attending an intense, 12-week training program that focuses on obedience, drug detection, locating discarded evidence, tracking and suspect apprehension.



Once his training is complete, Mattis will be certified by the United States Police Canine Association, and his primary role will be helping officers locate people and evidence.

"As my partner, Mattis will respond to daily and emergency calls," Finnvik said. "He'll be asked to find and possibly apprehend suspects involved in crimes, locate evidence and aid in locating missing persons."

Minnetonka has had a K9 program since 1976. K9s live with their partner's family and typically work the night shift.

"It's very clear Mattis is driven to excel in his new role," Finnvik said. "We're excited to put his skills to use throughout the community."

BURWELL Spooktacular

Wear your best costume and have a spooktacularly good time at this FREE fall event!



Friday, Oct. 29
5-8 p.m.

Burwell House grounds
13209 E. McGinty Road*

- Spooky scavenger hunt
- Live performers
- Crafts
- Fire department inflatable slide
- Fire pits
- Burwell House tours
- Food vendors

*Free parking is available at St. David's Family Center (3395 Plymouth Road) and Mills Church (13215 Minnetonka Drive).

Get first year of organics recycling free

To encourage organics recycling, the city and Hennepin County are offering a free year of service to the first 200 new customers in 2021. Which means, there's still time to get in on this environmentally friendly deal. Here's how to sign up:

- You must use Randy's Environmental Services (763-972-3335) as your garbage hauler. Contact them directly to begin curbside organics collection.
- The city will pay Randy's directly; you will not be billed.



Why sign up?

Because organics recycling ...

- **Provides the best opportunity to reduce our trash**
Waste sort studies, like the one Hennepin County conducted in 2016, continue to show that organic materials are the largest proportion of our trash - making up about 25 percent of the trash stream.
- **Reduces greenhouse gas emissions**
Organic materials decomposing in landfills generate methane, a potent greenhouse gas. Diverting organics to composting helps to reduce landfill methane emissions.
- **Improves soil and protects water**
When compost is added to soil, it reduces the need for fertilizers and pesticides. It also increases the water retention of soils, which reduces runoff and erosion that can pollute our water and helps to conserve water.
- **Supports a local economy**
Minnesota's composting industry supports about 700 jobs and produces \$148 million in gross economic activity per year. The composting industry supports four to eight times more jobs on a per ton basis than landfilling operations.
- **Helps achieve our goal of zero waste to landfills**

Benefits list courtesy of Hennepin County.

Drop off leaves throughout October

Each fall, the city accepts leaves, yard waste and brush from Minnetonka residents at the Public Works Facility at 11522 Minnetonka Blvd. Residents must present a driver's license, state ID or Minnetonka utility bill. Commercial tree and lawn services must prove materials came from a Minnetonka address.

Keep leaves and yard waste separate from brush and drop off in their respective areas. Bags cannot be left at the drop-off site, including compostable bags.

LEAF DROP-OFF SITE

The leaf drop-off site is open through Nov. 20. Friday and Sunday hours aren't offered until November.

Saturdays	7 a.m.-3 p.m.	Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
Mondays	11 a.m.-7 p.m.	Oct. 4, 11, 18, 25
Tuesdays	11 a.m.-7 p.m.	Oct. 5, 12, 19, 26



BRUSH DROP-OFF SITE

The brush drop-off site is open Saturdays from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Mondays and Tuesdays from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. through Nov. 20.

Learn more

Visit minnetonkamn.gov/yardwaste to learn more, or call 952-988-8400 with questions. See Page 7 for more fall yard work tips!



Give us your best shot in the city's Photo contest

There's still time to take a great Minnetonka photo before the city's annual photo contest!

Entry information and contest rules

To enter, email your photo to **webmaster@minnetonkamn.gov**. The city will begin accepting submissions Monday, Sept. 27. All entries must be received by Friday, Oct. 15, at 4:30 p.m.

All photos must be taken in Minnetonka. Photographers may only submit one photo.

Visit **minnetonkamn.gov/photocontest** to view complete contest rules.

Choose winners

Voting will take place on the city's new community engagement website, **minnetonkamatters.com**, from Oct. 20-29. The photos with the most votes will earn First, Second and Third Place and Honorable Mention honors.

Awards

Winning photos will be featured on the city's website, social media accounts and in the *Minnetonka Memo*.

Please note, all entries will become the property of the City of Minnetonka and may be used in city publications.

Solar energy - it's the hot new thing

Friday, Oct. 8 | Noon-1 p.m. | Virtual

Go green by harnessing the sun's energy to power your home. Not sure where to start? No worries. Midwest Renewable Energy Association (MREA) is hosting a free webinar that will answer your questions and get you headed in the right direction. Plus, MREA will share info on how to participate in their solar group buy-in. Don't miss it!

Visit **minnetonkamn.gov/green** to register. Contact Planner Drew Ingvalson at **dingvalson@minnetonkamn.gov** or 952-939-8293 with questions.



Charge ahead with electric vehicles!

Tuesday, Oct. 5 | 6-7 p.m. | Virtual



Thinking about purchasing an electric vehicle (EV)? The car is only half the equation. Sign up for the October edition of our Sustainable Minnetonka Webinar Series and learn all about in-home EV charging stations, as well as charging station programs offered by Xcel Energy.

Visit **minnetonkamn.gov/green** to register, learn more and subscribe to email/text updates on the city's ongoing sustainability initiatives.

The Sustainable Minnetonka Webinar Series is brought to you by Minnetonka's Energy Action Team, with support from Xcel Energy's Partners in Energy program.

Join Williston in October 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
- Childcare



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

Don't miss our **FIRE DEPT. AND CITY OPEN HOUSE!**

Tuesday, Oct. 5, 5-8 p.m.
Minnetonka Civic Center Campus
14600 Minnetonka Blvd.



Check out the new facility, and stay for fireworks at 8 p.m. by the Ice Arena B parking lot.

Please note, this event is subject to change based on the latest COVID recommendations.

Follow the City of Minnetonka on Social Media

Join the conversation and stay connected to latest news, events and updates!



This fall, think about spring

Fall yard work is crucial in Minnesota to protect your plants against the elements of winter and prepare them to thrive the following spring.

As you embark on your outdoor fall chores, follow these tips to remedy small problems or begin changes that will bear fruit in the future.



- Seed (or overseed) bare spots in your lawn. Try fescue grasses in shady or damp spots where conventional grass hasn't thrived.
- Pull weeds when the ground is moist - ideally, after it rains. Place weeds in plastic bags and deposit in the trash.

- If you need to use herbicide, spot-spray problem areas rather than applying broadly. Don't do it when it's windy or rainy to avoid the spread of chemicals.
- You can plant trees, shrubs and perennials in the fall if they are properly mulched and receive an inch of water per week until the ground freezes. Add wire caging around woody plants to protect from wildlife.
- Collect native plant seeds and distribute them over the soil.
- Spread a thin layer of leaf litter atop planting beds for protection, shelter and nutrients.
- Rather than clearing perennials, cut them to 8-12 inches high. Bees can spend the winter inside the dried stems.



NATURAL RESOURCES HAPPENINGS



Advance registration is required for these events at minnetonkamn.gov/NRsignup, or call 952-988-8400.

Learn best practices to tackle buckthorn and improve the ecological health of your property, all while saving time and money.

Buckthorn Workshop

Thursday, Oct. 7
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Minnetonka Community Center
Community Room

Help remove invasive buckthorn to prepare parklands for native plant restoration. Additional information - including what to wear and bring - will be emailed to participants.

Location	Meeting Location	Date	Time
Lone Lake Park	5624 Shady Oak Road	Sat., Oct. 2	9 a.m.-noon
Purgatory Park	17315 Excelsior Blvd.	Sat., Oct. 9	9 a.m.-noon
Hilloway Park	12145 Hilloway Road	Sat., Oct. 16	9 a.m.-noon

City of Minnetonka Calendar

- 4** City Council, 6:30 p.m.
- 5** City and Fire Department Open House, 5 p.m.
- 6** Park Board, 7 p.m.
- 11** City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m.
- 12** Senior Advisory Board, 10 a.m.
- 14** Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.
- 18** City Council, 6:30 p.m.
- 21** Economic Development Advisory Commission, 6 p.m.
- 25** City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m.
- 26** DEI Task Force, 6:30 p.m.
- 28** Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.
- 29** Burwell Spooktacular, 5 p.m.

City meetings will be held in person with the option to participate virtually. 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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Learn the sounds of fire safety

Oct. 3-9 is Fire Prevention Week, and this year's theme is all about learning the different sounds that smoke and carbon monoxide alarms make, what they mean and how to take action.



Visit firepreventionweek.org for more information, including:

- A safety tip sheet with a breakdown of different alarm sounds.
- A family home safety action plan.
- Modified alarm info for those who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- The rule on when to replace smoke alarms (spoiler: every 10 years).
- Safety-themed games and activities for kids.
- And more!

