

MINNETONKA MEMO

A publication from the City of Minnetonka



Election Day is Nov. 2

The 2021 municipal election is Tuesday, Nov. 2. There are three city council seats on the ballot that will use ranked choice voting - mayor and two at-large seats. The Hopkins, Minnetonka and Wayzata school districts also have school board positions on the back of the ballot.

Here's what you need to know to cast your vote:

- **Hours:** 7 a.m.-8 p.m. If you're in line at 8 p.m. you're allowed to vote.
- **Locations and ballot:** Find your polling place and view a sample ballot online at pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us
- **Registration:** Voters can register at the polls with proper identification. Learn more at minnetonkamn.gov/voters
- **Location changes:** Ward 1 Precinct E voters will vote at the Minnetonka Public Works building. Ward 3 Precinct B voters will vote at Minnetonka Council Chambers.
- **Results** will be available by Friday, Nov. 6 at minnetonkamn.gov.

Full election details are online at minnetonkamn.gov/elections. Call 952-939-8200 or email elections@minnetonkamn.gov to learn more and to ask questions.

Longtime election judge bids farewell

Bonnie Carlson remembers her first election judging experience well.

It was 2002, and Sen. Paul Wellstone had unexpectedly died mere weeks before the election. To make matters more challenging, Carlson's precinct site had, at the last minute, moved its polling equipment to a preschool - classroom small chairs and all - to accommodate a funeral.

"It was pretty wild," Carlson recalled. "People were coming in droves to vote ... and here I am a brand new lead judge. I really think I earned my wings on that one. Getting through it made every election after much easier."

Carlson has been a beloved fixture of the Minnetonka elections process for nearly 20 years. She's worked dozens of primary and general elections at Cross of Glory Church and has been a friendly face welcoming absentee voters at Minnetonka City Hall.

"I can't tell you how much I've enjoyed being a part of that important process and the chance to mingle with the wonderful people of Minnetonka," she said.

Carlson, who recently retired from her post, is one of the hundreds of Minnetonka election judges who ensure the integrity of the voting process and assist our residents at the polls.

"Bonnie is one of the most loyal, dedicated and patriotic people I have ever met," says Minnetonka City Clerk Becky Koosman. "She would show up every morning with a smile on her face and ask, 'How many voters will we have today?'"

For her part, Carlson praised Minnetonka elections staff for making her job easier with updated election equipment, training and materials. "They always made me feel part of the team," Carlson said.

And that team won't be the same without her. Thank you, Bonnie, for your important service to Minnetonka's voters and for your friendship. We are grateful beyond words.



Minnetonka: Population 53,000+

The official 2020 Census numbers are in, and the City of Minnetonka recorded a total population of 53,776 – an increase of 8.13 percent from 2010.

The city's population increase is slightly below overall growth across the Twin Cities, where the total population grew by 11 percent, or 314,000 residents, over the last decade.

In Minnetonka, the city saw its overall housing units increase by 1,785 (to 25,079), while total households grew by 1,793 (to 23,694).

Many thanks to all Minnetonka residents who participated in the census. The city had an overall self-response rate of 84.4 percent, which is well above state average.

Watch for more census data to be released in the coming months.

	2020 CENSUS	CHANGE FROM 2010
Population	53,776	+4,042
Housing Units	25,079	+1,785
Households	23,694	+1,793
Persons per Household	2.26	+0.01

Source: US Census Bureau

Apply online for homestead classification

New Minnetonka homeowners are reminded to apply for homestead classification. By doing so, you could potentially qualify for a homestead market value exclusion that could save you money on your property taxes the following year.

To qualify, you must own and occupy the property as your primary residence. Qualified relatives of the owner may also apply for homestead classification.

Apply for homestead classification with Hennepin County's online application at hennepin.us/homestead. The application deadline is Dec. 31.

Watch for preliminary tax impact notices

Each September, the Minnetonka City Council sets its maximum preliminary tax levy before approving the following year's budget.

At its Sept. 13 meeting, the city council adopted a preliminary property tax increase of no more than 5.6 percent for 2022.

What's new in 2022?

The majority of the increase focuses on public safety and capital improvements.

To improve fire response times, the fire department is looking to hire at least nine full-time fire staff.

The preliminary levy also restores a portion of the levy dedicated to the Capital Improvements Plan, which was reduced last year to mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.



What does this mean for the average homeowner?

City property taxes for the median valued home in Minnetonka (\$405,400 for taxes payable in 2022) will increase by approximately \$97* next year.

How will I know my impact?

Hennepin County will mail truth-in-taxation notices in mid-November. These notices include your property's preliminary tax impact in 2022 from all taxing jurisdictions.

If my property value went up, can I contest it at this time?

Unfortunately, no. The time to contest property values is in the spring. Your valuation cannot be changed at this time.

Learn more and provide input

- Visit minnetonkamn.com/budget to learn more about the budget process.
- Provide feedback on the 2022 budget:
 - Online: minnetonkamn.gov/request
 - In Person: Monday, Dec. 6 city council meeting.
 - Email: dnelson@minnetonkamn.gov

Cook up fire safety this season

The holiday season is almost here, and that means more time preparing big meals for family gatherings. Did you know cooking was the leading cause of structure fires in Minnesota in 2019, causing nearly \$6 million in damages?



These reminders from the Minnetonka Fire Department will help you cook up a healthy dose of fire safety in the kitchen this winter.



Never leave the kitchen while cooking. If you have to step away, turn off the stove and remove pans from burners.



Keep flammable items - oven mitts, towels, wooden spoons, etc. - at least three feet from the stove and avoid wearing loose-fitting clothes.



Cover pan fires with a tight-fitting lid and turn off the heat.



Ensure your smoke alarms are working properly on each level and in each bedroom.

Shop safely this holiday season

'Tis the season for online shopping. Ensure your holiday is a happy one and keep your purchases secure with these helpful tips from your Minnetonka Police Department:



- Use only secure websites when shopping online. Need an easy way to verify that? Simply check your search engine's address bar and look for <https://> before the site name. Avoid sites that skip the "s" at the end (<http://>).
- Before undertaking your virtual shopping extravaganza, install the latest version of your internet browser, which often includes important security updates.
- Avoid using a public Wi-Fi or sharing network while making your holiday purchases.
- Process transactions with your credit card, rather than your debit card. Why? Credit cards offer better consumer protections and fraud tracking.
- Ship your purchases to a secure location and be sure to track your deliveries online.
- Avoid becoming an easy target for theft. After unboxing, don't leave packaging in your garbage/recycling pick-up for long. It's a giveaway that you have something new and fancy in your home.
- And finally! When it comes to giving a Facebook shout-out to your own generous gift-giving spirit ... don't. Be discreet on social media about all things shopping related.



Mike Funk begins tenure as acting city manager

Last month, following the retirement of longtime city leader Geralyn Barone, administrator Mike Funk was named Minnetonka's acting city manager.

Before partnering with Minnetonka two years ago in his role as assistant city manager, Funk had served in a variety of urban, suburban and rural settings - most recently for the cities of Maplewood, Minnetrista and Olivia.

"My professional calling has always been to serve and improve the communities I work for," Funk said. "My goal is to bring energy and insight to my role as acting city manager. It's a job I take very seriously, and I'm grateful for the opportunity."

Minnetonka City Council will begin its search for a permanent city manager after this November's election.



Ridgedale Commons Park gets go-ahead

This fall, construction began on a new park adjacent to Ridgedale Center.



Ridgedale Commons will be a two-acre community park that will feature inclusive, sustainable gathering spaces for a wide variety of activities and events.

The community site will include a plaza and lawn - both of which could double as event spaces - as well as an ice skating rink, garden room with pollinator-focused plants, interactive fountain, wooded lounge area and park building.

As part of the project, nearby Crane Lake Preserve will receive an update in the form of a new picnic shelter.



Electrify your life!

Tuesday, Nov. 16 | 6-7 p.m. | Virtual

Looking for another good way to go green? Swap out your conventional lawnmower or leaf blower for the electric versions! Even your water heater, furnace and oven can make the switch, and you'll reduce greenhouse gas emissions and save money. Learn more by signing up for our free November Sustainability Webinar.

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.



Learn more about the project at minnetonkamn.gov/ridgedalepark.

Sign up for natural resources news

Learn more about Minnetonka's abundant natural resources and how you can help protect them!

Visit minnetonkamn.gov/natural-resources to sign up for news, tips and events via email or text message.



Don't miss the **jazziest** debut in town!

Friday, Nov. 19, 7 p.m.
Minnetonka Community Center

Be there as the Music Association of Minnetonka's newest ensemble, the Minnetonka Jazz Band, presents its much-anticipated debut performance! We bet you'll be up and dancing in no time.

Visit musicassociation.org for details.



WINTER FARMERS MARKET



Stroll through the winter market for local foods, crafts and gifts from 45 local vendors, plus live music and free kids activities.



**Saturday, Nov. 13, Dec. 4, Jan. 8,
Feb. 12, March 12**
9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Minnetonka Community Center (indoors)
14600 Minnetonka Blvd.

For more information or to become a vendor, visit minnetonkamn.gov/farmersmarket, or email farmersmarket@minnetonkamn.gov.

Time to prune trees

Tree pruning is an important part of home maintenance. Plan to prune in the winter, when trees - along with potentially harmful insects and diseases - are dormant. Branches should be pruned if they are diseased, broken, overlong or crowding each other. Also keep in mind that this summer's drought was hard on trees. Consider reducing the amount of pruning or even delaying until after the next growing season.



Folding hand saw



Pole saw

Get ready for winter

As cliché as it sounds, winter is coming - are you ready? If not, help is on the way! These are the most common tips to protect both your home and your yard from winter:

- Change your air filters to prevent cold day furnace fiascos.
- Test your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors; winter is the most common time of year for house fires.
- Clean your gutters to protect from exterior deterioration and water infiltration.
- Have your chimney inspected and cleaned prior to firing it up for your cozy nights in.
- Drain and shut down your sprinkler systems and outside faucets to avoid frozen pipes.
- Mow your leaves and let them be; decomposing leaves slowly minimize weed growth.
- Place driveway markers along your driveway and curbs to help with snow plow removal.*

**A limited supply of curb markers are available for residents. Stop by city hall or public works to pick them up!*

Follow these tips and guidelines for successful pruning.

- Use the right tools, including eye protection, gloves, bypass hand pruners, folding hand saws, pole saws and bypass loppers. Avoid anvil pruners, which damage the wood.

Bypass hand pruners



Bypass loppers

- If pruning requires a ladder or chainsaw, call a professional!
 - Don't remove more than a quarter of a tree's branches.
- Individual branches should be less than one-third the diameter of the trunk.
 - Know your property lines, and consult state law before pruning or removing your neighbor's trees. Notify the city, county or state about pruning needs on someone else's property.

Right-of way pruning begins soon

The city will prune trees and shrubs along the right-of-way from November to March to improve sightlines, clear dead and broken branches and prepare for upcoming construction projects. Property owners will be notified by mail if pruning is scheduled in their neighborhood. Call 952-988-8421 to ask questions and learn more.



Don't 'waste' yard waste this fall

Leaves, twigs and grass clippings are often called "yard waste," but these beneficial items can add nutrients to the soil and increase water absorption. This fall, follow these tips to get the most out of your yard waste.

- Compost leaves, grass and native plant trimmings as mulch.
- Mow grass clippings and leaves back onto the lawn.
- Bag yard waste for curbside collection or bring it to the city's leaf and brush drop-off site.
- Visit **adopt-a-drain.org** to adopt a storm sewer drain. Clean it regularly to prevent water pollution.



City of Minnetonka Calendar

- 2** Election Day, 7 a.m.
- 3** Joint City Council/Park Board, 5:30 p.m.
- 4** Economic Development Advisory Commission, 6 p.m.
- 8** City Council, 6:30 p.m.
- 9** Senior Advisory Board, 10 a.m.
- 9** Charter Commission, 6:30 p.m.
- 9** Sustainability Commission, 6:30 p.m.
- 11** Veterans Day, city offices closed
- 15** City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m.
- 18** Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.
- 22** City Council, 6:30 p.m.
- 23** DEI Task Force, 6:30 p.m.
- 25-26** Thanksgiving Holiday, city offices closed

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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Ward 4: Kissy Coakley 952-486-9670
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Acting City Manager

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



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Take the Survey

Hopkins Schools and Minnetonka Recreation Services are asking for feedback from community members on elements that should be considered when choosing a new name for the building currently known as the Lindbergh Center. Use the QR Code or follow this link to learn more and take the survey.

minnetonkamn.gov/news

