

CITY NEWSLETTER



This spring, consider making your yard a more welcoming place for bees, butterflies, and other pollinators. Find tips inside on page 12.

IN THIS ISSUE

- 2** 2020 Elections
- 3** Census Day Is April 1
- 4** Database Resources
- 5** Library Activities
- 6** Facade Improvement Grant
- 7** Apply for Commission Seats
- 8** Darry “911” Jones
- 9** Firefighter Recruitment FAQ
- 10** Stop Sewer Backups
- 11** Fix-It Clinic
- 12** Pet Ordinance Update



COLUMBIA HEIGHTS
REDISCOVER THE HEIGHTS

RRSRT STD
U.S. Postage PAID
Permit No. 30308
TWIN CITIES MN

City of Columbia Heights
590 40th Ave., N.E.
Columbia Heights, MN 55421
763-706-3600

SEE FLIP SIDE FOR RECREATION PROGRAMS

City Accepting Nominations for Outstanding Citizen Until May 1

Do you know of someone making a positive impact in our community? Someone who's gone unrecognized for all the great things they have done to make the City a better place? Every year, Columbia Heights seeks nominations for

an Outstanding Citizen, in both adult and youth categories. Nominations for 2020 are being accepted until May 1. Please call 763-706-3611 for details, or stop by City Hall to pick up a nomination form.

Want to Run for Local Office? Candidate Filing Window Opens May 19

- Positions residents can file for: Mayor (two-year term) and councilmember (four-year term)
- Two council seats open, one mayoral seat open
- Filing dates are Tue, May 19, to Tue, June 2. Must fill out Affidavit of Candidacy (forms available online or at City Hall) and pay a \$15 filing fee (cash or check) and bring form to City Hall during office hours.
- There will be a primary Aug 11 if more than four people file for a City Council seat and if more than two people file for the mayoral seat to narrow down to four candidates for council and two for mayor.
- To run, candidates must be qualified to vote in Minnesota, be at least 21 years old by the date of assuming office (Jan 1, 2021), and residents of the City for at least 30 days before Election Day. More info at columbiaheightsmn.gov/elections

Important 2020 Election Dates

Feb 29: Special Saturday absentee voting for presidential primary. City Hall will be open 10 am to 3 pm.

March 2: Absentee voting for presidential primary closes.

March 3: Presidential primary. Polls open from 7 am to 8 pm. Must select a party when voting.

May 19: Candidate filing period opens for municipal elections

June 2: Candidate filing period closes

June 26: Absentee voting for state primary begins

July 21: Last day to preregister to vote for the state primary

Aug 11: State primary Election Day, polls open 7 am to 8 pm

Sept 18: General election absentee voting begins.

Oct 20: Last day to preregister to vote for the general election

Nov 3: General election, polls open 7 am to 8 pm

2019 Employee of the Year Award Goes to Fire Department Captain

Thirty-five years ago, the City Council approved the Employee of the Year Award as a method of rewarding employees seen by their peers and supervisors as deserving of special recognition for their accomplishments and contributions to the City of Columbia Heights. This year, Fire Capt. Tony Cuzzupe became the 40th employee to receive the honor.

As a fire captain, Tony is expected to make life-saving decisions at all hours of the night with little to no sleep over 24-hour shifts. There is no room for error. During his 13 plus

years of full-time experience, he has spent more than 38,000 hours on shift duty, averaging 56 hours a week. Yet, every day, on every call, inspection, or school education event, he rises to the occasion and shows his true heart.

Described by those who nominated him as being one of the most caring and dedicated people they have ever known, as someone who has had myriad chances to make positive impacts in people's lives and who has never passed up the opportunity to do so. For example, while on a rental inspection job, Tony noticed a boy walking a bicycle up the driveway. The boy looked upset. When asked, the boy explained that his day of biking had come to an abrupt end when his bike broke. Tony noticed this boy's distress, took the time to stop and listen to him, and assessed the damage of the bicycle. But he didn't stop there. He promptly grabbed a tool kit from the department's truck and fixed the bike on the spot.

Tony has become a key part of the growth and mentorship of the City's younger firefighters and has demonstrated a true knack for team building. He formed the Columbia Heights Fire Department Honor Guard to help honor the sacrifices made by former firefighters and their families.

Tony was nominated by his fellow employees and selected from a list of nominees by past winners of the Employee of the Year Award for being an asset not just to the Fire Department, but to the community, and to our lives.

Congratulations Tony!



Tony Cuzzupe accepts the Employee of the Year award plaque from Mayor Donna Schmitt



— This Spring — **GET COUNTED**

Make Sure Columbia Heights and MN are Represented in the 2020 Census

The City of Columbia Heights has been identified by the U.S. Census Bureau as at-risk of being an undercounted area. Because the census determines where district lines are drawn and where and how federal and state funding gets distributed, an inaccurate headcount can create negative consequences that ripple through a community for decades.

In fact, Minnesota stands to lose an estimated \$28,000 over the next 10 years for every one person who fails to be counted in the 2020 Census.

Census data also determines the number of seats the State has in the U.S. House of Representatives. If Minnesota is undercounted, it is at risk of losing a seat in the U.S. House.

To ensure Columbia Heights receives proper representation, the City has joined communities across the country in forming a Complete Count Committee made up of volunteer residents. Officials are calling on everyone to help increase awareness and encourage participation in the 2020 Census. To get involved, email chcensus2020@gmail.com with your contact information.

Are My Answers Safe and Secure?

The Census Bureau collects data for statistical purposes only. They combine your responses with information from other households or businesses, which never identify your household, any person in your household, or business. Your information is confidential. For more info, visit www.mn.gov.

Census Day Is April 1, 2020

What that means for you is: By April 1, 2020, you will receive an invitation to participate in the Census. The invitation will give you three options for completing your census form:

- online;
- by phone; or
- over the mail.

Visit mn.gov/admin/2020-census to learn more or to find out about Census job openings.



Members of several Minnesota cities, including Columbia Heights, gathered at the State Capitol last spring to bring attention to the importance of the upcoming 2020 Census.

Build Your Skills With Online Resources Through the City Library

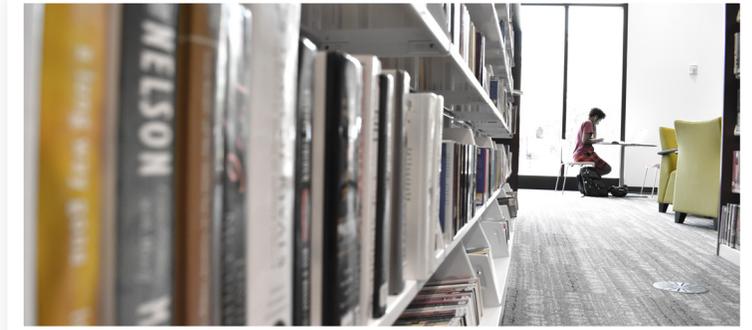
The Library has numerous online resources available for you to use for free. All you need is a library card with a PIN. Two of the most popular resources for students and learners of all ages are HelpNow! and Learning Express.

HelpNow! provides one-to-one tutoring to students in a variety of subjects as well as practice tests, flashcard games, and virtual study rooms. Online tutors are available to help with homework, writing skills, and language learning. Adult learners and job seekers are also welcome and tutors can help with resumes, cover letters, and U.S. citizenship test preparation. Live tutors are available every day from 1-11 pm. HelpNow! Includes Spanish-speaking support.

LearningExpress features online tutorials, practice tests, and eBooks to help patrons of all ages. You'll get immediate scoring, complete answer explanations, and an individualized analysis of your results. A large variety are available, including college and graduate placement tests (ACT, SAT, GRE, MCAD, LSAT), elementary and high school tests (advanced placement; high school, middle school, and

elementary school skills), career preparation exams (GED, EMS, firefighter, civil service, and reading, math and writing skills practice), TOEFL and U.S. Citizenship Exams, and more. LearningExpress is available 24 hours a day.

Find both online resources on the library website www.anokacountylibrary.org. Click "research" and then "online databases." Don't have a library card? Stop by the Columbia Heights Public Library to get yours today!



Update on Columbia Heights/Lomianki Sister Cities, Year in Review

It was another active year for the Columbia Heights/Lomianki Poland Sister Cities group. In September, Gloria Bergstrom and Phyllis and John Hustad went to Lomianki, Poland for a four-day celebration honoring American and Polish WWII soldiers. Bergstrom also helped teach at some schools there during the visit.

The group continues to send books to the English Learners Library in a Lomianki public school. They are now sending novels written in English to the library.

The Young Artist national competition, sponsored by the International Sister Cities organization, will be at the Columbia Heights High School March 13, 7 pm. The theme is "One World; Out of Many, We are One." Heights student Ashley Koeing was a national finalist in the 2019 competition.

The Sister Cities group welcomes new members. Call Bergstrom at 651-633-0506 for more information.

SAVE THE DATE

Community Picnic Is June 25

The City of Columbia Heights annual Community Picnic returns Thu, June 25, from 4:30 to 7 pm at Huset Park West. The picnic will include an arts and craft fair inside Murzyn Hall, so people can walk back and forth to each event. The Jamboree Carnival will also open June 25, so residents can make a day out of visiting Huset Park! The picnic will feature booths with officials from City and community organizations, children's activities around the splash pad, and free refreshments. Stay tuned for updates in the summer newsletter.

Photo Contest Deadline Is Aug 5

Calling all photographers! The City will be making a commemorative 2021 calendar in honor of Columbia Heights' 100th anniversary. For the calendar, we are looking for photos taken within the City limits in a variety of seasons and representing multiple aspects of the town and community. Photographers whose photos are chosen to be included in the calendar will receive recognition in the City Newsletter and a free copy of the calendar to keep. The photo submission deadline is Aug 5, 2020. For a full list of rules and submission guidelines, visit www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/photo

Get daily updates on Columbia Heights happenings by following us on Facebook @Columbiaheightsmn

Find our daily newsfeed at columbiaheightsmn.gov
For questions about this newsletter, call 763-706-3615

LIBRARY PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Below is a small sampling of upcoming activities at the library. For a full list, visit www.anokacounty.us/events, or call 763-706-3690 to register.

Adult Programs

Consult With a Law Librarian

March 11, April 8, May 13: 5-7 pm
Meet with and bring questions for the Anoka County Law Library Director.

Birdscaping in the Heights

Wed, March 18, 6 pm
Landscaping tips for layouts that attract birds. Registration required.

Organize Your Closet

Tue, March 24, 2 pm
Tips for overcoming some common closet organizational mistakes. Registration required.

Bizarre MN History

Mon, March 30, 6 pm
Chad Lewis of Unexplained Research will showcase over 100 bizarre newspaper stories from Minnesota not seen in 100 years. Registration appreciated.

Organize Important Documents

Tue, March 31, 2 pm
A short course on organizing and indexing your important documents and passwords. Registration required.

Needlecraft Drop-In Group

3-5 pm: March 9, April 13, May 11

Author Panel

Mon, April 6, 6 pm
Join Minnesota Sisters in Crime author panel as they discuss their recent anthology, "Dark Side of the Loon." Registration appreciated.

Author Talk: Joe Kimball

Mon, May 11, 6 pm
Author of "Secrets of the Congdon Mansion" will discuss the infamous Glensheen Mansion murder case. Registration appreciated.

Library Book Club

10 am: March 18, April 15, May 20

Senior Surf for Adults 55+

9:30-11:30 am: March 4, April 1, May 6
Internet lessons. Registration required.

AARP Technology Training: Intro to iPhones and Beyond the Basics iPhones

Wed, May 27, 10 pm (basics), 12 pm (beyond basics)

English Conversation Circles

Mons, 6-7 pm, Thurs, 1-2 pm
Drop in for these English language group practice sessions.

Kids and Teen Programs

LEGO Challenge

4-5 pm: March 11, April 8, May 13
For grades K-6. Walk-ups welcome.

Graphic Novel Book Club

3:30-5 pm: March 17, April 21, May 19
Love graphic novels? Want to learn how to create your own comic? Join us after school the third Tuesday of the month to discuss your favorite graphic novels, play games, and connect with other graphic novel lovers at Columbia Academy.

Stenciling Tote Bags**

Fri, March 27, 2-4 pm
Create professional-looking stencils and print your favorite on a take-home tote bag. Kids 10+. Registration required.

STEAM Saturdays*

11:30 am: March 28 (food and nutrition, for grades K-5), April 25 (MN geochemistry, for grades 3-6)
Hands-on science fun for families! Registration required.

Creative Movement**

Thu, April 9, 2-3 pm
Using dance elements, students will learn to navigate different pathways. Grades K-6. Registration required.

Teen Service Day

Sat, May 9, 11 am-1 pm
Need service hours for a class or school group? Help us decorate the library space in preparation for the summer reading program. Grades 6 and up.

4-H Tech Wizards*

2nd & 4th Tues of the month, 4-6 pm
Small group mentoring for tech and STEM concepts. Grades 5-8.

**This program is partially funded with a grant from the Minnesota Department of Education using federal funding, CFDA 84.287, Every Student Succeeds Act, Title IV B-21 Century Community Learning Centers. The content of this program does not necessarily represent the policy of the federal Department of Education or the Minnesota Department of Education. **Funded by the MN Arts and Cultural Heritage fund.*

Storytime @ the Library

March 9-April 23

Family Storytime

Mondays, 10:30-11 am

Baby Read, Baby Grow!

Thursdays, 10:30-11 am
For infants birth to 24 months

Toddler Play Date

Mon, April 27, 10:30 am
For infants birth to preschool

Library Hours

Mon-Wed, 9 am to 8 pm
Thu-Fri, 9 am to 5 pm
Sat, 11 am to 4 pm

Library Closures

April 10 • May 7 • May 23-25

3939 Central Ave NE • (763) 706-3690

www.columbiaheightsmn.gov

Cable Channel 19

Facebook: @ColumbiaHeightsPublicLibrary



Facade Improvement Grant Program Enters Third Year

Eligible business and commercial property owners can apply now for a chance to receive up to \$5,000 in matching grant aid for exterior storefront improvement in the third year of the Facade Improvement Grant Program, a collaborative effort between the Economic Development Authority, the Community Development Department, and the Columbia Heights Police Department.

Any commercial properties located along Central Ave NE, between 37th and 47th Ave NE, and along 39th or 40th Ave NE, are eligible to apply.

In an effort to reduce crime and enhance safety in area business districts and along Central Ave, the Columbia Heights Police Department also uses the grant program to provide monitored camera surveillance adjacent to participating businesses.

The City will start taking applications for the 2020 Facade Improvement Grant Program in the spring. Check columbiaheightsmn.gov for updates.

Building or Adding to a Garage? What You Need to Know

Prior to the approval of the building permit, the construction or addition of a garage requires a plan review by the City planner and building official to ensure the structure meets all required setbacks and applicable zoning requirements, as well as building code requirements.

What's Required?

A Certificate of Survey, two sets of complete building plans, and a completed Residential Building Permit Application are required before construction begins. A handout is available on the City's website which provides detailed information of what is required for plan review submittal. Find the information at www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/permits. Please contact Community Development at (763) 706-3670, if you have any questions regarding these requirements prior to submitting your documents for plan review.



General Information on Garage Construction:

- Garages cannot be located in a drainage or utility easement.
- Detached garages may be constructed on a thickened-edge slab.
- Attached garages must be constructed on a foundation extending at least 42" below finished grade and stepped in to the foundation of the home.
- Any portion of garage that is less than 5 ft. from the property line shall be fire protected.
- Garage doors must meet minimum wind resistance standards and must come with a label indicating the door complies with ANSI/DASMA 108 (designed for 90 mph wind).

OTHER SPRING PROJECTS PLANNED?

Get All the Info at Columbiaheightsmn.gov/permits

Decks, driveways, fences, sheds, windows, porches, pools—whatever your project is, get the information you need on acquiring the proper permits and plans to get rolling at www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/permits. Getting the proper permits and site plan approvals can take time, so consider starting the process ASAP if you'd like to start building this spring. You can also call Community Development with questions at 763-706-3670.



Take a Seat

Citizen commissions contribute to the quality of life in the community by assisting the City Council in an advisory capacity regarding a wide range of activities. Residents who serve their community in this way gain valuable insight relative to City operations. Commissioners have the capacity to help shape the community through decisions and input. Members volunteer their time to attend meetings throughout the year to address pertinent matters.

Multiple Seats Open on Five Boards and Commissions: Apply by March 6

- Number of open seats: 2 Planning Commission, 1 Library Board, 3 Park and Recreation Commission, 1 Traffic Commission, 1 Charter Commission
- Find an application online at columbiaheightsmn.gov/boardsandcommissions, or pick one up at City Hall or at the Columbia Heights Public Library
- Application deadline of March 6: bring to City Hall, mail, or email ntingley@columbiaheightsmn.gov
- Interviews in mid-March
- All positions require an interview except those only applying for Charter Commission (appointed by Chief Judge of Anoka County)
- Appointments made March 23 for those appointed by Council. Terms for those appointed start April 1
- Descriptions of board and commission duties at columbiaheightsmn.gov/boardsandcommissions
- For more info, contact the City Clerk at 763-706-3611, or email ntingley@columbiaheightsmn.gov

Another Way to Get Involved: 100th Anniversary Committee

July 21, 2021 will mark the 100th anniversary of Columbia Heights officially becoming an incorporated city. Activities and celebrations will be planned throughout the year. Have ideas for how to celebrate? Contact Communications Coordinator Ben Sandell to ask about joining the 100th Community Stake Holders Committee by calling 763-706-3615 or emailing bsandell@columbiaheightsmn.gov. To find out more about 100th anniversary events, check www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/events for updates.

IMPORTANT CITY CONTACTS

CITY OFFICES.....(763) 706-3600	Police(763) 706-8100	Mayor Donna Schmitt.....(763) 706-3607
Administration.....(763) 706-3610	Community	Councilmember Buesgens..... (763) 788-5072
Public Works Dept.(763) 706-3700	Development.....(763) 706-3670	Councilmember Murzyn(763) 781-4983
Garbage/Refuse Pick-up/ Recycling (Waste Management)(888) 960-0008	Bldg. Permits/ Licenses.....(763) 706-3678	Councilmember Novitsky.....(612) 760-4463
Utility Billing.....(763) 706-3640	24-Hour Info. Line-Murzyn Hall info., Weather Cancellations, Directions(763) 706-3737	Councilmember Williams(763) 788-1113
Fire Dept. Administration & Information/ Emergency Management..... (763) 706-8150	Murzyn Hall Rental..... (763) 706-3734	City Newsletter editor (763) 706-3615
Fire Chief.....(763) 706-8152		Emergency.....911

MORE INFO AT:

www.columbiaheightsmn.gov

CHPD Officer Darry Jones Makes Big Debut in Boxing Ring

Columbia Heights Police Officer Darry Jones Jr. was still new to the job when he first noticed the Firehouse Boxing Gym inside the City Hall building on Mill Street. He decided it might be fun to train there as a boxer, since it was so close to where he worked and boxing had always been an interest of his.

It turned out, Jones was a natural. In less than a year, he went from never having formally trained as a boxer in his life, to fighting in 15 official bouts and winning 14, giving him enough experience to enter the Olympic Trial Qualifiers in Columbus, Ohio, in the fall of 2019.

Before that, Jones had trained at the Firehouse Gym nearly every day since he started, finding windows of opportunity to get in a quick workout. He's traveled out of state for multiple fights. His first official fight was against the champion of the 2018 Upper Midwest Golden Gloves Tournament. Jones walked away a winner.

He has been dubbed Darry "911" Jones by his fellow police officers, who have been a major help in this process, he said.

"They've been swapping shifts with me to let me take time away for fights," Jones said. "Everybody at the department has been so supportive."

Jones' presence at the Firehouse Gym has also helped the department's mission of community policing. Even when Jones isn't training, he'll regularly stop by the gym while on patrol to lend some encouragement to the kids training there.

"I'll come by for five minutes and just hang out," Jones said. "I want to show them that I support them, and keep them motivated."

Speaking of support, Jones said he'd also like to thank his wife for her unwavering support throughout this process. This year, Jones will be taking a break from boxing to focus on being a new father.

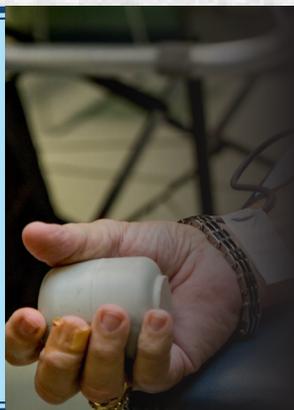


Above: Officer Jones trains at the Fire House Gym located in the City Hall building. Middle left: Jones poses with some of his fellow officers at a reception ceremony thrown for him by the Lions Club last fall to celebrate his recent wins. Middle right and bottom: Jones practices jabs with Ludy Webster and shadow boxes on his own.

SIGN UP NOW FOR CITIZEN ACADEMY

Participants get a behind-the-scenes look at what we do in the CHPD. Sessions are each Thursday in April, 6:30–8:30 pm, at the Public Safety Building. Contact Officer Bill Monberg at 763-706-8142 or BMonberg@columbiaheightsmn.gov for more info or to sign up. Registration is required.

Chili With a Cop
 March 4, 5:30-7 pm
 St Matthew's Church



CHPD and Red Cross Blood Drive Is Feb 26

The Police Department is partnering with the American Red Cross on Wed, Feb 26, 10 am to 4 pm, in the Public Safety Training Room for the department's first-ever blood drive! The Red Cross says there's a critical need for blood at this time of year. Please consider making a life-saving blood donation. To schedule a time, call 763-706-8123 or email BRomanik@columbiaheightsmn.gov.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Columbia Heights Police Department office is open Mon-Fri, 8 am to 4:30 pm. The telephone number is (763) 706-8100. Call 911 in an emergency. The office is located in the Public Safety building, 825 41st Avenue NE. The police department offices are closed on weekends and holidays.

A telephone is located inside the entry doors that can be used after hours to request assistance.

For general information, activities, ordinances, and services, visit www.chpolice.com, find us on Facebook, www.facebook.com/chpolice, and follow us at twitter.com/colhgtspolice.





ON-CALL FIREFIGHTERS FAQ

The Columbia Heights Fire Department is looking for on-call firefighters to join the team. This January, the department held a recruitment open house for those who wished to learn more about the job responsibilities. The following are some common questions the department receives about the duties of being a firefighter:

How Much Training Is Required?

On-call firefighters must complete the same amount of training as full-time firefighters. They do receive hourly pay for training, and will learn valuable skills that they can use in other areas of their lives. Firefighters are expected to complete 125 hours of EMT training, 98 hours of Firefighter level 1 training, 50 hours for Firefighter level 2 training, and 48 hours of hazmat training. Completing all training takes about 18 months.

What If I'm Not Confident I'm the Right Fit?

"We will help get you that confidence," said Fire Chief Charlie Thompson. Your doubts in yourself may be overblown. Come by or call the Fire Department to talk out your concerns.

Who's Eligible?

If you're 18 or older, live within or near the City borders, and have a valid driver's license, you're eligible to apply. It's as simple as that.

What Are the Time Requirements?

On-call firefighters have day jobs and families to worry about, so they are not expected to answer every call. To ensure flexibility, the Department requires on-call firefighters to answer roughly 30 % of calls. How many calls occur on any given day can vary widely.

What Will I Get Out of It?

"You get to be there to help someone when they're having the worst day of their life," Thompson said. "You will walk away feeling like you've made a difference, all while being a part of a team and gaining valuable experience." On-call firefighters also get paid. They receive pension benefits if they commit for 10 years.

How Do I Apply?

Download an application online at heightsfire.com, or stop by the Fire Department to pick one up. Call 763-706-8150 for more info. The department is looking to hire another 17 on-call firefighters, so please spread the word if you know of anyone who might be interested.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

825 41st Ave NE, Columbia Heights, MN 55421
fire@columbiaheightsmn.gov

Be up to date on activities and regular safety reminders of the Columbia Heights Fire Department by following us on Facebook @columbiaheightsfire.



Non-Emergency: (763) 706-8150
Emergency: Call 9-1-1
Housing Maintenance Inspections: (763) 706-8156
fireinspections@columbiaheightsmn.gov

FAT OIL GREASE

AVOID F.O.G. CLOGS

The most common cause of reported pipe blockages and sanitary sewer overflows is improper disposal of fats, oils and grease, according to the EPA.

Fats, oils and grease are problematic because they quickly build up on the sides of pipes, solidify, and block flow, in much the same way as cholesterol builds up in arteries. They can also solidify in the main sewer lines throughout town, where they cause blockages leading to damage for many properties. This is why it's a violation of City Code for anyone, businesses or residential properties, to put fats, oils and grease down the sanitary sewer.

Columbia Heights Public Works asks residents to please drain fats, oils and grease from pans and dishes into containers and then put them in a garbage can rather than down the drain.

If you operate a business that works with these substances, you must have a grease trap installed, inspected regularly and emptied before it becomes full.

EMERALD ASH BORER UPDATE



The City recently received a \$100,000 grant from the MnDNR to help manage EAB in the public forest (street and park trees). As for trees on private property, residents will need to decide quickly about whether to treat and preserve their ash trees or have the trees removed.

“Not making a decision on treating or removing your ash trees is essentially deciding to have them removed,” said Liam Genter, urban forestry specialist. “The mortality rates in areas previously hit by EAB are greater than 95 percent.”

Don't wait much longer to act. EAB was confirmed in Columbia Heights last summer. It's only a matter of time before the beetle infects all ash trees in the area. Infected trees become brittle and dangerous. They are also harder and more expensive to remove once they've been killed off by the beetle.

Reminder, *the biggest risk of spreading EAB comes from people moving firewood or other ash products harboring larvae.* Please don't transport firewood. Buy firewood locally from approved vendors and burn it where you buy it.

For more information and a list of helpful resources, please visit Columbiaheightsmn.gov/EAB. For specific questions or for tree consultation, call the Urban Forestry Specialist at 763 706-3708.

PUBLIC WORKS SPRING REMINDERS

Fire Hydrant Flushing April & May

Fire hydrant flushing will take place in April and early May. Hydrants will be flushed from 7 am to 3:30 pm. It's necessary to flush all City hydrants to ensure they're in good working condition and to clear sediment. As a result of the flushing you may notice some temporary discoloration of the water. Flush your residential system by running the cold water for 10 to 20 minutes. Avoid washing clothes while hydrants are being flushed in your area, as discolored water may leave stains. Some localized flushing may be necessary throughout the year.

Spring Street Sweeping Begins Soon

The Street Department will begin street sweeping as soon as weather permits, usually in early April. Areas around lakes and ponds will be swept first to minimize the amount of sediment entering these bodies of water. Sweeping operations will continue until all streets have been swept twice.

Prevent Sewer Backups

Over time, homeowners may experience problems such as collapsed pipes or tree roots growing into service lines that can cause stoppages with their sewer service lines. If your sewer backs up it may be time to clean or repair the line. Before hiring a contractor, call Public Works Utilities at 763-706-3700. They will check the City's mainline condition in the street for a possible blockage. **This service is free.**

Water Service Leak? Sewer Clog?

Call Public Works before calling a contractor:

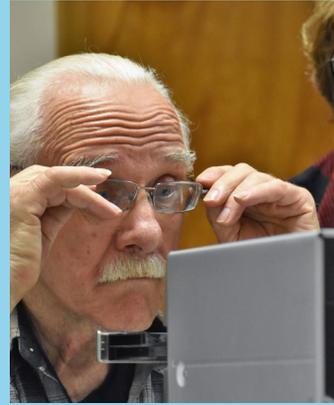
- Weekdays: 7 am-3:30 pm (763) 706-3700
- After-hours: (763) 427-1212 or 911

Remember, property owners are responsible for the water service and sewer service from the house or structure to the main in the street, including the connection to the City main.

Street Parking Restrictions In Effect Until March 31, 2–6 am daily

Fix-It Clinic Is March 7, 10 am to 1 pm, at United Methodist Church

The next Fix-It Clinic in Columbia Heights will be Sat, March 7, 10 am to 1 pm, at Community United Methodist Church, 950 Gould Ave NE. Bring broken items for possible repair to this free event. You can donate repaired items if you don't want them. There will be a scrap metal recycle bin for non-repairable items. First come, first served. No items over 40 pounds. These events are for residents who need their own items fixed, not for businesses. Have repair or sewing skills? Call 612-642-1263 if you would like to volunteer to be a fixer.



Tips for Recycling Items Not Picked Up in Curbside Recycling Carts

Plastic Bags and Styrofoam

The Columbia Heights Recycling Center accepts clean plastic bags, plastic films and Styrofoam. Bags must be brought directly to the Recycling Center at 3801 Madison St NE, Columbia Heights, on Saturdays from 9 am to 1 pm. Large cardboard pieces and household scrap metal items and batteries can also be brought to the recycling center.

Compostable Products

Delivery style pizza boxes, paper egg cartons, paper towels, napkins, and any plates, cups, and bowls with a BPI logo can be composted along with other organic products. Order a compost card from the City for \$2.52 per month by emailing publicworks@columbiaheightsmn.gov. Carts can also be used for yard waste.

Donating or Fixing

There are a number of outlets for donating used items, including Habitat for Humanity, thrift stores, and Bridging. For a full list, and addresses, visit columbiaheightsmn.gov/refuseandrecycling. Also consider hosting a garage sale to sell old items. Bring broken items to a Fix-It Clinic, see above.

Yard Waste Collection

Yard Waste collection begins in April after the snow cover melts. Woody tree waste can be brought to the Anoka County compost site. Be sure to use the proper bags or bundle the brush or order a City compost cart. Personal containers will not be emptied by the hauler. Compost carts can be ordered by calling 763-706-3706. They are emptied year-round and come with an organics kitchen kit and a bag of compost.

Refuse Holiday Schedule

- Presidents Day, Feb 17, no delay
- Good Friday, April 10, no delay
- Memorial Day, May 25, service delayed one day all week
- Yard waste/organics will be emptied throughout winter

Arm Truck Collection Information

Haulers have started using trucks with mechanical arms to collect trash and recycling. They are testing this truck in the alleys, as well. Please place your cart out where the arm can reach it and allow some space between the carts. Refuse pads are a convenient way to accomplish this and the City will add these, by request, to the annual concrete work schedule. Contact Publicworks@columbiaheightsmn.gov for specifications and pricing.



Waste Management

Customer Service Phone: 1-888-960-0008
www.wm.com/us/customer-support

City Refuse/Recycling website

www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/refuseandrecycling
Public Works Department Phone: (763) 706-3700

Email publicworks@columbiaheightsmn.gov for refuse e-news

Anoka County Recycling & Resource Solutions

(763) 324-3400
www.anokacounty.us/recycle

Refuse Service Levels and Rates

www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/refuserates



Tips For Pollinator Gardens

About one-third of our natural food supply relies on bees' pollination. If these important pollinators disappear, so will our grapes and strawberries, along with many of our favorite foods, according to the MN Pollution Control Agency.

Anyone with a yard—no matter the size—can help restore the bee population by creating a bee-friendly garden. The MN Pollution Control Agency offers the following tips for quality pollinator gardens:

Grow a Wide Variety of Flowering Plants

The more diversity in your garden, the more bees you will attract and support. To accommodate more species, be sure to plant flowers of differing sizes. Nourish bees with nectar-producing plants such as wild flowers. You can also plant flowering fruits and vegetables.

Native Plants Are Best

Native vegetation requires less maintenance and has evolved with bees native to your region. As an added bonus, native plants rarely become invasive.

Plant Flowers that Bloom at Different Times

Growing flowers with overlapping bloom times is necessary to support pollinators. Goldenrods and sunflowers are essential for pollinators looking for high-energy food before a harsh Minnesota winter hits.

Check the Labels

Some pesticides are toxic to bees or kill plants on which bees depend. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has developed new pesticide labels that help you understand how to apply the pesticides and help protect bees.

City Council Approves Changes to Pet Ordinance

The Columbia Heights City Council adopted Ordinance No. 1658 this January to update the previous animal ordinance for managing domestic animals. This includes eliminating the licensing requirement for cats and dogs but still requiring the objectives of the license (vaccination and display of owner information on the collar) in the Ordinance. The update also establishes a limit on the number of cats and dogs permitted per family dwelling unit. No household can have more than three dogs or more than three cats, or a combination of more than five animals exceeding six months of age in the family dwelling unit or on the family premises.

The Police Department also recommended that the City Council adopt the provisions of MN State Statutes as it relates to the handling of dangerous dogs.

A printed copy of the entire text of the Ordinance is available for inspection by any person during City Hall hours, or by standard or electronic mail. It can also be found online at www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/citycode.

Other Pet Reminders

- *Pick-Up After Your Pets:* We know it's gross to pick up pet waste, but it's even grosser not to. In fact, it's a health risk to both pets and people, especially children. Pet waste is full of bacteria that can make humans and animals sick. This gets into water runoff untreated and pollutes nearby waterways. On top of that, it's also an eyesore and absolutely no fun to step in. **Picking up after your pets is the neighborly thing to do.**
- *Keep Pets On Leash:* City Code requires pets remain on leash at all times in parks and other public spaces, unless those spaces are *clearly* designated as off-leash.

