

City of Wauwatosa Newsletter

Volume 35, Issue 4

<http://www.wauwatosa.net>

Winter 2014

Mayor's Corner

Wauwatosa continues to grow and change. I believe our local government and community organizations make better decisions about the City's future with you involved. I encourage you to learn more and be a part of building our community for the future and maintain our wonderful quality of life. Here are some ways to learn more...

A new 8-week course called "Citizen's Academy: Get to Know Wauwatosa" is being offered through the Wauwatosa Recreation Department beginning on February 4, 2015. You'll learn about the city's history, culture, services, and new growth and development. You can register at www.tosarec.com.

I will be holding my third round of Town Hall meetings throughout the City this spring. This is an opportunity for you to find out what's happening and talk with me and your elected officials. Dr. Phil Ertl from the Wauwatosa School District will be joining me again this year. Watch for a schedule on the City website.

For our youth, I conduct tours of City Hall and explain the services provided by the City. We also have a volunteer Youth Commission and I'm continuously looking for additional ways to engage our young people.

We need your input and insight to build a strong community with services vital to your everyday life. Your opinion matters!

Mayor Kathy Ehley

Christmas Tree Collection

Collection of Christmas Trees will occur from Mon., January 5th through Fri., January 16th.

No bags, decorations or wreaths will accepted.

Holiday Recycling & Refuse Pickup 2014-15

2014

- Wed., December 24: Regular Collection
- Thurs., December 25: CHRISTMAS DAY - NO COLLECTION
- Fri., December 26: Collect Thursday routes
- Sat., December 27: Collect Friday routes
- Mon., December 29: Regular Collection
- Wed., December 31: Regular Collection

2015

- Thurs., January 1: NEW YEAR'S DAY - NO COLLECTION
- Fri., January 2: Collect Thursday routes
- Sat., January 3: Collect Friday routes
- Mon., January 5: Regular Collection

New Drop-Off Center Hours & Fee Structure

Beginning Fri., January 2 2015, the Drop-off Center will have new hours and a modified fee structure. The following are highlights of these modifications:

- Hours of operation will be two days, Tues. from 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. & Sat. from 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- \$5 per load/per vehicle permits will be sold. These permits will be for a one-time use only.
- Trailers are limited to 8X8 in size, e.g., a resident that brings a pick-up truck load and a trailer load would require two permits, or a \$10 fee.

These changes were made to keep pace with changing disposal and operating costs of the Drop-off Center. The website will be updated soon with the 2015 garbage and recycling holiday and general pick-up schedules as well as all the program information.

ELECTED OFFICIALS DIRECTORY

FAX: 471-8989

TTY: 471-8484

Mayor Kathy Ehley Phone: 479-8915
 Richard Baker, Municipal Judge Phone: 471-8488

First District Matt Stippich 262-345-7847 James Moldenhauer 453-8821	Second District Kathleen Causier 771-0123 John Dubinski 708-9978	Third District Tim Hanson 617-2950 Gregory Walz-Chojnacki 475-0260	Fourth District Dennis R. McBride 258-4574 Michael Walsh 477-2830
Fifth District Bobby Pantuso 736-5700 Joel Tilleson 316-2120	Sixth District Alison Byrne 531-2862 Jeffrey Roznowski 258-0633	Seventh District Cheryl Berdan 550-0184 Jason Kofroth 687-6267	Eighth District Jason G. Wilke 527-1146 Craig Willson 745-5188

Library Hours



Monday – Thursday: 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.
 Friday & Saturday: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
 Sunday: 1:00p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Closed January 1 and January 4

Overdue fines, renewals 414-471-8484
 Telephone reference and adult services 414-471-8485
 Children’s services 414-471-8486
 Administration/room reservations 414-471-8487

Email: contact@wauwatosalibrary.org
 Website: www.wauwatosalibrary.org

For Children and Families

MILWAUKEE BUCKS READING CHALLENGE for students in 1st through 10th grades begins Friday, January 2nd.

LIBRARY STORY TIME for 3, 4, 5 and 6 year olds who are able to attend story time independently begins Mon./Tues., January 12/13th and ends January 26/27th; 3 week series, 30 minute sessions. Programs include stories, songs, dramatic movement, and fun with literacy. *No registration required.*

WINTER STORY TIME for the whole family will be presented at 6:30 p.m. on Tue., January 20th and at 3:00 p.m. on Wed., January 21st in the Children's Story Room. *No registration required.*

TOSA'S ALL-CITY READ PROGRAM for students in Kindergarten & up will be held Thurs., February 5th from 4:00 - 4:45 p.m. in the Children’s Story Room. Stories and activities about the orphan trains, pioneer life, orphans and trains will be featured. *No registration required.*

RHYME TIME for newborns through 3 year-olds with adults and siblings begins on Mon./Tue., February 9/10th and ends February 23/24th; 3 week series, 20 minute sessions. This early literacy program for babies and pre-kindergarten children features rhymes, stories, songs, finger plays and dramatic movement. *No registration required.*

GOLDIE B. LOCKS & THE THREE SINGING BEARS, presented by the Florentine Opera Company for students in Kindergarten through 8th Grades; Saturday, February 21st from 2:30 – 3:15pm; in the Civic Center Auditorium. *Register in person or by phone beginning Sat., January 24th with a valid library card.*

PAROCHIAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ART SHOW on display in the Children’s Library from Tues., March 3rd – Thurs., March 26th.

LIBRARY STORY TIME for 3, 4, 5 and 6 year olds who are able to attend story time independently begins Mon./Tues., March 16/17th and ends March 30/31st; 3 week series, 30 minute sessions. Programs include stories, songs, dramatic movement, and fun with literacy. *No registration required.*

For Adults:

Federal and State Tax Forms and publications will be available at the Library mid-January.

Depositing Snow into Street Unlawful

Did you know that it is unlawful to plow or blow snow from private property into the street? When home and business owners arrange for contractors to clear snow from their property it is important that they remind their contractor of this part of the municipal code.

Wauwatosa Municipal Code, Chapter 12 Removal of Snow and Ice, Section .060.

“Throwing Snow and Ice on Street Unlawful” spells out the part of the code that prohibits anyone from leaving plowed or snow blower snow anywhere in the street right-of-way. The snow cleared from paved surfaces must remain on the property. This includes medians, boulevards, islands, and terraces (between the curb and the sidewalks). Everyone’s cooperation is appreciated regarding proper snow clearing procedures.



Health Department News



Does Your Home Have Radon?

Radon is a cancer-causing, radioactive gas.

You can't see, smell or taste radon. But it may be a problem in your home. Radon is estimated to cause many thousands of lung cancer deaths every year. In fact, the Surgeon General has warned that radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States today.

Radon has been found in all Wauwatosa zip codes.

Radon comes from the natural breakdown of uranium in soil, rock and water and gets into the air you breathe.

You can fix a radon problem.

There are simple ways to fix a radon problem that aren't too costly. Even very high levels can be reduced to acceptable levels.

You should test for radon.

Testing is the only way to know if you and your family are at risk from radon. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Surgeon General recommend testing all homes below the third floor for radon. Testing is inexpensive and easy.

Radon test kits are available at the Wauwatosa Health Department starting in January for a \$10.00 fee. Quantities are limited. For more information, please contact the Wauwatosa Health Department at 414-479-8939.

The Wauwatosa Health Department obtained funding for the program from the Radon Prevention Grant through the State of Wisconsin

Tobacco Compliance Checks

In partnership with the Wauwatosa Police Department, tobacco sale compliance checks are completed biannually in efforts to discourage youth tobacco access at local establishments. The health department secures WI WINS monies, which provides grant funding in efforts to discourage underage tobacco access. The minors attempting to purchase tobacco are from local schools and are under supervision of a Wauwatosa Police Officer. In Apr. 2014, 29 of 33 Wauwatosa establishments did not sell tobacco products to minors and citations were issued if there was a sale to a minor; the next check is scheduled for December. Visit our website at www.wauwatosa.net/health to view the listing of all tobacco compliance checks through the years.

Infant Feeding Phone Survey

Starting in December, the Wauwatosa Health Department's Public Health Nurses will conduct an infant feeding survey to better assess our community's needs and direct resources to needed programs. Over the next few months, randomly selected families will be contacted to gather information on the infant feeding practices of Wauwatosa families. Participation is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions regarding the survey, please contact the Wauwatosa Health Department Information and Referral Nurse Line at 414-479-8939.

Alcohol Compliance Checks

In partnership with the Wauwatosa Police Department, alcohol sale compliance checks are completed annually in efforts to discourage underage alcohol access at local licensed establishments. The minors attempting to purchase alcohol are from local schools and are under supervision of a Wauwatosa Police Officer. We are pleased to announce that zero of the 20 Wauwatosa establishments checked sold alcohol to minors. Visit our website at www.wauwatosa.net/health to view the list of Wauwatosa establishments that continue to prevent alcohol access to minors.

Winter Danger: Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas that is difficult to detect without a carbon monoxide detector. The Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC) reports that accidental carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning kills more than 150 people per year. An additional 5,000 people are injured. During the winter months the potential for carbon monoxide poisoning increases dramatically.

Common sources of carbon monoxide include: gas stoves, water heaters and dryers as well as leaky chimneys, furnaces, fire places and generators.

At low concentrations of carbon monoxide, a healthy person will experience fatigue. Exposure to higher concentrations carbon monoxide leads to headaches, dizziness, confusion, nausea, flu-like symptoms, impaired vision and loss of coordination.

If you experience symptoms or suspect there is carbon monoxide present in your home, leave the house immediately and seek medical attention. Once you and all family members are out of the house, including pets, call 911 or the fire department. Emergency workers are equipped to locate and stop the source of the poisonous gas.



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City Hall, 7725 W. North Avenue, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin 53213-0068



Do You Have Healthcare Coverage?

Starting in 2014, almost everyone must have health care coverage. To find out more information about Marketplace Insurance Plans or to find enrollment events, please see the resources below:

Visit www.healthcare.gov to compare Marketplace Insurance Plans

Visit www.mkehcp.org and scroll to the bottom right hand corner of the web-page to see the enrollment event calendar

Call "2-1-1" to find out where local enrollment assistance is available

Don't Forget Your Fire Hydrant!

The next time it snows ask yourself this question, "If my house caught fire would the fire department be able to find the closest fire hydrant?" Today's fire engine utilizes a computerized map that approximates the fire hydrant's location in relationship to an address. Unfortunately, it can't provide an exact location meaning the firefighter still has to find the hydrant. If residents have kept that fire hydrant clear of snow it will be easy to locate and use. On the other hand, if the hydrant is snow covered or worse yet buried, the firefighter will first have to spend time locating and then digging it out. Sometimes the hydrant simply can't be found forcing the fire engine to move to another hydrant further down the street. Needless to say, valuable minutes are lost as a fire doubles in size every minute it burns. This is where you can help! Just find the hydrant closest to your home and make sure you keep it visible and accessible all winter long. Consider it an investment in your family's safety.



Rules of the Road

Recent news articles and events have stressed the need for the motoring public to adhere to the "Move Over" laws regarding law enforcement vehicles. The same "Move Over" laws apply to Public Works vehicles doing their day-to-day activities. As stated in the updated 07-08 Wisconsin Statutes Database, Section 346.072, **Passing stopped emergency vehicles, tow trucks and highway machinery equipment.** (1) If an authorized emergency vehicle giving visual signal, a tow truck flashing red lamps, as required by s. 347.26(6)(b), or any road machinery or motor vehicle used in highway construction or maintenance displaying the lights specified in s. 347.23(1)(a) or (b) or, with respect to a motor vehicle, displaying the lights specified in s. 347.26 (7), is parked or standing on or within 12 feet of a roadway, the operator of a motor vehicle approaching such vehicle or machinery shall proceed with due regard for all other traffic and shall do either of the following:

- Move the motor vehicle into a lane that is not the lane nearest the parked or standing vehicle...
- Slow the motor vehicle, maintaining a safe speed for traffic conditions, and operate the motor vehicle at a reduced speed until completely past the vehicle or machinery....

The City of Wauwatosa Public Works Department would like everyone's cooperation when approaching our maintenance vehicles on our roadways. If you have any questions regarding snow plowing and salting procedures please call 471-8422.

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Community Development Committee: Alderman Bobby Pantuso, Chairperson; Alderwoman Cheryl Berdan; Alderman Michael Walsh; Alderman Craig Wilson; Alderwoman Allison Byrne; Alderman Matt Stippich; Alderman Tim Hanson; Alderwoman Kathy Causier; Editor: A. W. Brown, Administration Dept., Telephone: 414-479-8915

2014 Property Taxes

The 2014 property tax bills are expected to be mailed by the week of December 8-12, 2014. These bills are mailed to the owner of record per the Milwaukee County Registrar of Deeds, unless an official mailing address change has been made at the City Assessor's office prior to November 15. If you do not receive a tax bill by December 15, use the city website, www.wauwatosa.net to obtain a copy of the bill. Otherwise, for those taxpayers who do not have access to the internet, please contact the Treasurer's Office at 414-479-8960. Property tax payments are due January 31, 2015.

Tax Information Is Available on the City Website. Shortly before the tax bills are mailed, individual 2014 tax balances will be available on the City website. From the main page of the city website, www.wauwatosa.net, click the "Property Taxes" button on the left side of the page. Follow the instructions to the City of Wauwatosa property tax web portal. The portal is searchable by parcel number or property address. In addition to balances, payment history, receipts and copies of original tax bills are all available electronically. Additionally, taxpayers will be able to make tax payments on the City website. See the next section for details.

I Dislike Long Lines, How Can I Avoid Them? Many of us envision long lines of people at City Hall waiting to pay their property taxes in December. This is tax collection of December past. Currently, taxpayers can not only use the City website to check that the Treasurer's Office has posted their tax payment, but also can use the website to make property tax payments. Using the website is one of three ways below a taxpayer can make a payment without coming in person to City Hall, see below:

(1) *On the City Website:* By following the instructions on the website, taxpayers can enter the property tax web portal, pull up their property tax balance, and click the "Make an Online Payment" button. They would then complete the payment process & receive e-mail confirmation. It is that simple. The transaction is also displayed on web portal in pending status with a receipt date equal to the date the transaction was completed. Please note that fees do apply. E-checks have the most inexpensive fee at \$1.50 for a transaction under \$10,000. Larger dollar e-checks (\$10,000 or greater) are a \$5.00 fee and credit card fees are 2.39% of the transaction.

(2) *By Mail:* Mail your tax payment in the green envelope provided with your tax bill. Mail the entire tax bill and your check made payable to "City of Wauwatosa". If you receive a property tax escrow check, make sure it is endorsed by one or both mortgage holders. Mailed payments are receipted using the U.S. Postal Service postmark as the receipt date.

(3) *24-Hour Night Depository:* Payments can also be placed in the 24-hour depository located on the southwest end of City Hall near the employee entrance. A deposit made prior to midnight will be receipted using that day's date.

But I Like Waiting in Line... If you choose not to partake in the above timesavers, payments can also be made in person at the Treasurer's Office by cash or check. Business hours are Monday – Friday 8 AM – 4:30 PM. Please bring the tax bill so that receipt information can be validated directly onto the bill. City Hall is closed on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Day. The Treasurer's Office will have special holiday hours on New Year's Eve from 9 AM – Noon.

What if my escrow check is larger than my tax due? Taxpayers entitled to a refund should also note that refunds can be obtained when paying by mail or via the 24-hour night deposit. A refund check will be processed and mailed promptly – taxpayers will receive their refund check in about a week - so it is not necessary to come in person.

My Mortgage Company Paid My Taxes. Payments received by the City directly from mortgage companies are typically not received by our office until the last few days of the December or January (the month depends on each taxpayer's individual mortgage agreement). The City website will have information on the status of these types of payments towards the end of December and January. Payments, when received, are viewable on the property tax web portal.

I Need A Receipt. Obtain a receipt one of three ways: (1) use the City website, (2) receive validated receipt information on the tax bill at time of payment in person or (3) enclose self-addressed stamped envelope with a payment sent via mail or dropped in the night depository – include parcel number on envelope. If a self-addressed stamped envelope is not included with the mailed or night deposit payments, our office will only mail a receipt to those who still owe a balance.

I Have More Questions About My Property Taxes. For more frequently asked questions on property taxes, visit www.wauwatosa.net/FAQ.aspx and scroll down to the Treasurer's Office section. Or, call your friendly neighborhood Treasurer's Office at 414-479-8960. We are happy to provide any information that will clarify your understanding of this year's property taxes.