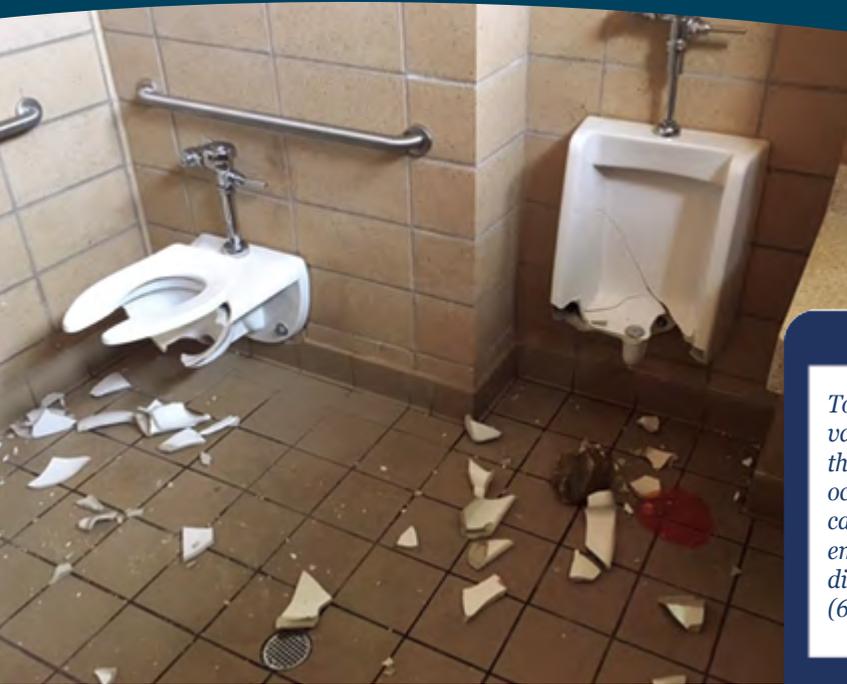


Woodbury City Update

August 2017 • Volume 18, No. 7



Several Woodbury parks have been vandalized this summer, including the toilets at the Madison's Place playground bathrooms (above). The public is asked to report any suspicious activities in progress by calling 911.

Vandalism in parks an increasing concern

To report vandalism that has already occurred, call the non-emergency dispatch number (651) 439-9381.

Acts of vandalism occurring in Woodbury parks have increased significantly this summer, and the cost to local taxpayers so far is approximately \$20,000 for repairs and staff time. As a result, the Public Safety Department is requesting the

public's help in finding those responsible.

"Woodbury, like most communities, has experienced minor issues with graffiti and vandalism in the past," said Parks and Recreation Director Bob Klatt. "But the incidents seem to have ramped up in recent weeks."

Extensive damage has occurred at HealthEast Sports Center, with four broken toilets, one damaged urinal, and a broken window at the Madison's Place playground restroom building being the worst of the recent destructive acts. Damage is typically occurring in the late evening hours. These incidents will cost more than \$2,000 to repair. Other extensive damage has been discovered at Ojibway Park, Stonemill Farms Park, Pioneer Park and Seasons Park.

"The Madison's Place restrooms have been vandalized repeatedly. Toilets are almost continually broken, damaged or plugged. Repairs are costly due to the nature and volume of the damage," Klatt said. "As a result, we are increasing the number of hours when the restrooms will be locked."

Other parks experiencing vandalism include:

- Carver Lake Park, where graffiti has been painted on the off-road bike trail maintenance storage container multiple times and the solar charging panels were stolen
- Colby Lake Park, where the park building window was broken
- Multiple trail tunnels, where graffiti has been painted multiple times
- Edgewater Park, where extensive damage has been done to the portable toilets
- Madison's Place splash pad, where one of the flower water features was broken

Public's help needed

As a result of all the damage, the Woodbury Public Safety Department is asking the public to be on the lookout for suspicious activity in the parks facilities and promptly report it to police.

"Vandalism is becoming a serious issue in Woodbury," said John Altman, patrol commander in the Public Safety Department. "We are asking people who live near parks to report any suspicious activities in progress by calling 911."

If you are using the parks and trails and notice vandalism that has already occurred, please report it by calling the non-emergency dispatch number: (651) 439-9381. The city strives to repair damaged property as quickly as possible.

2018 city budget to be discussed at Sept. 13 workshop

The City Council will review the proposed 2018 city budget at a workshop meeting scheduled Wednesday, Sept. 13, at the Public Safety Building. The meeting, which is open to the public, will start at 4 p.m. and continue into the evening until all department budgets have been evaluated.

At the workshop, the Council will discuss city services and funding levels for 2018, as well as a variety of issues that affect the 2018 property tax levy. Information about the budget will be available on the city's website (woodburymn.gov) and through the Finance Department at City Hall several days prior to the workshop.

"Residents and businesses should attend the workshop if they want to understand the proposed budget and provide input," said Mayor Mary Giuliani Stephens.

Woodbury's budget process follows a timetable established by state

law. The City Council must set the maximum tax levy by Sept. 30. This is the amount published in the truth-in-taxation notices mailed out by Washington County, usually in mid-November. The Sept. 13 workshop permits thorough review of projected expenses and revenues in advance of the Sept. 30 deadline.

State law also requires the city to hold a public discussion on the budget in late November or early December. However, citizens interested in the Council's most detailed dialogue about the budget are urged to attend the September workshop, which will be held in the training room at the Public Safety Building, 2100 Radio Drive.

For more information, contact the Finance Department at (651) 714-3502 or finance@woodburymn.gov.

Council Perspective

By Mayor Mary Giuliani Stephens

Council ponders changes for how property owners pay for water and sewer projects

Along with celebrating our community's 50th birthday in 2017 comes the realization that our community – and some of our critical infrastructure – is aging. We are having important discussions about how to best fund major improvements to our water and sewer systems. I want to share more about these discussions and some options for how we may fund these necessary improvements in the future.

Every year the city completes a Roadway Rehabilitation Project in different neighborhoods where repairs are deemed most necessary. As part of this work the city conducts testing on the water and sewer infrastructure under these roadways (e.g., pipes, valves, etc.) so that if repairs are needed they can be coordinated with the roadway repairs. This approach minimizes disruption and is most cost effective.

Property owners share the cost of these repairs via special assessments, which are charges to a specific property for a specific improvement performed by the city. There are separate assessments for roadway repairs and water/sewer infrastructure repairs. Most roadway projects in the past have not required major water or sewer improvements; only minor repairs. However, as our water and sewer infrastructure ages, we are anticipating significant repairs will be needed as part of most projects beginning in the near future. These are costly repairs that, under the current policy, could result in up to \$10,000 or more in assessments for some property owners; far more than is desirable.

That is why we are looking at changing the way we assess property owners for their share of water and sewer improvement projects. (No changes are proposed to be

made to how assessments are calculated for roadway repairs.) We discussed this issue at our July 19 workshop. Here are a couple highlights from our discussion with city staff:

- Instead of assessing property owners for water and sanitary sewer improvements, the work could be funded entirely through an increase in the Water and Sanitary Sewer Utility Fund rates (collected through quarterly utility bills).
- Property owners own the water service lines extending from their curb stop (close to the property line) to the main pipe under the street and, in the past, have been assessed 100 percent of the cost to repair them. A new approach under consideration would have the city begin sharing half the cost of replacing service lines when the water main is replaced. This would protect the city's investment in replacing the street, by reducing incidents of property owners excavating roadways after projects to repair leaky lines.

Utility bill impact

How much would these changes impact your water and sewer bill? Precise calculations are still being analyzed. However, on average, the cost could increase approximately \$10 per quarter, depending on usage. This potential impact will be discussed in greater detail at future Council workshops, including the potential for phasing in this impact over the next couple of years.

Changing an assessment policy is always challenging because we are moving away from years of past practice. But protecting and maintaining our critical infrastructure is important for enjoying our high quality of life for years to come. This



is about looking forward and proactively avoiding a potential funding issue down the road.

Ultimately, we all pay for maintaining our water and sewer infrastructure. The question is: what is the best way to spread the cost? A utility rate increase at this time seems reasonable and may be more manageable for our property owners to budget for than a large lump sum assessment. We've been responsible with managing our utility rates – we have the lowest average water bill amongst our comparable cities. The last time we increased city sanitary sewer rates was 2010. The base water rate has been held flat since 2006.

City staff will continue its research, incorporate feedback and finalize proposed changes for the Council to consider for approval at one of our future meetings. If approved, the new water and sewer rates would be effective in 2018, and will be implemented with 2018 Roadway Rehabilitation Project assessments. As always, the public is welcome to attend to share their thoughts, concerns and ideas via engineering@woodburymn.gov, calling the Engineering Division at (651) 714-3593 or by attending future Council meetings and workshops.

Break through the language barrier with the LanguageLine

Did you know community members who prefer to communicate in a language other than English can request city services or ask questions in their native tongue?

When someone calls City Hall to conduct business with the city, staff has the option of locating an interpreter through the LanguageLine and connecting him/her to the phone call. This program allows staff to speak with the caller through an interpreter. The Public Safety Department also has access to this service, if needed, during police, fire or emergency medical services interactions.



The LanguageLine is available in many different languages and is provided through the State of Minnesota.

For more information, or to use the service, call at (651) 714-3500.

The Woodbury newsletter is published 10 times per year by the City of Woodbury and mailed to all residents and businesses. Send comments to: Woodbury City Hall, 8301 Valley Creek Road, Woodbury, MN 55125-3330. Phone: (651) 714-3500. Email: jason.egerstrom@woodburymn.gov.

Mayor: Mary Giuliani Stephens.
Council Members: Christopher Burns, Andrea Date, Julie Ohs, Amy Scoggins. City Administrator: Clinton Gridley. Communications Coordinator: Jason Egerstrom.

The City of Woodbury is subject to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. In accordance with the act, the Woodbury newsletter is available in other formats. Call Jason Egerstrom, (651) 714-3500; TDD: (651) 714-3568.

Woodbury Days set for Aug. 25-27 in Ojibway Park

Thousands of people will converge on Ojibway Park the weekend of Aug. 25-27 for Woodbury Days – the annual community celebration that culminates the summer season.

Celebrating 39 years, Woodbury Days gets under way with carnival rides, games and food at 4 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 25, and continues through Sunday, Aug. 27. The weekend is jam-packed with activities and events for the entire family, with most of the fun taking place at Ojibway Park, adjacent to Woodbury High School.

The highlight of Sunday's schedule is the Grande Parade, which begins at 11 a.m.

For event details, including a map of the parade route, visit woodburydays.com.



Photo by Joyce Anderstrom, 2015 "Focus on Woodbury" photo contest

Smart watering reduces water use, improves water quality

Improving irrigation system efficiency remains critical for preserving our water source for years to come, but smart water use also can improve water quality.

In May, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) reduced its protective guidance level for two specific perfluorochemicals (PFCs) found in Woodbury wells. The new health-based advisory values for PFOS and PFOA are now 27 and 35 parts per trillion (previously 300 parts per trillion).

The new values are proposed to protect the most vulnerable portion of the population over a lifetime of exposure. Per the MDH, the previous guidance limited exposure to a very low level – well below the level at which most people would be expected to experience any health impacts. The updated values will further reduce the long-term exposure risk for people with the greatest vulnerability.

"Four of the city's 19 wells exceed the new MDH standard for PFCs in the water," said Klayton Eckles, Engineering and Public Works director. "Fortunately, none of the four

impacted wells are needed during the winter months, when outdoor water use is limited. However, during the peak lawn watering months, all of the city's wells are used."

Eckles explained when the four wells are needed they are rotated into use between wells that do not exceed the updated protective guidance level for PFCs. This practice, according to MDH, ensures the PFC levels remain below the new protective guidance level by the time it is reaching the tap. MDH affirms the city's water is safe and reliable.

"We have taken precautionary steps by making operational changes that reduce use of the four impacted wells as much as possible," Eckles said. "While we work to identify and analyze potential permanent solutions such as a treatment facility, our water customers are strongly encouraged to reduce lawn watering to limit the use of the four wells."

What are PFCs?

PFCs are a family of manmade chemicals that have been used for decades

to make products that resist heat, oil, stains, grease and water. PFCs have been found in the groundwater in Minnesota.

MDH has been monitoring City of Woodbury municipal wells for PFCs since the early 2000s. Details about the history of PFCs in Woodbury wells and 2016 testing results are available on the city's website at woodburymn.gov. Additional resources are available on the MDH and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency websites.

"We are working with MDH to continue monitoring and sampling all of our wells for PFCs," Eckles added. "We will continue to provide updates if any future testing results fall below the new protective standard."

Residents who have questions about their private water supply well and whether it is impacted by this change should contact the MDH.

How you can help

One easy way to improve water quality through lawn watering efficiency

is to turn off your irrigation system manually. Another option is to install a new WaterSense certified controller on your irrigation system. Visit woodburymn.gov/SmartIrrigation and complete the online form to be added to the waiting list for future city-sponsored irrigation controller programs for residential water users.

The city also has a cost-share incentive program to help businesses and homeowners associations make improvements to irrigation systems each year. Watch for future opportunities, typically announced in the first quarter of each calendar year. Sign up for the city's InTouch email notification system (Eco-Interest list) for information about future conservation opportunities.

More information is available at smartwateruse.org. Questions about irrigation system programs should be directed to Kristin Seaman, environmental resources specialist, at kristin.seaman@woodburymn.gov or (651) 714-3593.



Park vandalism a growing concern

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Register now for fall recreation programs

Are you looking for some fall fun? Check out the recreation programs and special events for all ages offered by Woodbury Parks and Recreation. Details are available in city's fall recreation programs brochure mailed the week of July 24.

Register online at WoodburyRecreation.com or by calling Woodbury Parks and Recreation at (651) 714-3583.

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Woodbury, MN

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Photo contest deadline is Aug. 31

The deadline to submit your favorite moments and creative imagery in the 19th annual "Focus on Woodbury" photo contest is fast approaching. All photos must be entered online via *Woodbury Magazine's* website, woodburymag.com by Aug. 31.

On the home page of the website, select the "Focus on Woodbury" photo contest tab, and complete the short form with required fields. Each participant may submit up to five photos total, but no more than three in one category.

Contest categories

Photos can be submitted in one of five categories:

- **People** – people living, working and enjoying themselves in the community
- **Events** – community gatherings, sporting events, etc.

- **Landmarks** – businesses, buildings and cityscapes
- **Nature** – plants, parks, animals in nature, natural landscapes
- **Pets** – domestic animals
- **Historical** – historical photos of life in Woodbury prior to 1967 (to help commemorate the city's 50th anniversary)

During September, *Woodbury Magazine* readers will have the opportunity to select the Readers' Choice winner at woodburymag.com. First place winners and runners-up will be announced for each category in early October.

First place entries will be published in the city newsletter. Selected photos also will be published in *Woodbury Magazine*.

Contestants must follow all rules or their entry will be disqualified.



*"Eva in the Tulips" by Erin Scott
Readers' Choice winner, 2015 "Focus on Woodbury" photo contest*

Questions should be directed to
Caitlin Crees, digital content editor of

Woodbury Magazine, at caitlin.crees@tigeroak.com or (612) 548-3882.