62 HOAs and commercial properties benefit from incentive program

In 2016, the Woodbury City Council approved a Water Efficiency Incentive Program for homeowners associations and commercial properties that operate irrigation systems. The program offered 50% funding up to $8,000 per property for managers to make water efficiency improvements to their irrigation systems. Improvements included updating irrigation controllers, adding weather-sensing technology that changes if and how much water is applied, and conducting audits of existing systems.

In the five years of the program, 62 properties participated and contributed to saving 3 million gallons of water annually! The city contributed $247,000 for more than $520,000 worth of improvements to private systems.

This year was the final year of the program. The city appreciates the associations and commercial properties that made important investments and supported efficient water use with their irrigation systems.

Thank you to the 2021 participating properties:

1. Carver Lake Meadows
2. Dancing Waters Association
3. Evergreen Community Association
4. Powers Lake Townhomes
5. Steepleview Townhomes
6. Villas of Stonemill Farms
7. Wedgewood Association

Watch for thin ice on Battle Creek and Colby Lakes

Thin ice and areas of open water may be found all winter on Battle Creek and Colby Lakes in Woodbury due to aeration systems operated by the city. The aeration systems circulate the water in the lakes to oxygenate them, keeping the fish alive through the winter.

The lakes were selected for aeration because their shallow depth results in low oxygen levels. All neighboring residents and recreational users of Battle Creek and Colby Lakes should note the location of the aeration systems and stay clear of the area posted for thin ice.

The aeration system in Colby Lake will be located in the southeast part of the lake near Edgewater Park. The aeration system in Battle Creek Lake will be operated adjacent to the fishing pier, north of the public access area in Shawnee Park. The perimeter of each aeration system will be posted with orange and white reflective signs that warn: “Danger - Thin Ice.”

The aeration systems will be turned on in early January, weather permitting, and remain in operation until the ice is out. For more information, call the Parks Division at 651-714-3720.
State guides how city manages stormwater runoff

The City of Woodbury holds a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit from the State of Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. The permit – updated every five to seven years – grants the city permission to discharge runoff into lakes, rivers and wetlands as long as it takes the necessary steps to ensure that water is as clean as possible before reaching downstream waterbodies.

This permit is part of the Federal Clean Water Act of 1972 and lays out six Minimum Control Measures for the city to meet:
1. Public Education
2. Public Involvement
3. Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination
4. Construction Site Stormwater Management
5. Post-Construction Site Stormwater Management
6. Municipal Operations/Good Housekeeping

The city’s primary role in implementing the permit measures is managing construction sites, approving development that features new stormwater treatment facilities, and executing proper snow and ice management practices.

What can residents do to help?
- Limit how much salt is used on driveways and sidewalks during winter months. One coffee mug of salt is enough for an entire driveway. Be sure to shovel early and often and only use salt when necessary.
- Clean up leaves and debris before they make it to the city’s lakes. Adopt a storm drain near your house to help your neighbors do the same. Learn more at adopt-a-drain.org for more information.
- Sign up for a free site visit with the Washington County Conservation District to see if your property is right for a pollinator-friendly rain garden! There is often funding available to residents in Woodbury to help with installation!

The City of Woodbury maintains its MS4 permit by mitigating damage from stormwater runoff, keeping it as clean as possible before it reaches lakes and streams. Surrounding construction areas with silt fencing and using less deicing salt are just two ways the city controls stormwater runoff.

Wellhead Protection Plan helps safeguard water supply

The City of Woodbury operates 19 water production wells located in three clusters referred to as the East, South and Tamarack wellfields. The parcels of land around these wells, in which water can travel from the surface into the groundwater, are called wellhead protection areas.

The city’s Wellhead Protection Plan, approved by the Minnesota Department of Health, is designed to protect the groundwater aquifers that supply the Woodbury municipal drinking water wells. Wellhead protection is a way to prevent drinking water from becoming polluted by identifying potential sources of contamination in the area which supplies water to a public well and managing the identified potential sources of contamination. Potential sources of pollution can include:
- Abandoned wells that haven’t been properly sealed
- Contaminated stormwater runoff
- Improper disposal of household hazardous wastes
- Leaking storage tanks
- Overuse of fertilizers and pesticides
- Poorly-maintained septic systems
- Unreported spills and illegal dumping

The city’s two-part Wellhead Protection Plan was approved by the Minnesota Department of Health and adopted by the City Council. Part I of the plan delineates the wellhead protection area and drinking water supply management area. Additionally, under part I of the plan, an assessment is completed on Woodbury wells and their vulnerability to impacts. Part II of the plan includes the development of the Wellhead Protection Plan itself. The plan includes goals, objectives, plan of action, an evaluation program and a contingency plan.

To view the plan and learn more about how residents can help protect groundwater, visit woodburymn.gov/WellheadProtectionPlan.