

Woodbury GreenTimes

A special environmental edition

November 2020



Woodbury recognized for water efficiency and protection

2021 is last year of association efficiency program

Although 2020 has been a different year in just about every way imaginable, one thing that has remained the same in Woodbury is the city's smart irrigation programs continue to be popular. Here are some highlights of this year's programs:

1. Ten homeowners associations completed efficiency upgrades to their irrigation systems through partnership with the city's Water Efficiency Incentive Program (see adjacent list). This program offers 50 percent funding for approved projects, up to \$8,000 per property. Properties must operate their irrigation systems out of an irrigation meter (which is billed at a different rate than indoor water use) to be eligible. The Water Efficiency Incentive Program began in 2017 and has assisted 75 properties in the last four years. Has your association participated yet? If not, it should submit an application in 2021, which will be the last year of the program. Applications will be accepted in early 2021. Talk with your board and land care team this winter to prepare the application!
2. Single-family homeowners took advantage of the irrigation efficiency program as well, as 501 additional smart irrigation controllers were purchased through the city's program in 2021 to replace existing, inefficient irrigation controllers. Each home is estimated to reduce water use by an average of 30,000 gallons per year, by simply not watering when

it's not necessary. Approximately 2,600 homes have participated since the program began in 2016. If you have not purchased one yet, add yourself to the 2021 waitlist at woodburymn.gov/smartirrigation.

3. Although temporarily paused due to COVID-19, the city is set to assist an apartment complex replace toilets that use approximately 3 gallons per flush. The project is funded through the Metropolitan Council and the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment. Toilets installed before the early 1990s vary with how much water they use, where toilets installed 1995 and after have been regulated by the U.S. government to use 1.28 gallons per flush or less, some using as little as 1 gallon. Moving to the newer, more efficient toilet does not require additional flushes and reduces water use substantially. If your toilet is older than 1995, consider replacement with your next trip to the hardware store. Be sure to look for the WaterSense label to find a water efficient toilet.
4. At the Oct. 28 City Council meeting, the city was recognized for its efforts to protect drinking water and improve the efficient use of water by the Minnesota Department of Health. This acknowledgement would not have occurred without the impressive participation from Woodbury homeowners, businesses and associations. Thank you for supporting water efficiency. Tell your neighbors about the programs and let's get more people involved in 2021!

More information about these programs is available at woodburymn.gov/waterwise.



Thank you to the 2020 Water Efficiency Incentive Program participants:

- Eastview Place
- Heritage Glen
- McHattie Ponds
- Spinnaker Cove Club Homes
- Sunrise Residents
- Townes at Stonemill Farms
- Villages at Eagle Valley
- Wedgewood Estates Association
- Wedgewood Village Townhomes
- Woodbury Crossing Association

Holiday recycling tips

The holidays, which often produce an abundance of extra waste and recycling, are upon us. Deciphering what can be recycled, or how to dispose of certain items, can be challenging. The tips below can help you navigate the holiday recycling season.

1. **Lights and cords get tangled at recycling processing facilities and should never be placed in your curbside recycling cart.** Instead, bring them to the Washington County Environmental Center (4039 Cottage Grove Drive in Woodbury) for recycling and proper disposal.
2. **Only plain gift wrap and cards can be recycled** – anything that has glitter, foil, ribbon or bows is waste, and cannot be recycled. This year, be more creative and wrap your gift in something that is easier to recycle, such as a newspaper or reusable bag.
3. **Take care of those empty boxes.** Break down boxes and place them in your curbside recycling cart for disposal. Better yet, make room for those new gifts and consider filling up a box or two of old things to donate for reuse by someone else.
4. **Be aware of your recycling day.** Holidays tend to affect collection schedules for trash and recycling. Be sure to check with your recycling hauler regarding schedule changes.
5. **Batteries contain toxic metals and pose threats if not properly disposed.** All battery types are accepted at the Washington County Environmental Center for proper disposal.
6. **New electronic items** are a popular holiday gift. Drop off old or broken electronics at the Washington County Environmental Center. For devices still in working condition, consider selling, gifting or donating them to someone else.

A list of acceptable items is available at: www.co.washington.mn.us/604/Environmental-Center.





Woodbury develops tools for tree preservation

At its Nov. 10 City Council meeting, the Woodbury City Council approved an update to the city's woodland protection ordinance, bringing it to current standards and developing a tool for staff to incentivize tree preservation on developments.

The updated ordinance defines a "significant woodland" as 10,000 square feet or more of undisturbed woodland, predominantly composed of significant (greater than or equal to 6-inch diameter) and/or specimen (greater than or equal to 30-inch diameter) hardwood and/or coniferous trees.

The ordinance also established an incentive for preserving specimen trees and/or significant woodland areas. Prior to the Nov. 10 update,

the ordinance only stated a penalty for removing significant and specimen trees, requiring replacement plantings of young trees on a site. The city recognizes the importance of preserving established trees when possible, providing a diversity of tree species and maturity. Staff is excited to have these additional tools to promote the preservation of established trees on developed sites.

Preservation and expansion of the city's tree canopy provides a number of environmental benefits to the community, including:

- Removal and storage of carbon from the atmosphere
- Absorption of odors and pollutants from the air

- Releasing oxygen
- Shading of streets and breaking up large impervious areas such as parking lots
- Energy conservation by planting trees strategically around a property to provide shade, reducing electrical costs
- Water conservation on lawns by reducing evaporation
- Prevention of water pollution and soil erosion

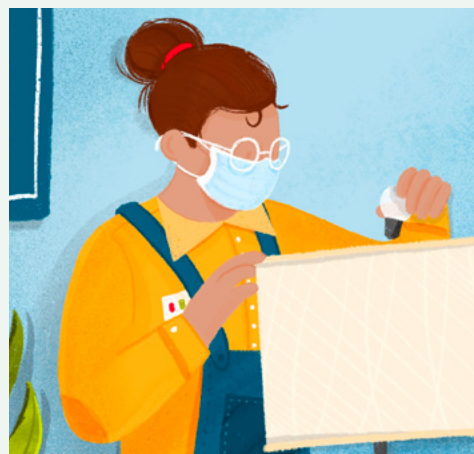
For additional information about the benefits of trees, and to learn which trees are native to Minnesota, visit dnr.state.mn.us/trees. Also, watch for information about the city's upcoming tree sale in the March 2021 issue of the Green Times newsletter.

Save money and stay warm this winter

When do you know winter has arrived? It might be the first frost of the year, or the holiday season popping up at a store. For many Minnesotans, however, it might be a draft of cold air across the living room or the annual bill increase that comes with heating homes. No one can stop the seasons from turning, but the City of Woodbury wants you to stay comfortable at home and keep your energy bills low-with help from the Home Energy Squad.

The Home Energy Squad is provided by Xcel Energy and delivered by the local nonprofit, Center for Energy and Environment. During a visit, energy experts help you explore your home from a new perspective. They will show how energy is used, and recommend ways to decrease your consumption, resulting in a lower utility bill. Their recommendations can help you improve the energy performance in a variety of ways, ranging from large equipment like furnaces, to the easier-to-overlook energy users like lightbulbs.

Through 2020, Woodbury residents receive a discount and pay only \$70 (normally \$100) for the assessment plus all of the materials. Free



in-person visits are available to income-qualified households.

FREE virtual home energy visit

Although a visit is typically performed in person, Home Energy Squad is now offering a free virtual home energy audit. If you are working remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic, you may have noticed that having your home act as both office and living space can really increase how much energy you use, along with an

increase to your monthly utility bill. After your free virtual visit, you and your energy expert may decide that the best next step is an in-person visit, which will be performed safely with health and safety guidelines in mind.

A season change is a perfect opportunity to reflect on what you love about your home – it's a comfortable place for you and your family to live and work, and it keeps you safe. As 2020 draws to a close, you should also consider the ways you might improve your home with projects that can save you money for years to come. Home Energy Squad is here to help you explore your home's potential and take the next step to make it a reality.

If you want to learn more or if you are ready to schedule your virtual or in-home visit, call 651-328-6220 or visit mncee.org/hes.

The Home Energy Squad will visit your home to install energy saving products such as:

- LED bulbs
- Door weather-stripping
- Faucet aerators and shower heads
- Water heater wrap
- Programmable thermostat

The Home Energy Squad team will also conduct an energy assessment that includes:

- Insulation inspection
- Blower door test
- Infrared camera
- Carbon monoxide safety check
- Help with next steps

