

Oak Park a pilot community

Smart electric meters to offer conservation tool

Oak Parkers soon will be able to monitor their electricity use online or at a device right in their home, as ComEd launches a pilot program to test *smart meters* in more than 100,000 locations in the Chicagoland area.

Every electric meter in Oak Park — about 27,500 — will be replaced with a smart meter, beginning as early as December or January. The new meters will provide information consumers can use to reduce energy costs by choosing to use electricity at times when demand — and rates — decrease.

A share of regional pilot sites, including some in Oak Park, may be selected to test various enhanced versions of the new meters, including ones connected to in-home readers that provide real-time use information on a digital screen.

Oak Park ComEd customers should get a telephone call about a week before technicians will replace an old meter with a new, smart meter, a procedure that should take no more than 10 minutes. The meters are designed to fit into the current meter base, and the only visible difference will be a digi-



Meters like these will soon be going in throughout Oak Park.

tal read out instead of the spinning disk and analog dials of the old meter.

Unless the meter is inaccessible, the property owner does not need to be present. However, a brief service interruption will occur, which may require resetting clocks and electronic devices.

Smart meters are the first step toward *smart grids* that will use digital technology to limit the duration of

power outages by automatically rerouting power around equipment failures and more efficiently integrate energy produced from multiple sources.

When the pilot program is fully implemented in early summer 2010 customers will be able to monitor their energy use via the internet, learning to take advantage of pricing differentials that change during various seasons and times of day. The meters also will help ComEd identify and respond more quickly to power outages and service interruptions.

In time, innovative energy efficient appliances will be able to adjust their functions by communicating with smart meters to take advantage of price differences as power production sources shift throughout any given day to meet consumer demand.

Other nearby communities participating in the smart meter pilot program include Bellwood, Berwyn, Broadview, Forest Park, Hillside, Maywood, Melrose Park and River Forest.

For more information on the smart meter pilot program, call 1.800.EDISON1 or visit www.comed.com/smartmeter.

Ike expansion talk begins again

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has initiated preliminary engineering and environmental studies that could lead to recommendations to widen the Eisenhower Expressway, I-290. While the study promises a “fresh look” at the corridor’s broader transportation needs with extensive public involvement and consideration of community context, Oak Parkers are encouraged to participate in the study as opportunities arise to help ensure local interests are heard and addressed. Information about meeting schedules and other opportunities to provide study input, will be publicized as it becomes available. An IDOT study published in 1998 recommended widening the expressway through Oak Park to accommodate High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes for carpoolers, a strategy Oak Park and other communities along the route oppose. The Village supports alternatives to widening the expressway such as extending the CTA Blue Line to the Oak Brook area where it would connect to a new bus rapid transit facility traveling between Naperville and Schaumburg. Getting people out of their cars, not building more highway capacity is considered by most transportation planners as a better way to solve congestion, reduce reliance on foreign energy sources and decrease harmful emissions. For information on the process and background, call 708.358.5770 or e-mail village@oak-park.us. Information also is posted on IDOT’s project website, www.eisenhowerexpressway.com.



www.oak-park.us/planning

Marion Street awards continue to come



The reconstruction of a block-long section of Marion Street in the heart of downtown Oak Park is continuing to do more than attract shoppers and turn heads of passers-by who may be wondering how such a historic streetscape could have made it into the 21st century. The Illinois Chapter of American Society of Landscape Architects is the latest organization to pick the Marion Street

project for an award. Among the criteria used by landscape architects to select Marion Street was the quality and functionality of the design and its environmental responsibility. This award is the latest in a list of accolades the project has won, including from the Illinois chapter of the American Planning Association, the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU) and the Brick Industry Association. The Marion Street project getting so much attention was the last remnant of a pedestrian-only mall created in 1974. Using brick and natural stone for the streets, curbs and sidewalks, the project on Marion Street and connecting Westgate Street showcases downtown Oak Park as a shopping, dining and gathering destination for the community and region. Other features include a system to capture and filter storm water for irrigating the trees and plantings, a fountain and an under-surface heating system to melt snow and ice from the sidewalks.

New parking coming to Lake Street

With the demolition of buildings along Lake and Westgate streets now complete, additional parking should be in place just in time for the holiday shopping season. The new lot will provide about 70 spaces just off Lake Street, east of Harlem Avenue, with another five on-street spaces added to Westgate. A new street and sidewalk along the eastern most edge of the new lot will offer both vehicle and pedestrian access to Westgate and North Boulevard.

Plans for Roosevelt Road continue

Plans to adopt a uniform look for Roosevelt Road will move a step closer to reality with the adoption of a special zoning overlay district to regulate height and design of buildings, parking, landscaping and density from Austin Boulevard to Harlem Avenue. The overlay district is part of an intergovernmental agreement with the City of Berwyn and Town of Cicero intended to create uniform and consistent regulations for the three communities that share the important east-west roadway. The proposed regulations, as well as more details about future plans for Roosevelt Road, are posted at www.rooseveltroad.com.

New office space planned for Madison Street

A new privately funded development on Madison Street at Highland Avenue will offer top-tier office space, retail outlets and 151 parking spaces for both private and public use. The project could create as many as 100 jobs for local residents and, once built and occupied, generate \$1.2 million in tax revenue for local governments, including the school districts. Two, four-story buildings totaling about 74,000 square feet will be linked with a bridge over Highland Avenue connecting a parking area on the second floor of both buildings. Construction could begin in spring. The project developer purchased the site from the Village for \$1.15 million. No public dollars will be invested in the project.



Green News

Careers...The Environmental & Energy Advisory Commission will host a presentation on green careers at 7 p.m., Tues., Nov. 17, at the Public Works Center, 201 South Blvd. Jason La Fleur of Eco Achievers will present an overview of sustainability and how it relates to the business world, followed by information on pursuing or transitioning into green careers. Call 708.358.5700 or e-mail publicworks@oak-park.us for more information.

Counting CFLs...How many CFL bulbs will be installed in Oak Park by March?

The Village is counting wrappers to help document the community's effort to go green and earn access to financial incentive programs offered by ComEd to help residents, businesses and governments reduce their electricity and natural gas use. From November – March, CFL wrappers can be recycled during regular business hours at Village Hall, 123 Madison St., or the Public Works Center, 201 South Blvd. Students also will be collecting the wrappers for participating schools. The school that collects the most wrappers will receive an engraved recycled plastic bench. For more information, call the Public Works Department at 708.358-5700 or e-mail publicworks@oak-park.us.



Awards...Seven individuals were the recipients of the Environmental & Energy Advisory Commission's first annual *Green Awards*. Winners were selected using criteria that included contribution to the sustainability of the community, measurability of the project or program, project longevity, innovation and elegance of execution. The seven recipients are Amy Little of Roll Out the Rain Barrels; Isaac Sinnott of Let It Rain Barrels; Mike Iversen for his Green Tuesday Lecture Series; Maria Onesto Moran of Green Home Experts; the residents of the 300 block of south Humphrey for the Village's first green block; and Tom Bassett-Dilley for his green garage. Members of the Oak Park and River Forest High School Environmental Club won honorable mention for their active involvement.

News You Can Use

Holidays affect waste collection schedule...

Refuse, recycling and yard-waste collection will be delayed by the holidays. For Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day, if your regular pick-up is on Thursday, your collection will be delayed until Friday, and Friday's collection delayed until Saturday.

Regular yardwaste collection ends...

After Sat., Nov. 28, yardwaste will be collected only by appointment. Call Waste Management at 888.656.5350 to arrange a special pick-up.

Nature museum activities...

Cook County's Trailside Museum of Natural History, 738 Thatcher Ave., in River Forest, offers a range of programs for children and adults alike, including nature stories, fitness hikes and close-up visits with the Thatcher Woods' many inhabitants. For more information, visit the Museum or call 708.366.6530.

Be cautious with alternate heat sources...

When using heat sources such as portable and baseboard electric heaters, fireplaces and woodstoves, remove nearby objects, keep furniture a safe distance away, do not block the heat flow and never use an extension cord. Working carbon monoxide detectors, smoke alarms and a family escape plan also are essential. Call 708.445.3300, visit www.oak-park.us/fire or e-mail fire@oak-park.us for more information.

Winter refuse collection...Residents and building owners are reminded to clear snow away from refuse and recycling containers to avoid a missed collection. If the container is not accessible, it will not be emptied.

Don't hesitate to call 9-1-1

Oak Park's community policing approach relies on residents taking an active role. If you see unusual activity, suspicious people or vehicles in your neighborhood, call 9-1-1 immediately. For more information on the Community Policing Program, or to contact your Resident Beat Officer, call 708.386.3800 or visit www.oak-park.us/police.

Fall leaf collection underway

The annual fall leaf collection program is underway. Leaves should be raked into the street at least 18 inches from the curb the day before the scheduled pickup dates, which are determined by location as indicated on the map. Residents who miss a scheduled pickup date are urged to keep leaves on the parkway until the night before the next scheduled pickup. Please follow these simple rules:

- Consider alternatives to raking such as composting or using leaves as garden mulch.
- Leaves only — do not add brush, grass clippings or yard waste.
- Rake leaves onto side streets whenever possible, avoiding major thoroughfares where piles of leaves might create traffic hazards.
- Do not rake leaves into or close to cul de sacs or traffic diverters. Keep catch basins clear of raked leaves to avoid localized flooding.
- Dampen piles after raking to avoid wind-blown leaves.
- Inform landscape services of the leaf collection schedule.
- Do not park on or near a pile of leaves, which can hinder leaf removal or create a fire hazard.
- Obey all parking restrictions — or risk a citation.
- Drive carefully — leaves are slippery when wet and large piles may hinder visibility.

For more information on the leaf collection program, call 708.358.5700, visit www.oak-park.us/publicworks or e-mail publicworks@oak-park.us.

NORTH AVE		EAST AVE		AUSTIN BLVD	
WEDNESDAY	Nov. 4 Nov. 11 Nov. 18 Nov. 25 Dec. 2	THURSDAY	Nov. 5 Nov. 12 Nov. 19 Nov. 26 Dec. 3	TUESDAY	Nov. 3 Nov. 10 Nov. 17 Nov. 24 Dec. 1
HARLEM AVE		EAST AVE		AUSTIN BLVD	
SOUTH BLVD		EAST AVE		AUSTIN BLVD	
MONDAY	Nov. 2 Nov. 9 Nov. 16 Nov. 23 Nov. 30				
				ROOSEVELT RD	

2009 Fall Leaf Collection Schedule



Volunteers sought for civic engagement

Volunteers who serve on a Village advisory board or commission perform a vital community function for local government. Oak Park has a long history of residents whose training, experience and expertise have helped shape new initiatives and provide new ideas and creative solutions for consideration by Village leadership. Most terms are for three years, and most commissions meet monthly at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. One-year terms for high school students also are available. Visit www.oak-park.us/volunteer for more information, including descriptions of each of the more than two dozen volunteer boards and commissions or call the Office of the Village Clerk at 708.358.5670.

Shopping locally important in tough economy

Residents who take advantage of retailing and dining opportunities in Oak Park play a key role in maintaining businesses and important sales tax revenues essential to funding vital public services. For every retail dollar spent in the Village, 2 percent goes to help fund public services and projects such as vital infrastructure improvements. Shopping at home should be easy for Oak Parkers. Among its nearly 1,000 retail businesses, the Village boasts more than 90 restaurants, an auto dealership, several supermarkets, many specialty shops and art galleries, and a mix of both national chains and local stores. For more information on where to dine and shop in the Village, visit www.oak-park.us.

HOUSING NEWS

housing@oak-park.us

Rehab loans available

Oak Park residents unable to afford needed home repairs may be eligible for a single-family rehabilitation loan from the Village. Property must be a single-family, owner-occupied unit located within Oak Park. Owner income must fall within federal guidelines. Eligible repairs include health and safety issues, building code violations and more. Apply now and begin construction in spring. For details, e-mail housing@oak-park.us or call 708.358.5410.

Public comment sought

The Village of Oak Park *Draft Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice* is now available for public review and comment. The analysis is a review of laws, regulations and administrative policies, procedures and practices affecting the location, availability and accessibility of housing, as well as an assessment of conditions affecting fair housing choice. Comments may be submitted until Nov. 19 in writing to Housing Programs Manager, Village of Oak Park, 123 Madison Street, Oak Park, Illinois 60302 or by telephone to 708.358.5419. This document is posted on the Housing Division pages of www.oak-park.us and is available for review during regular business hours, Monday–Friday, at Village Hall, and in all Oak Park Public Library branches. For more information, call 708.358.5410 or e-mail housing@oak-park.us.

Snowfall triggers emergency parking plan

After a two-inch snowfall, the Emergency Snow Removal Parking Plan goes into effect and the following parking rules are enforced seven days a week, including holidays:

- Main streets posted as snow routes must be cleared of all parked cars. These include Augusta, Austin, Chicago, Division, Garfield, Harlem, Harrison, Jackson, Lake, Madison, North Ave., Oak Park, Ridgeland, Roosevelt and Wisconsin from Madison to the emergency entrance of Oak Park Hospital.
- Non-snow route streets allow parking between 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. on the side of the street with even numbered addresses on even days and the side of the street with odd numbered addresses on odd days.
- Designated commercial parking areas as posted follow the odd/even rule between midnight and 8 a.m.
- Snow parking rules do not override other parking regulations, such as time limitations and prohibitions. Vehicles parked in violation of the snow restrictions are subject to ticketing and towing.

To find out if snow-related parking restrictions are in effect, call 708.358.SNOW for a recorded message. Cable television subscribers can tune into VOP-TV, available on Comcast channel 6 and AT&T channel 99. For more information on the emergency snow parking program, call 708.358.5700 or e-mail publicworks@oak-park.us.

Residents, businesses required to shovel sidewalks

Residents and businesses are urged to help improve walking conditions and public safety by removing snow and ice from sidewalks after a storm. Village ordinance requires snow and ice to be removed from the public sidewalk within 24 hours following any snow, sleet or freezing rain. If the snow or ice has become so hard that it cannot be removed without damaging the sidewalk, then sand, salt or other abrasive material may be used to make pedestrian travel reasonably safe. Failure to clear a sidewalk fronting or abutting one's property could lead to a ticket and fine. For more information on the shoveling requirement or help resources, call 708.358.5700 or e-mail publicworks@oak-park.us.

Pay water bill online

Property owners can pay their water bills electronically, either by using a credit card online, or setting up an automatic debit from a checking, savings or credit card account. The Village also encourages property owners to go paperless by signing up to receive bills via e-mail. In addition to water, the quarterly bill includes charges for sewer, garbage disposal and recycling. To set up an electronic account, visit www.oak-park.us/onlineservices and look for the manage your water account link. For more information, call 708.358.5460 or e-mail finance@oak-park.us.

Clip and Save 

Who to Call at Village Hall

Dial Direct

Village TTY	383.0048
Police/Fire TTY	848.1911
Automated Info Line	445.3340
Adjudication	358.5479
Building and Property Standards	358.5430
Licenses/permits	358.5433
Codes/status of plans	358.5434
Property complaints	358.5443
Inspections	358.5440
Community Planning/	
Development	358.5420
Business Services	358.5648
Housing	358.5410
Historic Preservation	358.5417
Zoning	358.5449
Community Relations	358.5405
Graffiti Hotline	358.5429
Neighborhood Programs	358.5405
Finance	358.5460
Utility Billing Inquiries	358.5478
Fire (non-emergency)	445.3300
Human Resources	358.5650
Job Hotline	358.5650
Police (non-emergency)	386.3800
Crime Tip Hotline	434.1636
Public Health	358.5480
Animal Control	358.5680
Public Works	358.5700
Parking	
Day Parking Passes	358.DAYS
Night Parking Passes	358.NITE
Parking Office	358.PARK
Snow Hotline	358.SNOW
Extended Passes	358.5750
Village Clerk	358.5670
Village Manager's Office	358.5770
Village Web Site	www.oak-park.us
Police, Fire and Medical	
EMERGENCIES	911

Carbon monoxide detector alerts family just in time



A recent close call for an Oak Park family on South Harvey Avenue underscores the importance of working carbon monoxide detectors. The shrill scream of a detector alarm likely saved the lives of the family who immediately called the Fire Department. Nicor technicians shut down the home's furnace, which was emitting dangerous levels of the odorless, but deadly, gas. State law requires homeowners and landlords to install carbon monoxide detectors within 15 feet of every room used for sleeping. Alarms can be battery powered, plug-in with battery back up or wired into a power line with a secondary battery back up. The alarm also can be a combination carbon monoxide and smoke detector if the unit complies with established standards and the alarm differentiates the hazard. While state law allows for specific exemptions to the detector requirement, it is up to a community's building officials to determine if an exemption is allowable. Officials from Oak Park's Building & Property Standards Department say exemptions are not granted in the Village, given the age of most of the housing stock, the near universal use of natural gas and proximity of idling vehicles. Carbon monoxide detectors are not substitutes for smoke detectors, fire officials caution, so both devices are essential. For more safety information call 708.445.3300 or e-mail fire@oak-park.us.

Get the latest Village news via e-mail



Keeping up with what's going on at Village Hall is easy for anyone with a computer and access to the internet. The Village's e-mail news and information service allows anyone wishing to receive information

on municipal activities to sign-up at www.oak-park.us — just click on the e-news icon at the bottom of the page. No information other than an e-mail address is collected. Unsubscribing is just as easy. For more information, call 708.358.5770 or e-mail village@oak-park.us.

Effort underway to create strategic historic preservation plan

The Historic Preservation Commission is leading a community wide effort to create a 10-year Strategic Historic Preservation Plan to help guide efforts to identify and protect important historic resources throughout the Village. Residents are invited to get involved in helping create the new plan, which will replace a long-range plan created in the 1994. The next workshop is scheduled for 7 p.m., Dec. 16, at Hatch School, 1000 N. Ridgeland Ave. Commissioners say a strategic preservation plan will enhance efforts to identify and protect important historic resources, create new methods for encouraging rehabilitation and adaptive use of important historic buildings and structures, and promote a strong historic preservation ethic among a cross-section of community stakeholders and residents. The new strategic plan is being approached in three phases. The first phase will develop a comprehensive baseline of information for future analysis and decision-making. The second phase will explore ideas and concepts for specific historic preservation planning strategies and initiatives. And the third, plan-making phase will create a formal document of strategies to achieve both short and long-term goals. For more information on the plan or the process, call 708.358.5417 or e-mail planning@oak-park.us. Information also is posted on the Historic Preservation pages of the Village web site, www.oak-park.us.



VOP-TV's Joe Kreml with his camera.

VOP-TV videos win national awards

Original programs produced by VOP-TV, the Village of Oak Park's municipal cable television station, were big winners in national competition, garnering three first place

awards for individual productions and finishing third in overall programming. *Operation Problem Child*, a profile of a drill to assess the Oak Park Department of Public Health's ability to dispense medication to the entire community, won first place in the public safety category, while the *Business Buzz*, a regular how-to program featuring local businesses, took top honors in the public information series category. A public service announcement featuring a giant turkey promoting last season's free holiday parking, won first place for the use of humor. Oak Park's VOP-TV also earned a third place in overall excellence for the wide variety of programming aired throughout the year. VOP-TV videos have won more than two dozen industry awards since 2001. In addition to broadcasting public information programs such as these most recent award winners, the station produces public service announcements, broadcasts Village Board meetings and airs information on government related services and events. Emergency information also can be found on VOP-TV, which is broadcast on Comcast channel 6 and AT&T Uverse channel 99. In addition, many VOP-TV original programs are posted on YouTube at www.youtube.com/vopnews. For more information on VOP-TV programming, call 708.358.5775 or e-mail village@oak-park.us.



Residential Customer Local
Oak Park, Illinois

Village President David Pope
Trustees
Glenn Brewer Ray Johnson
Jon Hale Colette Lueck
John Hedges Jan Pate
Village Clerk Teresa Powell
Village Manager Thomas W. Barwin

Postal Carrier
Pre-Sort

Presort
Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 26
Oak Park, IL

OP/FM

Village of Oak Park
Village Hall
123 Madison Street
Oak Park, Illinois 60302-4272



Foob and his trainer demonstrate how a special mask can save a pet's life in a fire. Invisible Fence Company recently donated masks to the Oak Park Fire Department, giving them a tool firefighters say can mean the difference between life and death for a pet. The masks can be connected to regular oxygen bottles and used to treat both dogs and cats for smoke inhalation. An estimated 40,000 animals perish in home fires every year. For more information on fire prevention, call 708.445.3300 or e-mail fire@oak-park.us.

H1N1 vaccine offered by appointment

The Oak Park Department of Public Health is administering H1N1 (swine) flu vaccine to residents at community clinics at Village Hall and the Main Fire Station. Those most at risk are given top priority, but Health Department officials say vaccine may be available to the general public if supplies and public demand warrant. Those considered at the greatest risk for contracting the virus and potentially suffering the greatest complications include individuals six months to 24 years old, pregnant women, adults ages 25 - 64 with a chronic illness including diseases of the heart and lungs, asthma, diabetes and HIV, healthcare workers and caretakers of children less than six months old. Oak Park residents will not be charged for the vaccine, but appointments are required — call 708.358.5601. Children under the age of 10 will need two shots, approximately a month apart. Both appointments can be made at the same time. For more information on H1N1 clinics, call 708.358.5480 or e-mail health@oak-park.us. Information, including links to the CDC and Illinois Department of Public Health, is posted at www.oak-park.us/health — just look for the H1N1 icon.



Photo: James Gathany

Make extra money renting your extra parking space

Many Oak Parkers are making extra money each month by renting a private parking space in their garage or driveway. While the Village does not manage the spaces or negotiate fees, staff will help market a private rental parking space via the *Parking Clearinghouse*. Parking Services maintains a list of private property owners who have parking spaces available for rent throughout the Village. The list of available private spaces is provided to anyone in need of a place to park a car when a suitable public space is not available. The list may be reviewed in person from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday thru Friday, in Village Hall, 123 Madison St. The list cannot be reviewed via telephone or faxed. If you would like to add your parking space to this list, call 708.358.PARK (7275) and choose option 5 for more information.