

Single-use bag fee begins in Oak Park retail stores

Bringing a reusable bag on a shopping trip in Oak Park is not only environmentally friendly, but also cost effective now that the Village's retail single-use bag law is in effect.

As of Jan. 1, shoppers in Oak Park's larger retail stores are being charged 10 cents for every single-use bag the merchant provides to carry home purchases.

Half of the 10-cent fee is retained by retailers to allay cost of implementing the program, while the other half is remitted to the Village to help fund local environmental initiatives.

The new local law is not about making money, officials say, but reducing the negative impact single-use bags — both plastic and paper — have on the environment.

High-density polyethylene plastic bags, which are made from non-renewable fossil fuels, take more than 200 years to degrade.

Paper bags have an even a higher carbon footprint than plastic because more energy is required to produce and transport them.

By enacting a fee, Oak Park has joined a number of other environmentally conscious municipalities across the country in adopting laws aimed at reducing single-use bags and their environmental impacts.

Indications are that such laws are

helping change shopping behavior. A study conducted recently in neighboring Chicago found that the number of single-use bags used per shopping trip dropped 42 percent after the city put a similar fee in place last February.

Reusable bags already are common in Oak Park, according to a study conducted by the Village's Environment & Energy Commission. In researching their recommendations for the new local law, citizen volunteers on the commission determined that more than half of all residents already rely on reusable bags.

Exemptions to the local fee do apply. These include bags provided by a pharmacist to contain a prescription drug and for plastic bags intended for a special use, such as dry cleaning, garbage, pet waste or yard waste.

Bags given at the point of sale at a seasonal event, such as a farmers market, street fair or yard sale, also are exempt from the fee, as are bags provided by a restaurant for carryout or used by a grocer to package a bulk item or wrap a perishable item, such as meat.

For more information on the new fee, including a list of stores where the 10-cent bag fee applies visit www.oak-park.us/bringyourbag.

Free reusable bags available... Reusable bags are available to all residents free of charge in the lobbies at Village

BRING YOUR BAG 

10¢ CHARGE
on checkout bags 
effective Jan. 1, 2018

Help reduce the use of disposable bags in Oak Park! 



Oak Park oak-park.us/bringyourbag

Hall, 123 Madison St., and the Public Works Center, 201 South Blvd. Officials ask that residents limit taking one bag per household. The Village also is working with local not-for-profit organizations to provide reusable bags to individuals who may not be able to afford to buy them. Contact sustainability@oak-park.us for more information.

No plastic bags in recycling bins...

Residents who have plastic bags they'd like to dispose of are reminded not to discard them in curbside recycling carts and bins. Plastic bags often get caught in equipment at recycling centers, potentially breaking or stopping machinery. A wide variety of plastic bags, films and wraps can be discarded in bins at local grocery stores. Visit www.plasticfilmrecycling.org for a list of items that can be recycled at stores. Plastic bags are also accepted by the Animal Care League, 1013 Garfield Street. Contact sustainability@oak-park.us for more information.

OP/FYI returns to bi-monthly publication

With this issue, the *OP/FYI* newsletter returns to its original bi-monthly publication schedule as part of the effort to trim Village operating expenses and take advantage of the growing reliance of citizens on the internet as a source of the most up-to-date news. In addition to this issue, newsletters are scheduled for March, May, July, September and November. The *OP/FYI* was originally launched in 1989 on a bi-monthly schedule. Residents are urged to visit www.oak-park.us/news for breaking news from the Village. The latest official Village news also is available via email — just go to www.oak-park.us/enews to sign up. Or follow us on Facebook and Twitter at www.facebook.com/vopnews and twitter.com/vopnews.

2018 budget focuses on public safety, infrastructure improvements

With approval of the municipal budget for 2018, resources will continue to focus on infrastructure improvements and enhancing public safety, while ensuring fiscal stability.

For the fourth year in a row, the budget allocates additional resources to maintaining and improving the community's critical network of streets, alleys and other public infrastructure.

Funding for new Police officers and firefighter/paramedics in 2018 will help further enhance crime prevention and the high level of emergency medical services residents rely upon in times of need.

Technology will continue to play an important role in the year ahead as well, with resources allocated to the long-term goals of making the Village service delivery more efficient and cost-effective through automation and web-accessible, data-driven information management.

Partnerships with agencies that provide a wide range of social services also

will continue in the year ahead, including with the Regional Housing Center, Oak Park Residence Corporation, Oak Park Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, Oak Park Economic Development Corporation and Oak Park Area Arts Council. These partner agencies have been an integral part of the many special services that have helped make Oak Park diverse, open and inclusive.

Increases in some fees are now effective, including waste collection. Beginning Jan. 1, the monthly cost for a 96-gallon refuse cart is \$26.71, up from \$25.93, and the cost for a 64-gallon refuse cart is \$23.59, up from \$21.93. Refuse rates are charged on quarterly water bills. Green yard waste stickers are now \$2.60, up from \$2.50. Pink bulk-item refuse stickers are \$2.35, up from \$2.25.

Water rates rose to \$9.33 cents per 1,000 gallons used, up from \$9.14. Sewer rates, which are based on water use, are now \$2.67 per 1,000 gallons

of water, up from \$2.61. The water and sewer fees include the cost of purchasing Lake Michigan water from the City of Chicago and help fund maintenance and improvements to the local system.

Rates also changed for parking permits, vehicle immobilizations and emergency ambulance transportation.

The 2018 budget is comprised of 31 funds and \$146 million in expenditures, down from \$149 million in fiscal year 2017.

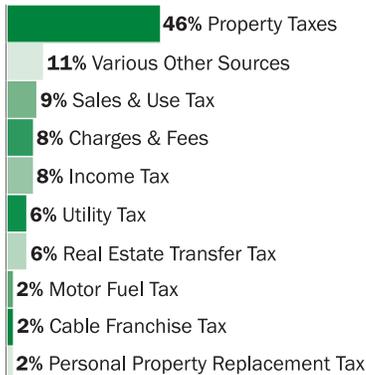
Expenditures are supported by a number of sources, including property taxes, sales taxes, user fees and inter-governmental revenues.

The budget's \$61-million general fund, which supports most day-to-day municipal operations, will allocate 75 percent of spending to Police, Fire and Public Works.

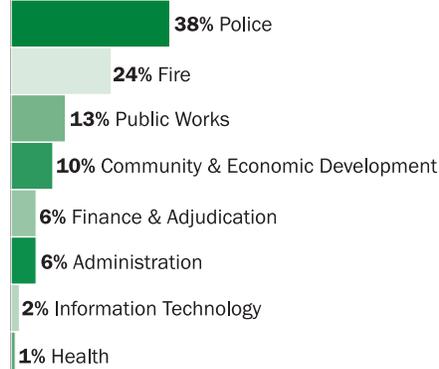
Information on the budget process and copies of the FY2018 and past year's budgets are posted at www.oak-park.us/budget.

2018 Budget at a Glance—General Fund

WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM



WHERE THE MONEY GOES



HOW PROPERTY TAXES ARE DISTRIBUTED



Finance documents available online

The Finance Department ensures the fiscal integrity of the Village of Oak Park by developing, maintaining and administering all programs related to the accounting of municipal revenues and expenditures. This critical municipal government role results in a wide range of financial documents available for public view online at www.oak-park.us/financial-reports. Among the documents readily assessable online are the following:

- Annual Budgets
 - Audit Management Letters
 - Bond Rating Service Reports
 - Capital Improvements Plans
 - Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports
 - Quarterly Financial Reports
 - Single Audit Reports
 - Tax Increment Finance Annual Reports
 - Tax Increment Finance Historical Reports
 - Total Compensation Reports
- For more information on the role and duties of the Finance Department, call 708.358.5460, email finance@oak-park.us or visit www.oak-park.us/finance.

Wide range of property information is online



Residents interested in really getting to know the details of their Oak Park properties have an online resource available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year at www.oak-park.us/communityportal. Just by entering an address into the portal search window on a computer, pad or smartphone, users can link to a wide range of property-specific information. The initial Community Portal page displayed after the address search immediately lists how the specific property is zoned and its PIN (property identification number) that also is a live link directly to the tax and sales history information maintained by

Cook County. Other important details about specific properties accessible through the portal include names and contact information for elected officials at all levels, recycling and refuse schedules, overnight parking permit maps, nearby public transportation sites and voting precinct and polling location. The ability to provide residents with specific information about their properties is made possible through by Oak Park's participation in the GIS Consortium, a collective of local governments working together to develop and implement new technologies they can share. More information on the consortium is posted at public.gisconsortium.org.

Township News

Advance directives clinic...Senior citizens and people with disabilities seeking free legal assistance preparing advance directive legal documents such as power of attorney or living wills can schedule an appointment through Oak Park Township. Representatives from the Center for Disability & Elder Law are available by appointment every second and fourth Tuesday of the month at the Township Senior Services Center, 130 S. Oak Park Ave. To qualify, household income must be at or below 150 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines and you must be a resident of Oak Park or River Forest. For an appointment or more information call 708.383.8060.



Aging, disability resource consultations...One-on-one consultations are available through Oak Park Township to help senior citizens and persons with disabilities identify and use local, state and federal assistance programs. Private consultations are available at two West Suburban Medical Center locations – the first and third Thursdays at the River Forest Medical Campus, 7411 Lake St., Building A, room 1104 and the second and fourth Thursdays at the Medical Center, 3 Erie Court, first floor, room 1062. Among the many assistance areas covered are service coordination, individual case monitoring, transportation, meals, caregiver support, affordable will preparation, daily phone checks/monitoring and home energy assistance. Just call 844.794.4301 to register and make an appointment.



Early childhood support available

Families with young children can look to the *Collaboration for Early Childhood* for information about early development and resources, finding child care or preschool and parenting support. The organization, funded in part by the Village and school districts 97 and 200 to serve children at their most critical development stage, offers free coaching for parents of infants and toddlers, and free preschool for three- and four-year-old children whose families meet eligibility criteria. Parents concerned about their child's physical, social or emotional development also can look to the Collaboration for screening and referrals to additional services. In addition, the Collaboration publishes an *Early Childhood Resource Directory* both online and in print that lists child care centers, preschools and family child care programs in the community. Neighbors are encouraged to spread the word about these free services to families living on their block or to those who are new to Oak Park. For more information on local early childhood resources, including eligibility for programs, call 708.613.6122, email info@collab4kids.org or visit collab4kids.org.

Residents invited to learn more about Islam

Residents are invited to gain deeper understanding and appreciation of Islam at an academic lecture scheduled for 7 to 9 p.m., Wed., Feb. 7 in the Veterans Room of the main Oak Park Public Library, 834 Lake St. Franklin Lewis, chair of the University of Chicago's Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, will present an introduction to Sufism by way of the 13th-century Persian poet and Sufi mystic Rumi, and Rumi's most well-known work, the *Masnavi*. Bring your questions to the discussion, or email them in advance to communications@oppl.org.

Warming centers offer relief from cold

Anyone in need of a place to warm up as temperatures dip can find a range of options in Oak Park. Local sites include the following:

- **Housing Forward**, overnight shelters in various locations, 888.338.1744
- **Rush Oak Park Hospital**, 520 S. Maple Ave. – open 24 hours, 708.383.9300
- **Oak Park Township Senior Services**, 130 S. Oak Park Ave. – Ages 60 and over, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. weekdays, 708.383.8060
- **Village Hall**, 123 Madison St. – 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., weekdays, 708.383.6400
- **West Suburban Medical Center**, 3 Erie Court – 5:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., 708.383.6200

If transportation is needed, call the Oak Park Police Department's non-emergency number 708.386.3800.

Help available to deal with nuisance wildlife



The surprisingly large numbers of wild animals that call Oak Park home typically keep to themselves. But as winter weather makes their search for food and shelter more difficult, the odds of residents coming into contact with a wild animal increase. Typically, the biggest problem with wild animals in a dense, built-up community like Oak Park is the property damage they can cause when seeking shelter. Squirrels gnawing a hole

in the soffit to get into the attic and raccoons, skunks and opossums burrowing under decks, porches and garage foundations are among the more common nuisance issues property owners face.

Be cautious, but don't run from a coyote...As coyotes have made it clear they are at home in Oak Park, wildlife experts agree that simply seeing one does not necessarily constitute a problem or a dangerous situation. If a coyote approaches, they say do not run, but yell, stand up straight, clap your hands and wave your arms — or even throw something to scare it away. However, if a coyote is aggressive or shows no fear, move to a safe location and contact the Animal Control Division at 708.358.5680. Be sure to provide details including the date and address where the interaction occurred. To discourage coyotes from being attracted to your property, limit the amount of bird and pet food left outside. Garbage also should be stored securely — even though coyotes are not likely to eat garbage, they may be attracted by the rodents that do. In addition, do not leave small pets, especially cats, outside unattended. A fence at least four feet high can help prevent entry into the yard.

Traps available...The Health Department leases traps to local property owners who want to try and catch a wild animal causing property damage. Visit Village Hall, 123 Madison St., between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday – Thursday and complete a short application form. A refundable \$50 or \$75 cash or check deposit is required, depending on the size of the trap. The number of traps is limited, so be sure to call 708.358.5680 and check on availability prior to visiting Village Hall. If you capture an animal, the Village's Animal Control officer will deal with the trap's contents. What happens to the animal after it is trapped — whether release or euthanasia — depends on its propensity to spread disease. State and federal laws govern the fate of wild animals caught in populous areas. As for the coyotes and foxes that also call Oak Park home, officials say trying to trap them is difficult at best. Instead, eliminate any potential outside food sources, including unattended small pets.

More information...Extensive information on how to make property less vulnerable to nuisance wildlife in urban areas, as well contact info for local nuisance wildlife control professionals, visit www.dnr.illinois.gov and use the search feature. For more information on dealing with nuisance wild animals in Oak Park, call 708.358.5480 or email health@oak-park.us.

Holiday tree collection schedule

Holiday trees will be collected the weeks of Jan. 8 and 15. Be sure to remove all decorations and stands, and place the tree in the regular collection area by your regular collection day during these two weeks. Since the trees are mulched at a licensed composting facility and used for soil enrichment, please do not leave them in plastic disposal bags or they will not be collected. Trees set out after the collection program ends will require a pink bulk refuse sticker be attached. Stickers are available at most local grocery and hardware stores, as well as at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. for \$2.35 each. Wreaths and garlands cannot be collected for recycling because they contain wire — place them in the trash container. For more information, call 708.358.5700 or publicworks@oak-park.us.

Clip and Save

Who to Call

Dial Direct (area code 708)

Village Hall	oak-park.us
TTY	711
Adjudication	358.5630
Development	
Customer Services	358.5420
Business Services	358.5425
Neighborhood Services	358.5410
Housing	option 1
CDBG	option 2
Property complaints	option 3
Permits & Inspections	358.5430
Planning	358.5440
General questions	option 1
Historic Preservation	option 2
Zoning	option 3
Finance	358.5460
Utility Billing Inquiries	358.5478
Fire (nonemergency)	358.5600
Human Resources	358.5650
Job Hotline	358.5650
Mayor & Trustees	358.5784
Police (nonemergency)	386.3800
Crime Tip Hotline	434.1636
Public Health	358.5480
Animal Control	358.5680
Public Works	358.5700
Parking	358.7275
Village Clerk	358.5670
Village Manager's Office	358.5770

EMERGENCIES 911

Park District	www.pdop.org
Administration	725.2017
Customer Service	725.2000
Building & Grounds	725.2050
Business Operations	725.2015
Public Library	www.oppl.org
Main Library	383.8200
Maze Branch	386.4751
Dole Branch	386.9032
School District 97	www.op97.org
Administration	524.3000
School District 200	www.oprfhs.org
Administration	383.0700
Township	www.oakparktownship.org
Senior Services	383.8060
Youth Services	445.2727
General Assistance	383.8005
Assessor Services	383.8005
Mental Health Board	358.8855

facebook.com/vopnews

instagram.com/oakparkil

pinterest.com/oakparkil

twitter.com/vopnews

youtube.com/vopnews

Ask for identification

If you receive an unexpected visit from someone claiming to be an employee of the Village who wants to enter your home, ask to see their official identification. The official ID card features the employee's photo, name and the Village logo on the front. Use the same procedure if someone claiming to be an employee of a utility company, such as Nicor or ComEd, wants to come in your home — ask to see an official ID. If in doubt, call the Police non-emergency number, 708.386.3800. If you feel threatened, call 911.

Volunteers needed for A Day in Our Village

June may seem like a long way from January, but planning already is well underway for *A Day in Our Village*, Oak Park's annual festival celebrating diversity and community involvement. This year's event is scheduled for Sun., June 3. A variety of volunteers are needed to help promote and staff the event, which includes activity booths, demonstrations, entertainment and food. Anyone interested in volunteering — or more information — is urged to call 708.358.5407 or email community@oak-park.us.

Park District news

Winter celebration...Celebrate winter from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Sat., Jan. 27, in Austin Gardens, 167 Forest Ave., at the Park District of Oak Park's annual Winterfest. The free event will feature outdoor ice skating (weather permitting), games and music. Limited skate rental will be available for \$1 per pair. Visit www.pdop.org for more details.

Planning for Wenonah Park...Oak Park residents are invited bring their ideas and opinions to a community meeting to help plan for the future of Wenonah Park, located at Wenonah Avenue and Harrison Street. The meeting to revisit the park's master plan is scheduled for 7 p.m., Wed., Feb. 21 at Fox Center, 624 S. Oak Park Ave. Visit www.pdop.org for more details.

Village names Sustainability Coordinator



An experienced sustainability professional with corporate and government contract experience has been selected to lead the Village of Oak Park's municipal environmental programs. Marynda "Mindy" Agnew, an Oak Park resident, was selected from a field of more than 50 applicants to be Sustainability Coordinator. Agnew, who has a background in business finance, sustainable community development, government operations, environmental science and conservation, was part of the initial group that procured grant funding for resource reduction, composting and zero waste strategies in District 97 schools. She also worked with key community stakeholders and the Village to launch Oak Park's CompostAble composting program. Agnew earned a Bachelor's degree in business administration from Elmhurst College and studied graduate-level sustainable management at the University of Wisconsin. She also is a graduate of Oak Park and River Forest High School. In addition to working with local groups and organizations, Agnew has most recently been under contract with the Village to provide green block party and event coordination. Her role also included working to expand and improve recycling and zero waste processing strategies that have helped make Oak Park a model for other municipalities. In her role as Sustainability Coordinator, Agnew's first task will be implementation of the single-use bag ban set to begin in Oak Park on January 1. Her duties also will include overseeing the community choice electricity aggregation program, identifying project funding opportunities, executing strategies that help achieve the Village's sustainability objectives and working closely with the citizen volunteers on the Environment & Energy Commission. For more information on Oak Park's environmental initiatives visit www.oak-park.us/sustainability or email sustainability@oak-park.us.

Incentive offered to join composting program

Residents who join the Village composting program for the first time will get three months free this year if they sign up for 12 months of continuous service, a savings of \$44.56. The cost is \$14.85 per month charged on the quarterly water bill, which is about the same as recycling one bag of yard waste per week during the Village's seasonal yard waste program that does not accept food scraps and requires a \$2.60 green sticker be attached to each bag or barrel. Composting subscribers can skip the stickers by putting their grass clippings and other gardening waste right into the organics cart. Residents who maintain backyard compost piles or mulch grass clippings are urged to investigate sharing organics carts and costs with neighbors. More than 1,000 households currently participate in the Village program that provides a special 96-gallon mobile cart for organics and an under-sink collection bucket. Sign up for the composting program online at www.oak-park.us/compost. For more information, call 708.358.5700 or email compostable@oak-park.us.

Life-saving CPR/AED classes offered

The Oak Park Fire Department offers a variety of life-saving classes including CPR and training in how to use an automated external defibrillator, or AED. Classes are held from 6 to 10 p.m. at the Fire Department's certified American Heart Association community training center in the main station, 100 N. Euclid Ave. All courses are taught by an



AHA-certified instructor. Classes are \$55 for Oak Park residents and \$80 for nonresidents, plus a \$5 textbook fee. A healthcare provider course is \$55 for residents and \$75 for non-residents, plus a \$15 textbook fee if required. Payment must be made by check, money order or cash in exact amount. In-person registration is required. Class size is limited to eight students for infant/child classes and nine students for all other classes. The 2018 class schedule is posted online at www.oak-park.us/cpr. For more information, call 708.358.5605 or email cpr@oak-park.us.

Scan with a smartphone QR app for more information



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



Mayor Anan Abu-Taleb

Trustees

Deno J. Andrews Dan Moroney

Simone M. Boutet Jim Taglia

Andrea Button Bob Tucker

Village Clerk Vicki Scaman

Village Manager Cara Pavlicek

Residential Customer Local
Oak Park, Illinois

Postal Carrier
Pre-Sort

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

Forecast key to planning parking when it snows

The Village has specific rules that govern parking when it snows — rules that are enforced seven days a week, including holidays. Residents are urged to monitor local forecasts and plan accordingly. When snow exceeds two inches, all parking is prohibited on the main streets posted as snow routes. Parking on other streets is restricted to one side from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. in residential areas and from midnight to 8 a.m. in designated commercial districts, the side determined by the date. To find out if snow-related parking restrictions are in effect, call 708.358.7669 for a recorded message. Cable television subscribers can tune into VOP-TV, broadcast on Comcast channel 6 and AT&T channel 99. Residents who sign up at www.oak-park.us/notifyme will be alerted. Efforts also will be made to post timely information to social media sites www.facebook.com/vopnews and twitter.com/vopnews. The snow emergency parking rules and a list of frequently asked questions also are posted at www.oak-park.us/snow.

Sidewalk shoveling required...Property owners who shovel their sidewalks are doing more than making it safer for pedestrians of all ages — they also are complying with the law. Village ordinance requires snow and ice to be removed from the public sidewalk within 24 hours following any snow, sleet or freezing rain. Being a good neighbor is important, too, so property owners are urged to help those who may need help clearing a sidewalk. For more information on the shoveling requirement or help resources, call 708.358.5700 or email publicworks@oak-park.us.



Snow Route Map

Police News

Don't hesitate to call 911...If you see unusual activity, suspicious people or vehicles in your neighborhood, don't hesitate to call 911 immediately.

Crime Tip Hot Line...Suspicious activity can be reported anonymously to the Police Department's Crime Tip Hot Line at 708.434.1636. Anonymous tips also can be made at www.oak-park.us/crimetip.

Get to know your RBO...Oak Park's residential beat officers hold regular meetings in the neighborhoods they serve to discuss issues and crime trends, and answer questions. For more details, including dates, times and locations, call 708.386.3800 or visit www.oak-park.us/rbo.

Crime prevention tips...Nearly 90 percent of all crime in Oak Park is against property, but more violent crime such as armed robberies and vehicle hijackings do sometimes occur here. The best defense, Oak Park Police say, is to try to avoid being an easy victim. For tips on how to prevent crime, visit www.oak-park.us/preventcrime.

Police escort...Any resident uneasy about walking to or from a public transit stop, public garage or other site in the community may contact the Police Department for an escort from dusk until dawn. Please consider seeking assistance from friends and family first, since officers may be needed for emergency calls. Call 708.386.3800 for information or an escort.