

CityNews



WINTER 2016

A PUBLICATION OF THE CITY OF APPLE VALLEY, MN

PREPARING YOUR HOME FOR WINTER



With the change of season there are some important steps to prepare your home for winter. Most important is the furnace. To prevent carbon monoxide (CO) problems, have your furnace checked by a qualified service person. You can replace the filter on the furnace and make sure the outside combustion air duct is not plugged. The furnace needs air to operate properly - both the outside air and the return air. A clean filter allows the return air to circulate better throughout the duct system and removes dust. Fresh outside air allows the burner to operate more efficiently and saves energy. Proper adjustment of the burner by a qualified service person will produce less CO. Be sure to plug in CO detectors to check CO levels in your home.

A humidifier on the furnace also needs annual maintenance. The filter should be replaced, and a leak check performed after the water supply has been turned on. Now would be a good

time to shut off your outside faucets too. Turn the valve inside the house off and open the outside faucet to drain any residual water and then close the faucet. Lawn sprinklers should also be winterized.

Another important component is the dryer vent. The dryer will work more efficiently if the duct and hood termination on the outside of the home is unobstructed and clear of debris such as lint. Lint and debris can build up in your dryer vent reducing air flow to the dryer and backing up dryer exhaust gases that can create a fire hazard. The duct should be cleaned by a qualified service person. They have the proper tools and know whether your dryer vent meets code.

The holiday lighting season is right around the corner. Take care when installing lights to avoid overloading electrical outlets by using power-strips with surge protection. Check electrical cords for damage or frayed wires and replace if necessary. All exterior outlets should be protected by a ground fault interrupter - replace unprotected outlets.

Be sure to test smoke detectors and replace the batteries. Newer homes

have electric smoke detectors, but they also have battery backup that should be checked. Have a safe and warm winter!



Mayor:

Mary Hamann-Roland

Council Members:

John Bergman
Thomas Goodwin
Ruth Grendahl
Clint Hooppaw

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2016 CITY BUDGET PRESERVES THE PUBLIC'S INVESTMENT IN CITY STREETS

The Apple Valley City Council has approved a preliminary property tax levy that continues significant funding for the maintenance of the city's infrastructure. Street surfaces require significant maintenance investment over time to maintain their condition and prevent significant deterioration. Eventually, streets reach an age at which reconstruction is necessary. In 2013, the City Council considered a number of options to fund these upcoming street reconstruction projects. A common practice in many other Metro area communities is to levy special assessments on the abutting benefiting property owners, often resulting in charges exceeding \$5,000 to the property owner at the time of construction. The City Council chose a policy that would avoid special assessments for street maintenance by funding these annual street maintenance costs through an ongoing annual property tax levy, avoiding the need to levy additional special assessments for these costs. For 2016, 12.6% of the property tax levy is directed to the Street maintenance Program.

The City of Apple Valley will be conducting the City's Truth in Taxation hearing on December 10th, 2015 at 7 p.m.

BUDGET PRINCIPALS

Our budget process is built on five core fiscal principles that serve us well and continue to guide our work:

- 1) Focus on the provision of basic City services and fund their provision at adequate levels.
- 2) Estimate anticipated revenues at realistic levels.
- 3) Retain adequate reserves to protect against fiscal uncertainty.
- 4) Anticipate continued community growth and program capital improvements to serve our growing community.
- 5) Demonstrate strong stewardship of existing infrastructure and plan for its repair/replacement in a proactive manner.

STATE AIDS

The State's Local Government Aid (LGA) distribution formula to cities remains unchanged for 2016. Under current law, the State will distribute to Minnesota cities over \$519 Million in 2016. Again this coming year the City of Apple Valley will receive no LGA from the State. The LGA distribution formula penalizes suburban communities such as Apple Valley and our realized revenue from the LGA program remains zero.

PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX LEVY

To support the proposed 2016 budget requires a total levy of \$24,058,000, an increase of \$924,000 or 4%. Within the levy, the General Fund portion includes new funding in the amount of approximately \$208,000 for the replacement of the park maintenance department vehicles and equipment. By adding this stable equipment funding source to the budget it will reduce the need for future borrowing and the related interest expense. In addition, the annual street maintenance program funding increases by \$88,200 and the total levy for debt service increases \$62,245. Consistent with prior years, the levy for the 2012 Refunding Park Bond will be paid for from reserves in the Future Capital Projects Fund. The impact of the total levy increase to property owners is lessened by the decertification of an existing TIF District and the additional tax base from new construction, the impact of these is approximately \$365,000.

The table below shows a comparison of the property tax levy for the past two years. Note that the levy for the street maintenance program increases to \$3,028,200 in 2016. The street maintenance program represents 12.6% of the 2016 property tax levy. The tax impact of the annual street maintenance program levy is approximately \$104 for the median value home.

Levy Component	2015	2016	Change (2015 to 2016)
General Fund	\$ 18,766,000	\$ 19,539,555	\$ 773,555
Street Maintenance Program	2,940,000	3,028,200	88,200
Ice Arena Support	121,000	121,000	-0-
Debt Service	1,307,000	1,369,245	62,245
Total	\$ 23,134,000	\$ 23,134,000	\$ 924,000

TAX DOLLARS PAID IN CITY TAXES MAINTAINS REASONABLE GROWTH TREND

The median valued home of \$218,200 experiencing the median 4.85 percent increase in value would pay approximately \$37, or about 4.1%, more in 2016. The City taxes on this median value home are \$937 and are 6.5% higher than in 2009, an annual average of 1%. The estimated tax amount of \$937 includes \$104 in taxes to support the street maintenance program. Again, the objective in including the annual street maintenance program in the levy was to avoid the burden of special assessments for street improvements on the property owners. The trade-off for funding the program through the property tax levy and not using special assessments is that the City of Apple Valley's property tax rate will be higher than other communities.

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HOW ARE THE CITY TAX DOLLARS USED?

The median valued home has a total monthly city tax bill of \$78.08 for 2016. Of that total, \$65.55 (84 percent) is for general city operations, \$8.63 (11 percent) is for the support of the Annual Street Maintenance Program, and \$3.90 (5 percent) is for the total debt service needs of the City. The checkbook image below shows the breakdown of the \$65.55 city operations portion by department function. Of the total, \$23.53 covers the operations of the Police Department, \$6.01 covers the operations of the Fire Department \$9.52 is for the Public Works Department which includes snow plowing, road maintenance and vehicle/equipment maintenance, and \$12.52 supports the Parks and Recreation Department. The remaining \$13.97 represents the remaining department budgets and other unallocated costs.

The services the City of Apple Valley provides are necessary, essential, and quite diverse. In Apple Valley, resources are leveraged, services are efficient and economical, and we stand accountable for the product we deliver at the low-cost prices we have come to expect, typically take for granted, and rely on daily.

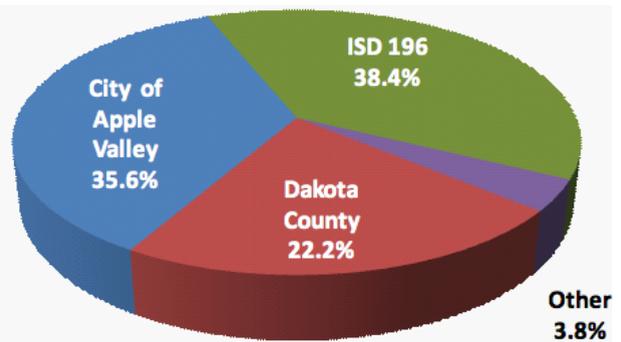
Description	% of total	\$ of Levy
Police	30.1%	23.53
Park and Recreation	16.0%	12.52
Public Works	12.2%	9.52
Annual Street Maintenance Program	11.1%	8.63
Fire	7.7%	6.01
City Council, Administration & Human Resources	6.2%	4.80
Debt Service	5.0%	3.90
Community Development & Code Enforcement	3.2%	2.53
Information Technology	2.7%	2.12
Finance	2.7%	2.08
Insurance/Contingency	2.3%	1.77
Legal Services	0.9%	0.67
Total per Month	100.0%	\$78.08



THE CITY OF APPLE VALLEY MAKES UP 35% OF YOUR PROPERTY TAX BILL

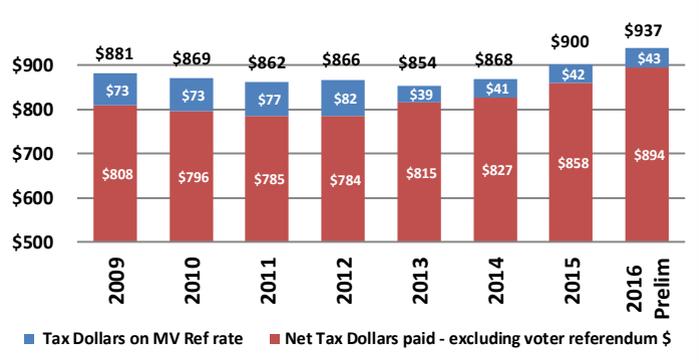
While the City of Apple Valley strives to lessen the impacts on property owners, the City has no control over levy decisions by other government entities serving Apple Valley. So while the City's portion of the taxes may go up slightly, Apple Valley officials cannot guarantee the same will be true for a property owner's overall tax bill.

Property Tax Distribution for an Average Apple Valley Home



Everyone is invited to attend the City's Truth in Taxation Hearing that will be held December 10, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. at the City of Apple Valley City Hall. For more information visit the City's website at www.ci.apple-valley.mn.us

2016 Property Taxes Average 1% Increase since 2009



HAPPY BIRTHDAY MINNESOTA FIRE CODE!



Minnesotans are safer every day at home, work and school thanks to the Minnesota Fire Code, which turned 40 years old Saturday, Oct. 3.

Before the adoption of a statewide fire code in 1975, the frequency and severity of fires in Minnesota was much higher. The fire-death rate (per 100,000 people) has plummeted 62 percent since the late 1970s. In the same period, there has been a 38 percent decrease in the structure-fire rate (building fires per 10,000 people).

- **1970s:** 961 deaths
- **1980s:** 776 deaths
- **1990s:** 585 deaths
- **2000s:** 465 deaths
- **2010s:** 390 (estimate)

The fire code is a set of construction requirements that makes buildings safer from fire. Most of the fire-and-life safety requirements in the fire code are based on lessons learned from previous fires. Having an effective fire code is not the only reason fire deaths dropped dramatically, but it has played a key role. Constantly improving fire protection systems — particularly smoke alarms and fire sprinklers — and better fire-and-life safety education have also contributed.

Q. What is the code's purpose? A. The purpose of a fire code is to create reasonable, uniform, enforceable fire-safety standards that are consistent with nationally recognized practices for safeguarding life and property from fires and explosions. The code addresses hazards that occur from dangerous conditions in buildings, and from the storage, handling and use of hazardous materials.

Q. Why is the code important to Minnesotans? A. When buildings are inspected and comply with the fire code, they tend to have fewer fires. The fires they do experience tend to do less damage. Fires discovered when they're small, and prevented from spreading, pose less risk to people and property. The code ensures that the rules and guidelines are in place to help with prevention, detection and suppression. **It saves lives.** Minnesota, like other states, adopted a state fire code rather than leaving the matter to local jurisdictions. A statewide fire code prevents inconsistent local regulations and ordinances that may fail to be effective — and utterly frustrate architects, engineers and contractors.

Q. What is the Minnesota State Fire Marshal Division's role? A. Since the first state fire code, the Department of Public Safety State Fire Marshal Division has been responsible for recommending provisions that go into the code. SFMD inspectors enforce state fire code provisions in high-risk occupancies such as daycare facilities, hospitals, hotels, nursing homes and public schools.

Q. How does Minnesota compare to other states? A. Minnesota's fire rate is substantially lower than the national rate over the past three years and Minnesota experienced a fire death rate about 20 percent lower than the national rate in 2014.

If you have questions about how the Minnesota State Fire Code impacts you, call the Apple Valley Fire Marshal at **952-953-2679**.

(Per MN State Fire Marshal Bruce West, Department of Public Safety State Fire Marshal Division October 7, 2015 Viewpoint publication. Department of Public Safety State Fire Marshal Division contact: **651-238-9292**.)

15 APPS AND WEBSITES KIDS ARE HEADING TO AFTER FACEBOOK

Gone are the days of Facebook as a one-stop shop for all social-networking needs. Recent reports go back and forth on teens' favorite digital hangout, but the fact is that these days, teens are diversifying: dividing their attention among an array of apps and sites that let them write, share, chat, and meet new friends. It may seem more complicated to share photos on Instagram, post secrets on Whisper, flirt with people on Skout, and share jokes on Twitter, but tweens and teens seem to enjoy keeping up with their various virtual outposts, and each one offers something different. (And they're doing lots of positive things on social media!)

You don't need to know the ins and outs of all the apps and sites that are "hot" right now (and frankly, if you did, they wouldn't be trendy anymore). But knowing the basics -- what they are, why they're popular, and what problems can crop up when they're not used responsibly -- can make the difference between a positive and a negative experience for your kid.

TEXTING APPS

Kik Messenger is an app that lets kids text for free. It's fast and has no message limits, character limits, or fees if you only use the basic features. Because it's an app, the texts won't show up on your kid's phone's messaging service, and you're not charged for them (beyond standard data rates).

What parents need to know: It's loaded with ads and in-app-purchases. Kik specializes in "promoted chats" -- basically, conversations between brands and users. It also offers specially designed apps (accessible only through the main app), many of which offer products for sale.

There's some stranger danger. An app named OinkText, linked to Kik, allows communication with strangers who share their Kik usernames to find people to chat with. There's also a Kik community blog where users can submit photos of themselves and screenshots of messages (sometimes displaying users' full names) to contests.

ooVoo is a free video, voice, and messaging app. Users can have group chats with up to 12 people for free -- and it's common for kids to log on after school and keep it open while doing homework. Maybe they're using it for group study sessions?

What parents need to know: You can only chat with approved friends. Users can only communicate with those on their approved contact lists, which can help ease parents' safety concerns.

It can be distracting. Because the service makes video chatting so affordable and accessible, it also can be addicting.

WhatsApp lets users send text messages, audio messages, videos, and photos to one or many people with no message limits or fees.

What parents need to know: It's for users 16 and over. Lots of younger teens seem to be using the app, but this age minimum has been set by WhatsApp.

It can be pushy. After you sign up, it automatically connects you to all the people in your address book who also are using WhatsApp. It also encourages you to add friends who haven't signed up yet.

MICRO-BLOGGING APPS AND SITES

Instagram lets users snap, edit, and share photos and 15-second videos, either publicly or with a private network of followers. It unites the most popular features of social media sites: sharing, seeing, and commenting on photos.

It also lets you apply fun filters and effects to your photos, making them look high quality and artistic.

What parents need to know: Teens are on the lookout for "likes." Similar to the way they use Facebook, teens may measure the "success" of their photos -- even their self-worth -- by the number of likes or comments they receive. Posting a photo or video can be problematic if teens post it to validate their popularity.

Public photos are the default. Photos and videos shared on Instagram are public unless privacy settings are adjusted. Hashtags and location information can make photos even more visible to communities beyond a teen's followers if his or her account is public.

Private messaging is now an option. Instagram Direct allows users to send "private messages" to up to 15 mutual friends. These pictures don't show up on their public feeds. Although there's nothing wrong with group chats, kids may be more likely to share inappropriate stuff with their inner circles.

Tumblr is like a cross between a blog and Twitter: It's a streaming scrapbook of text, photos, and/or videos and audio clips. Users create and follow short blogs, or "tumblelogs," that can be seen by anyone online (if made public). Many teens have tumblelogs for personal use: sharing photos, videos, musings, and things they find funny with their friends.

What parents need to know: Porn is easy to find. This online hangout is hip and creative but sometimes raunchy. Pornographic images and videos and depictions of violence, self-harm, drug use, and offensive language are easily searchable.

Privacy can be guarded but only through an awkward workaround. The first profile a member creates is public and viewable by anyone on the Internet. Members who desire full privacy have to create a second profile, which they're able to password-protect.

Posts are often copied and shared. Reblogging on Tumblr is similar to re-tweeting: A post is reblogged from one tumblelog to another. Many teens like -- and, in fact, want -- their posts reblogged. But do you really want your kids' words and photos on someone else's page?

Twitter is a microblogging site that allows users to post brief, 140-character messages -- called "tweets" -- and follow other users' activities. It's not only for adults; teens like using it to share tidbits and keep up with news and celebrities.

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What parents need to know: Public tweets are the norm for teens. Though you can choose to keep your tweets private, most teens report having public accounts (Pew Internet & American Life Project, 2013). Talk to your kids about what they post and how a post can spread far and fast.

Updates appear immediately. Even though you can remove tweets, your followers can still read what you wrote until it's gone. This can get kids in trouble if they say something in the heat of the moment.

Vine is a social media app that lets users post and watch looping six-second video clips. This Twitter-owned service has developed a unique community of people who post videos that are often creative, funny, and sometimes thought-provoking. Teens usually use Vine to create and share silly videos of themselves and/or their friends and families.

What parents need to know: It's full of inappropriate videos. There are significant privacy concerns. The videos you post, the accounts you follow, and the comments you make on videos all are public by default. But you can adjust your settings to protect your posts; only followers will see them, and you have to approve new followers.

Parents can be star performers (without their knowledge). If your teens film you being goofy or silly, you may want to talk about whether they plan to share it.

SELF-DESTRUCTING/SECRET APPS

Burn Note is a messaging app that erases messages after a set period of time. Unlike many other apps of this sort, it limits itself to text messages; users cannot send pictures or video. That may reduce issues such as sexting -- but words can hurt, too.

What parents need to know: It allows kids to communicate covertly. To discourage copying and taking screenshots, a spotlight-like system that recipients direct with a finger (or the mouse) only reveals a portion of the message at a time. It may encourage risky sharing. The company claims that its "Multi-Device Deletion" system can delete a message from anywhere: the device it was sent from, the device it was sent to, and its own servers. But it's wise to be skeptical of this claim.

You don't have to have the app to receive a Burn Note. Unlike other apps -- for example, Snapchat -- users can send a Burn Note to anyone, not only others who have the program.

Snapchat is a messaging app that lets users put a time limit on the pictures and videos they send before they disappear. Most teens use the app to share goofy or embarrassing photos without the risk of them going public. However, there are lots of opportunities to use it in other ways.

What parents need to know: It's a myth that Snapchats go away forever. Data is data: Whenever an image is sent, it never truly goes away. (For example, the person on the receiving end can take a screenshot of the image before it disappears.) Snapchats can even be recovered.

It can make sexting seem OK. The seemingly risk-free messaging might encourage users to share pictures containing sexy images.

Whisper is a social "confessional" app that allows users to post whatever's on their minds, paired with an image. With all the emotions running through teens, anonymous outlets give them the freedom to share their feelings without fear of judgment.

What parents need to know: Whispers are often sexual in nature. Some users use the app to try to hook up with people nearby, while others post "confessions" of desire. Content can be dark. People normally don't confess sunshine and rainbows; common Whisper topics include insecurity, depression, substance abuse, and various lies told to employers and teachers.

Although it's anonymous to start, it may not stay that way. The app encourages users to exchange personal information in the "Meet Up" section.

Yik Yak is a free social-networking app that lets users post brief, Twitter-like comments to the 500 geographically nearest Yik Yak users. Kids can find out opinions, secrets, rumors, and more. Plus, they'll get the bonus thrill of knowing all these have come from a 1.5-mile radius (maybe even from the kids at the desks in front of them!).

What parents need to know: It reveals your location. By default, your exact location is shown unless you toggle location-sharing off. Each time you open the app, GPS updates your location.

It's a mixed bag of trouble. This app has it all: cyberbullying, explicit sexual content, unintended location-sharing, and exposure to explicit information about drugs and alcohol. Some schools have banned access. Some teens have used the app to threaten others, causing school lockdowns and more.

CHATting, MEETING, DATING APPS AND SITES

MeetMe Chat and Meet New People,” says it all. Although not marketed as a dating app, MeetMe does have a “Match” feature whereby users can “secretly admire” others, and its large user base means fast-paced communication and guaranteed attention.

What parents need to know: It’s an open network. Users can chat with whomever’s online, as well as search locally, opening the door for potential trouble.

Lots of details are required. First and last name, age, and ZIP code are requested at registration, or you can log in using a Facebook account. The app also asks permission to use location services on your teens’ mobile devices, meaning they can find the closest matches wherever they go.

Omegle is a chat site (and app) that puts two strangers together in their choice of a text chat or video chat room. Being anonymous can be very attractive to teens, and Omegle provides a no-fuss opportunity to make connections. Its “interest boxes” also let users filter potential chat partners by shared interests.

What parents need to know: Users get paired up with strangers. That’s the whole premise of the app. And there’s no registration required.

This is not an app for kids and teens. Omegle is filled with people searching for sexual chat. Some prefer to do so live. Others offer links to porn sites.

Language is a big issue. Since the chats are anonymous, they’re often much more explicit than those with an identifiable user might be.

Skout is a flirting app that allows users to sign up as teens or adults. They’re then placed in the appropriate peer group, where they can post to a feed, comment on others’ posts, add pictures, and chat. They’ll get notifications when other users near their geographic area join, and they can search other areas by cashing in points. They receive notifications when someone “checks” them out but must pay points to see who it is.

What parents need to know: Skout is actually OK for teens if used appropriately. If your teens are going to use a dating app, Skout is probably the safest choice, if only because it has a teens-only section that seems to be moderated reasonably well.

There’s no age verification. This makes it easy for a teen to say she’s older than 18 and an adult to say she’s younger.

Tinder is a photo and messaging dating app for browsing pictures of potential matches within a certain-mile radius of the user’s location. It’s very popular with 20-somethings as a way to meet new people for casual or long-term relationships.

What parents need to know: It’s all about swipes. You swipe right to “like” a photo or left to “pass.” If a person whose photo you “liked” swipes “like” on your photo, too, the app allows you to message each other. Meeting up (and possibly hooking up) is pretty much the goal.

It’s location-based. Geolocation means it’s possible for teens to meet up with nearby people, which can be very dangerous.

The bottom line for most of these tools? If teens are using them respectfully, appropriately, and with a little parental guidance, they should be fine. Take inventory of your kids’ apps and review the best practices.

Polly Conway - Common Sense Media’s TV Editor. This story was co-written with Kelly Schryver.



SNOW & ICE CONTROL

Plowing Information

Check the City website at www.cityofapplevalley.org for news on snow and ice control operations. At your convenience, you can access current operations, plowing procedures, and related topics. Updates on snow plowing operations are posted under Timely Topics on the home page. To sign up to receive email and text messages when an update is posted, go to Email Updates on the home page.



Plowing or anti-icing operations begin when driving becomes difficult. First priority is given to primary streets such as Galaxie Avenue, Johnny Cake Ridge Road, 140th Street West, Garden View Drive, 147th Street West, Hayes Road, Pennock Avenue, and Whitney Drive. Residential streets and cul-de-sacs are cleared next. City crews strive to clear all 173 miles of City streets and 330 cul-de-sacs within 8 to 10 hours after the snow stops to ensure safe passage on public streets. County roads are maintained by the Dakota County highway department.

Sod Damage

The City will repair/replace sod damaged by City snowplows. Damage from the current plowing season must be reported to the Public Works Department by May 1. The City will not repair/replace sod damaged due to the application of sand, salt, or other deicing chemicals.

Residents can place markers directly behind the curb line to define the edge of the street. The City provides the markers which may be picked up beginning October 1 at the Central Maintenance Facility located at 6442 140th Street West.

Mailbox Damage

The City makes repairs to mailboxes damaged by direct contact with City snowplows.

Other Damage

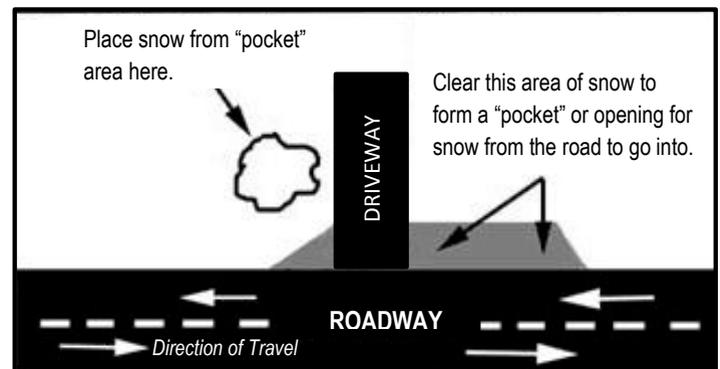
All other damage within the public right-of-way is the responsibility of the property owner. This includes, but is not limited to, trees, shrubs, bushes, landscaping materials, decorative rock, and lawn/landscaping irrigation systems.

Tips For A Safe Plowing Season

Removing snow and ice is a time-consuming and intense job. Residents can help minimize plowing-related problems and ensure city crews do the most effective job possible.

Here are some tips for the winter plowing season:

- Do not park your vehicle on the street between the hours of 3:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m., or after a 2-inch snowfall.
- Keep garbage and recycling containers clear of the plow's path by placing them at least 3 feet behind the curb. This distance can still be reached by the automated arm of garbage trucks.
- Pushing or placing snow back into or across the street is prohibited by state and local laws. Doing so creates hazards for drivers and could lead to a citation.
- Clear snow from the mailbox area after each plow event. This prevents compaction by postal vehicles and ensures subsequent plowing is effective. Postal carriers can refuse to deliver mail if the mailbox is not easily accessible.
- Don't allow children to play in the snow banks near the curb or snow piles in the middle of the cul-de-sacs. This can create a dangerous situation when additional snow removal operations are required.
- Help clear snow from fire hydrants and keep them accessible in case of an emergency. Quick access to the hydrant could save a home in your neighborhood.
- To reduce the amount of snow deposited in your driveway from the plow, clear the boulevard area to the right of the drive (viewed from the street) to create a "pocket" (See diagram). Keep this pocket cleared all winter to avoid having a snow pile at the end of your driveway after the plow goes through.



For more information or to report sod and mailbox damage, Contact Public Works at pubworks@cityofapplevalley.org or 952-953-2400.

NOW IS THE TIME TO PRUNE TREES

November through March is the preferred time for most tree pruning since insects and diseases are dormant. Tree pruning is especially important during a tree's early years to establish good structure for the future. Please refer to the points below on tree pruning:

- Prune trees to maintain one central dominant leader.
- Shorten all upright growing branches to prevent competition with the central leader.
- Remove all dead, broken, and rubbing branches.
- Young trees require pruning every two to three years. As trees get older, live branches should be removed only when necessary. Pruning mature trees should be more of a maintenance pruning and focus on dead and damaged branches.
- Pruning paint is only necessary on oak, elm, honeylocust, and fruit trees during the growing season to seal out disease. Paints and sealants do not help tree wounds heal.
- Wrap trunks of newly planted and thin-barked tree species in late fall and remember to remove the wrap in spring. Light colored tree wrap is recommended. Wrap trunks up to the first branch or five to six feet above the ground.
- Spring flowering trees and shrubs such as lilacs or rhododendrons should be pruned as soon as they are done flowering if needed. If you prune these in the winter, you are cutting off your flowers!

The City Code of Ordinances requires tree workers to be licensed for all tree work performed in the City of Apple Valley (§152.43). A list of currently licensed tree contractors is available on the City's website at www.cityofapplevalley.org, or call Natural Resources at **952-953-2400**.

Stay tuned for the 2016 Tree and Shrub Sale in the spring City News edition. Each spring the City offers limited quantities of bareroot trees at wholesale prices to help reforest and diversify private properties.

Sewer and Water Emergencies

In the event of a sewer or water emergency, please use the following contact numbers.

952-953-2400 (Public Works)

Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

952-322-2323 (Dakota Communication Center)

After hours, weekends and holidays.

WATER SERVICE QUESTIONS...

Should I have the City turn off my water when I go out of town?

That depends on your preference. There is always a chance of a hose or pipe leaking in the house while you are gone. During winter months, pipes could freeze if water is not turned off.

Is there a charge to have the City turn the water off?

There is no charge to turn your water off. However, there is a charge to have water service restored. The fee will appear on the first utility bill received following your return. Please note that you will continue to be billed for base services while your water is off.

What is involved in having the water service turned off by the City?

The City will turn your water on or off Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Property owners who will not be at home are required to sign a form relieving the City of any responsibility if a line was left open in the house or the service does not get turned off. The form can be picked up or mailed to you from Utility Billing or can be printed from the City website, www.cityofapplevalley.org. To schedule a turn on/off, please contact Utility Billing at **952-953-2522**, 24-hours in advance.

How will I get my water bill when I am gone?

The City will send your water bill to the address currently set up on your utility account, or to a temporary address you provide. If a forwarding address is given to the post office, the water bill should automatically be sent to that address. The City also offers automatic deduction from your bank account on the due date. Please call Utility Billing at **952-953-2522** to request an enrollment form or to change your mailing address. This form is also available on the City website at www.cityofapplevalley.org. Online services are another option for residents. Residents can make payments, receive an e-bill by email, and have access to their account online. Simply go to the City website and navigate to on line services.

Why do I receive letters about a problem with my meter every year while I am gone?

Public Works tracks water meters showing unusual usage patterns and sends letters when it appears the meter could be malfunctioning. No use of water is an unusual pattern. If you have your water turned off by the City, we know the reason for no usage. If you do not have the City turn off your water when you are gone for an extended time and want to avoid receiving a letter, please notify Public Works at **952-953-2400**.

PREVENT WATER PIPE FREEZE-UP

- Turn your water supply off to outside hose bibs.
- Check heat tapes to ensure they are plugged in and working properly.
- Check the cold air intake for your furnace to ensure the cold air does not come into direct contact with the concrete floor, water meter, or pipes.
- When leaving on vacation, avoid turning your thermostat down as far as it will go. The temperature could fall too low in some areas of the home.
- Turn off the water valves for the supply line and water heater when going on extended vacations. You may also want to consider temporarily discontinuing your water service.
- If you have or are in the process of remodeling your home, make sure water pipes and the water meter are accessible and not isolated behind walls where they may be susceptible to freeze-up.

If you are aware of a vacant or foreclosed property in your neighborhood, please contact Public Works at **952-953-2400** so we can investigate and determine if the water should be shut off to prevent water damage if the pipes freeze.



How much sugar is in your drink?
Check the nutrition facts on your beverage label.
One teaspoon of granulated sugar equals 4 grams (g) of sugar.
Example: 40 g ÷ 4 = 10 teaspoons sugar.

WATER QUALITY

Getting the Scoop on Doggy Doo

It may make you snicker, but doggy doo-doo is a definite don't in Apple Valley Parks and outside your yard. Those little presents Fido leaves behind on his daily rounds are serious business and can cause great harm to neighborhood water resources. Dog poop can contain harmful bacteria and pathogens such as E. Coli, Cryptosporidium, Giardia, Salmonella, and Roundworm that can make you or your pet sick. In addition to harmful pathogens, dog poop also contains nutrients like phosphorus that lead to algal blooms in area waterbodies.

The problem – with snow melt or rain, all that doggy doo left on the ground gets flushed into the nearest stormdrain and into the closest pond without receiving any treatment. When you consider that over 1700 dogs are registered within Apple Valley, your dog's little mess is part of a much bigger concern. Over the course of one year, Apple Valley's registered dog population will produce feces containing over 5.6 quadrillion E. Coli colonies and over 2.25 tons of phosphorus capable of producing 675 tons of algae. Stormdrains in Apple Valley flow to local water bodies such as Long and Farquar Lakes which do not meet State water quality standards for phosphorus, and regional waterbodies such as the Vermillion and Mississippi Rivers that do not meet State water quality standards for Fecal Coliform (E. Coli is a type of Fecal Coliform). Picking up after your pet is more important than ever.

The next time you take Fido out to get a little fresh air and exercise, do your part to keep Apple Valley's parks and lakes clean and safe – scoop the poop.

Use Salt Sparingly

While salt can be an effective tool for winter ice removal, it has a lasting impact on local lakes and ponds. Melt water high in salt makes its way to local waterbodies through stormdrains on the street. Once in local lakes and ponds, salt tends to stay there, harming fish and other critters that live in the water. Follow these three tips when removing winter snow and ice to reduce pollution:

1. Remove snow promptly before ice can form.
2. Use as little salt as possible to get the job done.
3. Clean up spills or extra salt.

Visit the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency website at www.pca.state.mn.us to learn more about the harmful effects of salt.



Caution! Thin Ice on Local Lakes

Lake aeration systems will be operated this winter in Alimagnet and Farquar Lakes to prevent winter fish kill. Aeration systems create an area of open water on the lakes, and ice near the aeration systems can be thin and unsafe. Warning signs are posted and maintained around the perimeter of the aerated area to alert lake users of open water.

Aeration systems work by moving warm water from the bottom of the lake (around 39 degrees) to the surface. The area of open water created allows air exchange with the atmosphere, and keeps oxygen levels high enough for game fish (bass, walleye, and northern) to survive. Game fish keep the rough fish (bullheads, carp, and minnows) population in check, which has positive effects on water quality and lake ecology.

Public Works staff begin monitoring dissolved oxygen in each lake starting in December. Aerators are turned on when dissolved oxygen levels dip down to about 6 mg/l to maintain an adequate level.

Lake aeration systems are regulated by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. You can learn more here <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/lakeaeration/index.html>.

Free Gardening Workshops

If you are looking for more environmentally (and wallet) friendly solutions to some of your landscape problems, we have the workshop for you. In Landscaping for Clean Water, you will learn about gardening projects that beautify your yard and help local waterbodies.

The workshop is free to Dakota County residents and will be offered in Apple Valley the evenings of February 17 and April 14 in 2016. Check www.cityofapplevalley.org or www.dakotawcd.org for locations and times.

Attendees will be invited to additional workshops where they will learn more about available grants, design their gardens, and receive technical assistance. To register, call the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District at **651-480-7777**.

Blue Thumb - Planting for Clean Water

Are you looking for more information? Check out www.BlueThumb.org. You will find lots of information on native gardens, raingardens, and native plant shoreline stabilizations. Some of the most popular features of the website include the plant selector and 'find help' listings. Blue Thumb is a great place to start your journey toward a water friendly yard.



LEBANON CEMETERY

of Apple Valley

Preplanning your cemetery arrangements can be a gift to your family at an emotional time. If you are considering Lebanon Cemetery, staff is available to assist you. You may request an information packet from Public Works or access information on the City website, www.cityofapplevalley.org, under City Services. Please contact Public Works at **952-953-2400** or pubworks@ci.apple-valley.mn.us for information or to meet with Cemetery staff.

Lebanon Cemetery is owned by the City of Apple Valley and is open all year from sunrise to sunset. You are welcome to visit the cemetery, which is located on the southeast corner of County Road 42 and Pilot Knob Road. Entrance is from eastbound County Road 42 or northbound Pilot Knob Road.

Street Light Burned Out or Flickering?

Note the identification number found at eye level on the pole, or the closest address or cross streets. Contact Dakota Electric at **651-463-6287** or http://www.dakotaelectric.com/residential/service_requests/streetlights/streetlight_repair.

In addition to replacing burned out bulbs, Dakota Electric repairs broken globes and adjusts the sensitivity of the light sensors.