

CityNews



WINTER 2017

A PUBLICATION OF THE CITY OF APPLE VALLEY, MN

2017 CITY BUDGET PRESERVES THE PUBLIC'S INVESTMENT IN CITY STREETS

The City of Apple Valley will be conducting the City's Truth in Taxation hearing on December 8th, 2016 at 7 p.m.



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 ongoing 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. 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 2017, 13.4% of the property tax levy is directed to the Street Maintenance Program.

BUDGET PRINCIPLES

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 2017. Under current law, the State will distribute to Minnesota cities over \$519 Million in 2017. 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.

Mayor:

Mary Hamann-Roland

Council Members:

John Bergman
Thomas Goodwin
Ruth Grendahl
Clint Hooppaw

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PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX LEVY

To support the proposed 2016 budget requires a total levy of \$24,850,000, an increase of \$792,000 or 3.3%. Within the levy, the General Fund portion includes an additional \$170,000 of spending for capital outlay and equipment. Another significant portion of the levy increase is related to the additional support directed to the annual Street Maintenance Program including additional funding of \$303,900 and the total levy for debt service increases \$129,585. 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 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 by \$303,900 to \$3,332,100 in 2017. The Street Maintenance Program represents 13.4% of the 2017 property tax levy. The tax impact of the annual Street Maintenance Program levy is approximately \$114 for the median value home.

Levy Component	2016	2017	Change (2016 to 2017)
General Fund	\$ 19,539,555	\$ 19,898,070	\$ 358,515
Street Maintenance Program	3,028,200	3,332,100	303,900
Ice Arena Support	121,000	121,000	-0-
Debt Services	1,369,245	1,498,830	129,585
Total	\$24,058,000	\$24,850,000	\$ 792,000

TAX DOLLARS PAID IN CITY TAXES MAINTAINS REASONABLE GROWTH TREND

The median valued home of \$224,900 experiencing the median 2.88% increase in value would pay approximately \$28, or about 2.98%, more in 2017, or an increase of \$2.34 per month. The City taxes on this median value home are \$971 and are 10.2% higher than in 2009, an annual average of 1.3%. The estimated tax amount of \$971 includes \$114 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.

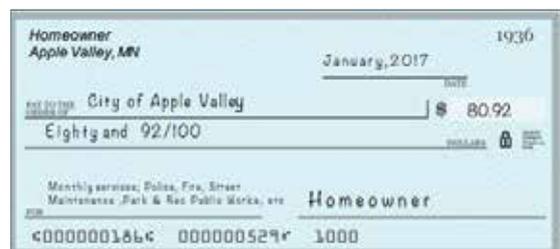
HOW ARE THE CITY TAX DOLLARS USED?

The median valued home has a total monthly city tax bill of \$80.92 for 2017. Of that total, \$67.17 (83%) is for general city operations, \$9.50 (12%) is for the support of the Annual Street Maintenance Program, and \$4.25 (5%) is for the total debt service needs of the City. The checkbook image below shows the breakdown of the \$67.17 city operations portion by department function. Of the total, \$24.25 covers the operations of the Police Department, \$6.00 covers the operations of the Fire Department \$9.42 is for the Public Works Department which includes snow plowing, road maintenance and vehicle/equipment maintenance, and \$12.92 supports the Parks and Recreation Department. The remaining \$14.58 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.

Monthly Application of Tax Payment

Description	% of total	\$ of Levy
Police	30.0%	\$ 24.25
Park and Recreation	16.0%	12.92
Public Works	11.6%	9.42
Fire	7.4%	6.00
City Council, Administration & Human Resources	6.5%	5.25
Community Development & Code Enforcement	3.3%	2.67
Information Technology	2.8%	2.25
Finance	2.5%	2.08
Insurance / Contingency	2.0%	1.58
Legal Services	0.9%	0.75
Subtotal General City Operations	83.0%	67.17
Annual Street Maintenance Program	11.7%	9.50
Debt Service	5.3%	4.25
Total per Month	100.0%	\$ 80.92

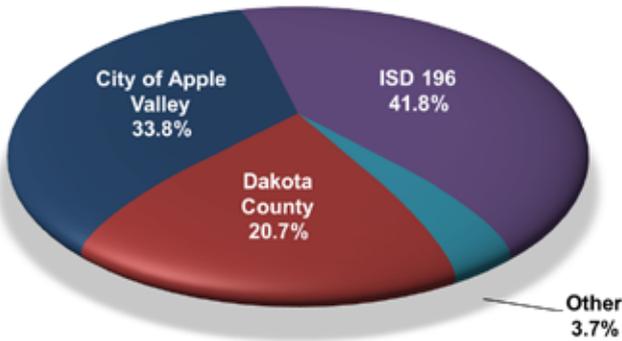


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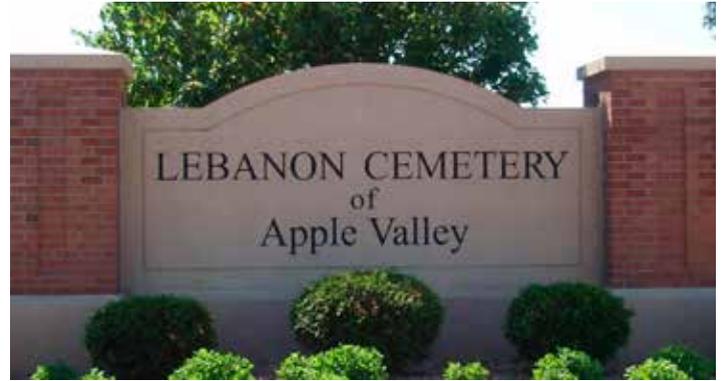
THE CITY OF APPLE VALLEY MAKES UP 34% OF YOUR PROPERTY TAX BILL

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 8, 2016 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



LEBANON CEMETERY OF APPLE VALLEY

Lebanon Cemetery is located on the southeast corner of County Road 42 and Pilot Knob Road. It is a non-denominational cemetery open to the public from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset, 365 days a year. The City of Apple Valley owns and operates Lebanon Cemetery. Current residents of Apple Valley may purchase burial sites at a lower cost.

Traditional lawn burials and a variety of cremation interment options are available in Lebanon Cemetery. For more information or to schedule an individual appointment to meet with a cemetery representative, please contact Public Works at **952-953-2400** or pubworks@ci.apple-valley.mn.us, or visit the web site www.cityofapplevalley.org.

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.

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 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

952-322-2323

(Dakota Communication Center)

After hours, weekends and holidays

APPLE VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT 50 YEARS IN THE MAKING

This is the last article of our fiftieth year celebration. We have enjoyed digging through our archives and sharing the sometimes small, sometimes large, and always forward focused steps that have been made to ensure our residents and visitors have a safe environment.



Fire Prevention Week is observed annually on the Sunday through Saturday period in which October 9th falls. This national safety awareness program is the biggest outreach we do each year. Active and retired firefighters visit every elementary school, practice fire drills at the middle and high schools, and host family-centered Open Houses at each of our three fire stations through the week. We are so proud of our fire stations and equipment and it is our pleasure to show visitors what we have and how we use it.

This year's Fire Prevention Week theme, created and promoted by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), was **Don't Wait-Check the Date! Replace Smoke Alarms Every 10 Years.** This theme was displayed on posters and handouts that went everywhere we did. It is our hope that every home in Apple Valley was checked during or shortly after Fire Prevention Week (October 9-15, 2016) to make sure the smoke alarms are less than ten years old.

We like to change up our presentations, demonstrations, and promotable messages each year, so what else did we focus on during Fire Prevention Week in 2016?

About five years ago, Apple Valley Fire Department created an **Adopt-A-Hydrant program.** Fifth grade students and their families are given the opportunity to make a commitment to keep the fire hydrants in and near their homes clear of snow during the winter months ahead. In the event of a fire, firefighters need at least a three foot clearance around a fire hydrant in order to be able to attach a hose and flow the water necessary to fight the blaze. Fire grows extremely fast so the quicker we can hook the hose to a hydrant and flow water, the better opportunity we have to impact the destruction. This has been an extremely successful program through the years as families have not only kept their neighborhood hydrants clear, but some have gone around and made sure that those where senior citizens are living are cleared as well. There are sure great people in Apple Valley!

This year we added **Hands-Only CPR** to the educational activities at our Open Houses. By having resuscitation mannequins and foam knee pads, every guest over the age of twelve was quickly and easily trained on the two steps they can take to save a life. Do you know what to do if someone collapses? First thing to do is to dial 9-1-1 and provide the dispatcher with the address and additional information they need to get emergency help on the way. Then, all you have to do is kneel near the person who is down and push hard and fast in the center of their chest. There is no need for the mouth-to-mouth breathing of the past. It really is that simple. The Apple Valley Fire Department has take-home kits that include a DVD and special mannequin so you can familiarize yourself and other family members with what it takes to provide Hands-Only CPR when it's needed. Just call **952-953-2609** to arrange to borrow this free lifesaving kit. It's easy to learn this new way of doing Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation. The process has changed, but the outcome can be as great as ever!

Change. Change in CPR, change in Fire Prevention Week, change in the Fire Department. Change is growth and growth is good. Fifty years ago, when we were the Lebanon Fire Department, two fire trucks ran on less than fifty calls out of one station. We were made up of twenty-three firemen (yes, they were all men and that was what was printed on their badges) that shared rubber gear and rode on the back of the truck no matter the weather. Today, as November 14th, 2016 approaches, we will celebrate our 50th Anniversary with five engines, two ladders, and one rescue truck that run out of three strategically placed stations to what may well be over 1,600 runs by the time the year ends. Our seventy-five paid-on-call volunteer firefighters wear their individually fitted, laboratory tested gear and breathing apparatus that they have been trained to wear for optimal performance, for optimal safety.

What hasn't changed since November 14, 1966? The Apple Valley Fire Department is here to serve you, the residents and visitors of our great City. And now, as we did fifty years ago, the members of the Apple Valley Fire Department thank YOU for your support!

PUBLIC WORKS - UTILITIES

WATER METER REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

What is the meter replacement program?

Residential and business water meters will be replaced with newer meter technology which allows remote access to water usage data. The average service life of water meters is 15 to 20 years. The meter program is expected to provide enhanced customer service with leak detection, conservation, improved billing efficiency and elimination of manual meter reads.

When will the program begin?

Program implementation is anticipated for 2017. The City is currently evaluating numerous water meter types, data infrastructure needs, technology resources and costs.

Is there a cost for the meter replacement program?

There is no cost to the property owner to replace the water meter.

Where is my water meter? Will I need to do anything?

The meter is typically located in the mechanical or laundry room. To replace the meter, the water will need to be shut off at the valves located on either side of the water meter. These valves and all plumbing inside the home or business are the responsibility of the property owner. In preparation for the water meter replacement program, it may be advantageous for you to be sure the valves and plumbing are operational.

The City will provide additional information as the project progresses. Contact Apple Valley Public Works at **952-953-2400**, if you have any questions.

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 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.

WATER SERVICE LINE PROTECTION COVERAGE

Some Apple Valley residents may have received a letter from one of several companies who are selling water service line protection coverage or insurance. As in the past, the City of Apple Valley has not partnered with any private water service maintenance providers. In fact, neither these companies nor this type of coverage are endorsed by the City of Apple Valley. If you are considering purchasing this coverage for your property, the City strongly advises researching the need to do so and the background and track record of the company to make an informed decision. In addition, some homeowner insurance policies may already offer this coverage, please check with your provider.

For more information, contact the City of Apple Valley Public Works at **952-953-2400**.



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.

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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 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**.

TRAP THE GREASE: AVOID COSTLY HOME PLUMBING BILLS

Fats, oils, and grease aren't just bad for your arteries; they are bad for the sewers, too. When food scraps are washed down the drain, the fat and grease from the food can build-up in your sewer lines causing raw sewage to backup into homes, businesses, and the environment. Anything with a fat content, including dairy products, salad dressings, and cooking oils, can contribute to grease clogged pipes. Avoid costly home plumbing bills by following these three simple steps:

1. **TRAP** bacon grease or meat drippings in a sealable container and toss in the trash.
2. **SCRAPE** all food scraps in the compost or trash.
3. **WIPE** all greasy, oily, creamy, or buttery food residues from dishes before you wash them.

Running hot water and soap down the drain does not prevent grease build up and blockages. Despite these preventive measures, if you see, hear or smell something you think might be a sewer backup, report it immediately by calling **952-953-2400** or **9-1-1**.



HELP WITH HOUSEHOLD CHORES IS AVAILABLE

Home ownership and maintenance can become difficult for aging individuals. Do you know someone, or are you yourself in need of assistance completing routine household chores such as yard work and various home cleaning and maintenance tasks?

DARTS, a community based non-profit organization, offers a wide range of indoor and outdoor chore services to aging individuals in need of such assistance. The program is intended to help connect individuals with resources and services that will improve their quality of life. Common chore services include, but are not limited to: house cleaning, laundry, grocery and errands, home maintenance such as fixture and bulb replacement, shoveling, lawn mowing, raking, and window washing. These services and more are available to qualified residents of Apple Valley. DARTS also has funding through the City of Apple Valley for low income clients, who cannot afford chore services. Call or visit their website to see if you qualify.

If you have further questions or to request services, please contact DARTS at **651-455-1560**. More information can be found on their website at <http://darts1.org>



PLEASE PICK UP AFTER YOUR POOCH

Snow . . . nothing makes the landscape look cleaner and more pristine in winter than a fresh, new blanket of snow. Don't be fooled. The problem with snow? Eventually it melts, so don't be tempted to not pick up after your dog in the winter. Take old grocery, sandwich, and bread bags with you during your walks. Public parks have garbage cans for easy disposal. Everyone will have a much more enjoyable spring and cleaner shoes if you do the pooper scoop.



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 16 and April 10, 2017. Check www.cityofapplevalley.org or www.DakotaSWCD.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**.

You can learn more about gardening projects that help local lakes by visiting www.BlueThumb.org



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:

- Remove snow promptly before ice can form.
- Use as little salt as possible to get the job done.
- 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 is thin and unsafe. Warning signs are posted and maintained around the perimeter of the aerated area to alert lake users of unsafe conditions.

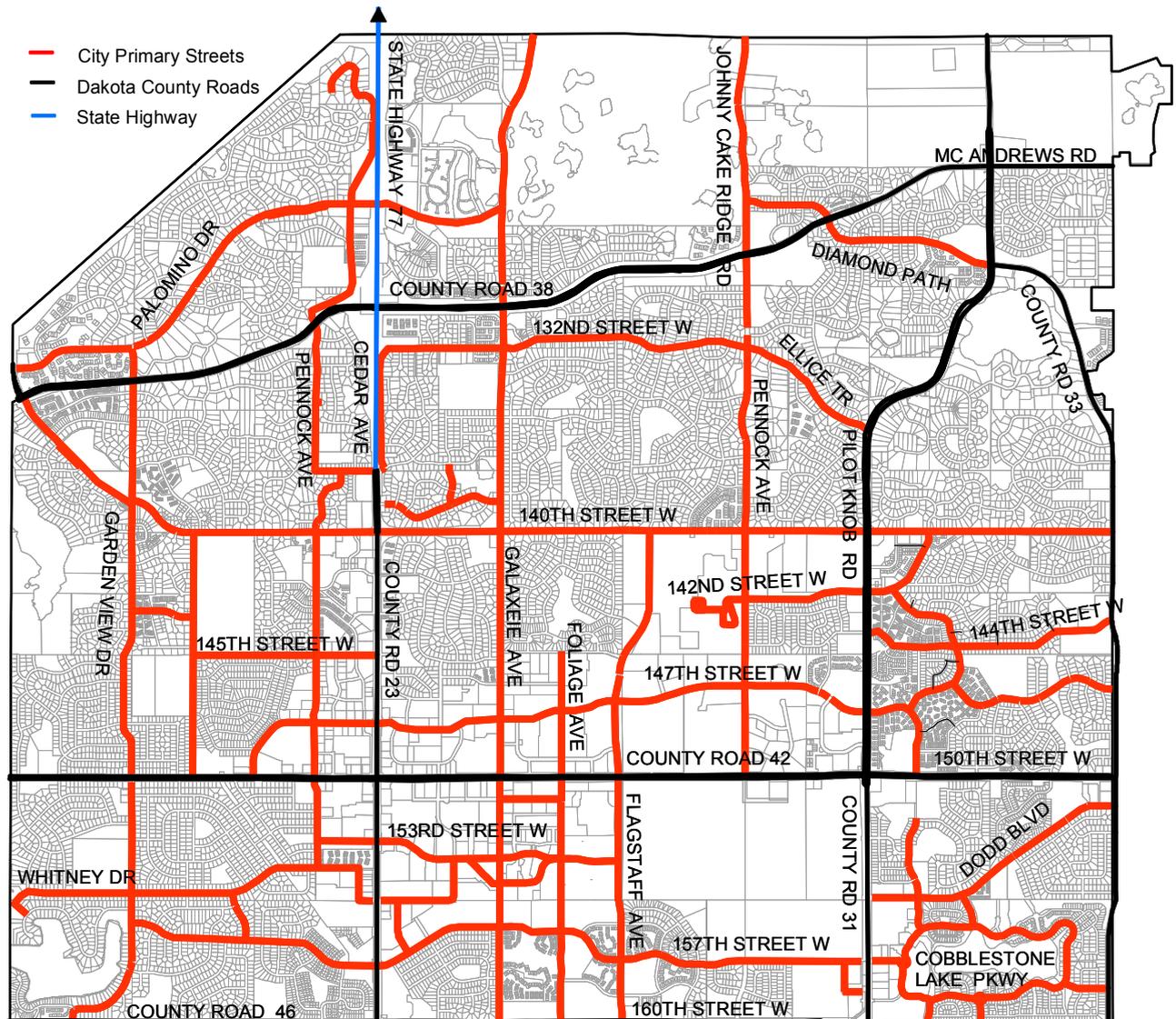
Lake aeration systems are regulated by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources; you can learn more about the DNR lake aeration program here <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/lakeaeration/index.html>. You can learn more about winter fish kills here <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/areas/fisheries/westmetro/fishkills.html>.

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. Residential streets and cul-de-sacs are cleared next. City crews strive to clear all 177 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. See map for City primary streets, County roads and State highway.





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.

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.

CURB MARKERS

Residents can place markers directly behind the curb line to define the edge of the street. The City provides lathe 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 temporary repairs to mailboxes damaged by snowplow operations within 48 hours of notification. If the mailbox cannot be repaired, a portable mailbox structure will be placed so mail service may continue. If the mailbox is damaged as a result of direct contact by City snow removal equipment it will be replaced with a standard No. 1 mailbox or reimbursed up to \$75. Mailbox damage must be reported to Public Works by May 1 of the current year.

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.

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

