

Turning over a new leaf: Village to modernize fall leaf collection

Beginning this fall, the Village is modernizing its Fall Leaf Collection Program to improve safety, help the environment and provide residents with more choices for how to handle leaves.

The modernization of the Fall Leaf Collection Program — the first since 1994 — will address resident concern over the potential safety hazards created by leaf piles, streamline the leaf collection pickup process and reduce confusion over parking restrictions. The changes come after the Village conducted case studies of 150 Illinois municipalities to identify best practices for leaf collection.

Oak Park's annual fall leaf collection period typically runs from late October to early December. Previously the Village used a pile model in which large piles of loose leaves were consolidated at street corners for collection.

This year, residents will no longer place leaves in the street near the curb. Instead, they are able to choose from a variety of leaf collection options that will improve safety, sustainability and efficiency. These options include:

- Bagging fallen leaves in yard waste bags and/or rigid containers and placing them in the parkway by the curb — no yard waste sticker required
- Composting leaves via the Village's CompostAble program
- Mulching leaves with a mower
- Leaving the leaves on the lawn or gardens to decompose naturally

Additional details and answers to frequently asked questions about the changes to the Fall Leaf Collection Program can be found on the Village website at www.oak-park.us/leafcollection.

In addition to offering choice for residents, the changes are anticipated to provide benefits such as increased tree and soil health through mulching, enhanced public safety by removing leaf piles to improve visibility on streets and in the public way, and potential reduction in costs for collection. The changes will also resolve inconvenient parking disruption caused by overnight leaf-pushing and daytime collection of piles that previously created disproportionate reduction of parking in affected areas.

Under the new system, the Village's residential waste

hauler, Lakeshore Recycling Systems (LRS), will have dedicated compost trucks and leaf crews that will collect bags and empty rigid landscape containers from the parkway according to the route and schedule set by Public Works staff. A Village-wide make-up day is included in the weekly Fall Leaf Collection schedule to supplement areas with higher leaf volumes or to catch-up after inclement weather events.

As part of the transition, the Village is planning to expand its Sidewalk Shoveling Program — typically used to assist income-eligible residents that physically cannot shovel snow nor afford to hire a shoveling service — to also assist with fall leaf services.

The Village will broadly communicate additional details about the changes via its website, social media channels, e-newsletter, the OP/FYI newsletter, local media outlets and more. Staff will also attend community events during the coming months to discuss the changes with residents and answer questions in person.

For questions about the new Fall Leaf Collection Program, please call 708.358.5700 or email publicworks@oak-park.us.

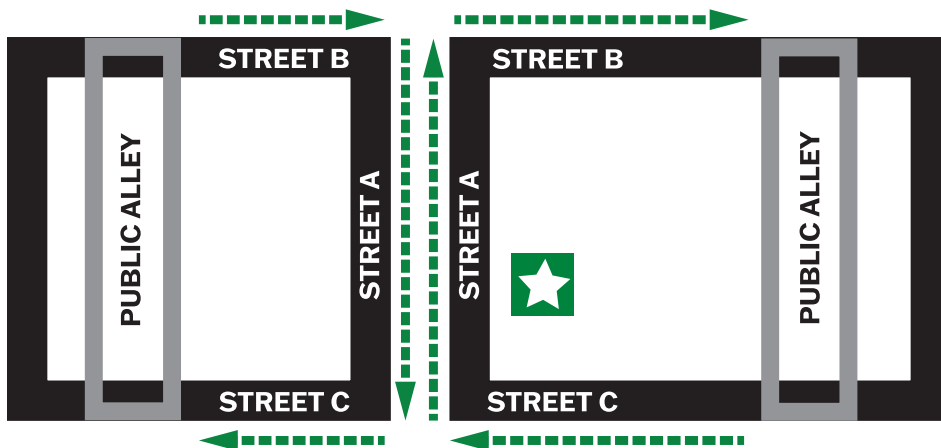
Recycle electronics, hazardous waste

Residents in single-family homes and buildings with five or fewer units can schedule a special collection of electronic and hazardous household waste. Examples of hazardous household waste that can be safely disposed of include oil-based paints, aerosols, household cleaners, lawn chemicals and automotive chemicals. Electronic waste such as portable electronics, computer items and TV items will also be collected. Find more information and schedule a pickup at www.LRSrecycles.com/oakpark or by calling 844.633.5377. Residents of large multifamily buildings not served under the municipal refuse hauling program are encouraged to contact their building's refuse provider about recycling options. A list of additional electronic and hazardous household waste recycling resources is posted on the Village website www.oak-park.us/ewaste.

Vehicle license deadline nears

Every Oak Park resident is required to purchase a license for each owned or leased motor vehicle before July 15. Vehicle licenses can be purchased and renewed online at www.oak-park.us/vehiclelicense. Vehicle license rates vary by type of vehicle. Persons age 65 and older, and anyone who has a state-issued handicapped license plate or placard, can apply for a discount. Disabled and active-duty veterans with proper documentation can apply for free vehicle licenses. The rate increases by \$20 after the deadline. Failure to purchase a license also could result in a ticket. For more information, call 708.358.7275, email parking@oak-park.us or visit www.oak-park.us/vehiclelicenseinfo.

Daytime restrictions eased for vehicle license holders... Oak Park residents with an active Village vehicle license can override daytime parking restrictions posted on the blocks where they live. The exemption from daytime parking restrictions is intended to provide relief to residents from undue burden created by parking restrictions that are intended to regulate parking for non-residents and commuters. The daytime parking exemption does not override other posted regulations related to traffic, public safety, permit parking and other paid parking zones. For more information, contact parking@oak-park.us or 708.358.7275 or visit www.oak-park.us/parking. The diagram below illustrates how the exemption applies to a typical residential block face, with the star representing a residence and the dotted lines representing the street frontages on which a resident is exempt from applicable daytime restrictions.



Guidance for storm debris pickup varies

Summer is an active period for storms in the Midwest, and severe storms often result in fallen tree branches. If a branch falls from a parkway tree located between the curb and sidewalk, please contact the Public Works Department at 708.358.5700 or publicworks@oak-park.us so the Village is aware of the issue and can pick up the debris. Officials ask residents to not cut up branches from parkway trees as it is faster for crews to feed one large branch into the wood chipper than many smaller pieces. The Village does not pick up brush from trees on private property. If you have a small amount of private brush to dispose of, you can bundle it, attach a green yard waste sticker and set it out in the regular collection area for regular garbage and recycling pickup. Bundles should be no larger than two feet in diameter or four feet in length and not weigh more than 50 pounds. If you have a larger amount of private brush, contact a tree care or landscape maintenance contractor for assistance. For more information about parkway tree care and maintenance, visit www.oak-park.us/trees.

Farmers' Market News

Corn roast... The Oak Park Farmers' Market's annual corn roast is set for Aug. 10. Guests can enjoy fresh-picked corn sold by the ear hot off the roaster from about 9 a.m. to noon. Be sure to bring cash for this fundraising event, as credit cards are not accepted when purchasing roasted corn.

SNAP/LINK among payment options... Making fresh produce affordable for all patrons is a priority at the Oak Park Farmers' Market, which has been providing SNAP/LINK card processing since 2011. The Market also offers matching value coupons throughout the season. For each dollar SNAP/LINK participants spend, they receive a \$1 coupon up to a maximum of \$25 in coupons per cardholder per Market day. Many vendors also accept WIC and Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program coupons.

Transportation available for seniors... Oak Park Township offers rides for seniors to and from the Oak Park Farmers' Market throughout the season. Pickups are made from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. each Saturday for seniors who live in Oak Park and River Forest. Reservations for rides to the Market can be made by calling 708.383.4806 between 8:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. A \$1 donation is suggested.

About the Market... Visit www.oak-park.us/farmersmarket for updated information about what's coming up at the Market, including information about bake sales and special events. The webpage also features information about all of the Market's vendors. The Market is held from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. rain or shine every Saturday through October in the Pilgrim Congregational Church parking lot, 460 Lake St., one block west of Ridgeland Ave. For more information, call 708.358.5780 or email farmersmarket@oak-park.us.



Gas-powered leaf blowers prohibited during summer months

The Village is reminding residents and landscape companies operating in Oak Park that the use of gas-powered leaf blowers is prohibited from June through September. The community is also less than one year away from a permanent ban of the use of gas-powered leaf blowers that will go into effect June 1, 2025. Currently, gas-powered leaf blowers may be operated only between October 1 and May 31. Electric leaf blowers may be used year-round. The operation of all leaf blower equipment is allowed Monday-Friday between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. and on Saturday and Sunday between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. All leaf blowers must operate below 65 dB. Find more information, including answers to frequently asked questions, at www.oak-park.us/leafblowers.

Façade improvement grants available

Applications for grants to help commercial businesses improve and restore the facades of their buildings are available. Qualified participants can receive up to \$5,000 in grant assistance for each eligible façade. Since the start of the program in 2018, the Village has worked with local businesses/property owners on 31 façade improvements across nine different business districts in Oak Park. For more information or to apply for a grant, call 708.358.5421 or email business@oak-park.us.

Health News

Summer sun safety...Keep yourself and your family safe from the sun's dangerous UVA and UVB rays when enjoying the outdoors this summer. Health officials advise everyone to use a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher every day. For extended outdoor activity, use a water-resistant, broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher. Reapply every two hours or after swimming or sweating.

Beat the heat and stay hydrated...Staying hydrated during the warm summer months is an important part of enjoying the season while staying healthy. Whether your plans include more walks or bicycle rides, soaking up the sun, or taking a long-awaited vacation, make sure you drink enough water to stay hydrated. The average adult should drink 8 to 13 cups of water per day for optimal hydration.

Back-to-school immunization...Local health officials are reminding parents and caregivers that all children attending Illinois schools, both public and private, need to show proof of required immunizations in order to attend class each fall. Failure to do so may result in exclusion from school. Parents and caregivers may contact the Oak Park Public Health Department at 708.358.5480 or health@oak-park.us with questions about which immunizations are required, and how to access free or reduced cost vaccines for those who are un- or under-insured.

Fight the bite this West Nile season

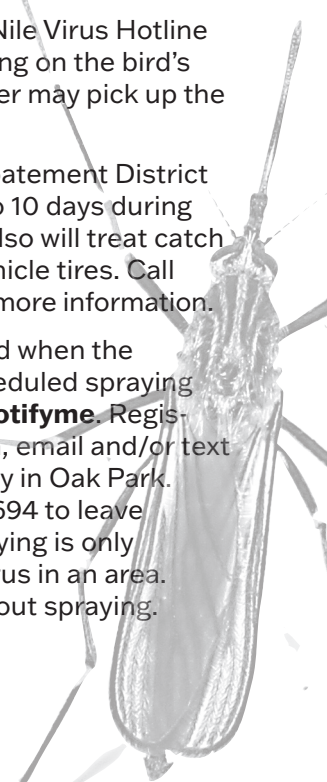
As temperatures rise, so does the threat of the mosquito-borne West Nile Virus. Last year, the Illinois Department of Public Health reported 119 human cases, 62 of which were in Cook County, and six deaths.

Take precautions...Avoid being bitten by mosquitoes by wearing long sleeves and pants, limiting time spent outdoors at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active and using insect repellent that contains DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-menthane-diol. Residents also are urged to eliminate potential mosquito breeding sites by cleaning roof gutters, storing containers upside down, emptying birdbaths every few days and any other precautions to avoid standing water on their property. For more information, call 708.358.5694, visit www.oak-park.us/fightthebite or email health@oak-park.us.

Report dead birds...If you see a dead bird call the West Nile Virus Hotline at 708.358.5694 or email health@oak-park.us. Depending on the bird's condition and species, a Health Department staff member may pick up the carcass for testing.

Prevention efforts...The Des Plaines Valley Mosquito Abatement District treats all street catch basins with larvicide every seven to 10 days during the mosquito-breeding season. The abatement district also will treat catch basins on private property by request and pick up old vehicle tires. Call 708.447.1765 or visit www.desplainesvalleymad.com for more information.

Spraying notification...Residents who wish to be notified when the Des Plaines Valley Mosquito Abatement District has scheduled spraying for adult mosquitoes can sign up at www.oak-park.us/notifyme. Registrants will be notified by an automated telephone system, email and/or text message as soon as possible following a decision to spray in Oak Park. Individuals without computer access may call 708.358.5694 to leave their phone number for telephone notification only. Spraying is only conducted in response to elevated levels of West Nile Virus in an area. Visit www.desplainesvalleymad.com for information about spraying.



Outdoor sculpture walk returns

The Oak Park Sculpture Walk is back with 12 sculptures newly on display in the community as part of an outdoor exhibit in the Downtown Oak Park business district in the vicinity of Lake Street and Marion Street. This year's



Sculpture Walk will be on display until spring 2025 and features the work of artists from throughout the Midwest. The sculptures were chosen through a juried competition and vary in materials. Visitors will be able to download the free Otocast app onto their smartphones to access information about the sculptures and hear descriptions of the work by the artists. The Sculpture Walk is organized by the Oak Park Area Arts Council.

Oak Park's permanent public art collection grows...

The Village's zoning ordinance requires that either a piece of public art be installed at the site of any new planned development or that a donation be made that would lead to the installation of public art within Oak Park. Sculptures were

recently installed at new residential developments at 835 Lake St. and 1105 Pleasant St. For more information about public art in Oak Park, email the Oak Park Area Arts Council at info@oakparkareaartscouncil.org or visit www.oakparkareaartscouncil.org.

Police offer tips to deter bicycle thieves

Bicycle thefts tend to increase during warmer weather. Following these steps, police say, can help deter bicycle thieves:

- Register your bike with the Police Department at www.oak-park.us/bikeregistration. Should your bike be stolen and later recovered, the registration provides information about its rightful owner.
- Don't leave your bike unlocked or unattended. Police recommend a U lock.
- Lock your bike even when it is stored in a closed garage, enclosed porch or basement common area.
- Never let anyone you do not know take your bike for a ride.
- Trust your instincts. If you feel someone is going to take your bicycle, shout for help.
- Stay in the company of friends — there usually is safety in numbers.
- Think twice about resisting — your bike can be replaced.

Police urge parents to share these tips with their children. For more information, call 708.386.3800 or email police@oak-park.us.

Bicycles and sidewalks... Riding on a sidewalk by anyone of any age is not allowed in the business districts, including downtown. And only those under 15 years of age may ride on a sidewalk anywhere else in the community. Youngsters riding on sidewalks always must yield to pedestrians. For more information about bicycle rules and safety, call 708.386.3800 or email police@oak-park.us.

Helmets required... Bicyclists under age 17 are required to wear a helmet in Oak Park. Enforcement focuses on education rather than punishment, but parents of repeat offenders could face a \$25 fine or be required to do community service. The local law is based on information from the American Academy of Pediatrics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration about injuries and deaths caused by bicyclists who have accidents while riding without a helmet. For more information about the helmet requirement, call 708.358.5480 or email health@oak-park.us.

Nominations sought for community awards

Nominations are being sought for the Village's 2024 Historic Preservation, Cavalcade of Pride and Sustainability Awards that recognize efforts made by organizations, individuals and businesses who have played roles in improving the community.

Cavalcade of Pride... These awards recognize property owners who have done an exceptional job of maintaining and improving the exteriors of their homes and businesses. Nomination categories include residential, multi-family, garden, commercial and sign. The deadline for nominations is Sept. 16. More details and an online nomination form are posted at www.oak-park.us/cavalcadeofpride.

Historic Preservation...

Nomination categories include restoration, rehabilitation, adaptive use, additions/new construction, stewardship, detail and design. Nominations need not be in a historic district and interior work may be considered in conjunction with exterior work. The deadline for nominations is Oct. 18. More details and a link to the online nomination form are posted at www.oak-park.us/preservationawards.

Sustainability... Green Awards recognize community members and organizations, local businesses and nonprofits, institutions and collaborative projects and initiatives that demonstrate leadership in advancing equity-centered climate action, climate resilience and sustainability in alignment with Oak Park's community climate and sustainability plan, Climate Ready Oak Park. The deadline for nominations is Oct. 31. More information and an online nomination form are posted at www.oak-park.us/greenawards.

Renew pet licenses online



Oak Park Public Health officials urge residents to use the online option at www.oak-park.us/villageview to renew their pet licenses. Renewing online is quick and easy. Residents can delete pets they no longer own and add new ones. Payment is made with a credit card, a receipt is sent via email and the actual tag delivered to your mailbox. Pet owners whose pets were already licensed and who had emails on file with the Village should have received a renewal notice. First-time pet owners should also register pets online. Pet owners still have the option of mailing in a paper renewal notice and payment, or coming to Village Hall, 123 Madison St. For more information about owning a pet in Oak Park, visit www.oak-park.us/pets. For questions about the license renewal process, please call the Public Health Department at 708.358.5480 or email health@oak-park.us.

Bee allergy registry... The Village allows residents to keep bees on their property, but will not issue a permit for an apiary on a property within 150 feet of a residence of a person with an anaphylactic reaction to bee stings. If you have been diagnosed with such an allergy by a licensed physician, please provide documentation to the Public Health Department at health@oak-park.us. More information about beekeeping in Oak Park is at www.oak-park.us/health.

News you can use

Officials preparing for Democratic National Convention... With the Democratic National Convention taking place Aug. 19-22 in Chicago, Village officials are busy preparing for potential tourism and public safety impacts that could arise as a result of the high-profile event taking place a few miles from Oak Park. The Village is working with county, state and other regional partners leading up to the convention. For more information, email prepare@oak-park.us. As the convention draws near, any local updates will be posted on the Village's social media pages and on the Village website at www.oak-park.us.

Sign up for emergency alerts... The Village maintains an alert system to notify residents when emergency situations occur. The system requires residents to register, but allows citizens to choose how they wish to be notified — by text, email and/or voice message. The system is intended for emergency notifications, not news or general information. Alerts from the Village typically include information about topics such as snow emergency parking and mosquito spraying. To sign up, visit www.oak-park.us/notify. Anyone who would like to sign up, but lacks access to a computer can call 708.358.5489 to be added to the voice message alert list. For more information, email prepare@oak-park.us.

Group buying for solar panels available... Oak Park residents looking to install solar panels at their home are encouraged to consider Solar Switch Chicagoland, a program that provides homeowners with affordable solar panel and battery storage system installations through a group discount. By vetting and qualifying trusted installers and using a competitive bidding process, the program ensures consumer protection and saves the average consumer more than \$4,000 on a standard-sized solar installation. Oak Park residents interested in making the switch to solar energy can sign up online at www.SolarSwitch.com/chicagoland before Aug. 21.

Oak Park Film Festival accepting submissions... Organizers for the new Oak Park, IL Film Festival scheduled for Sept. 12 and 14 are now accepting submissions. The festival is open to movies of a variety of genres and lengths, each with a local connection, including cast or crew members from Oak Park or a setting or shooting location within the Village. Awards will be distributed across multiple categories. The entry deadline is July 31. Additional information about the Oak Park Film Festival is available at www.opilff.org.

Traffic safety recommendations focus of Vision Zero open house on July 20

After gathering feedback from residents, carefully analyzing crash data, hosting discussions with key stakeholders and studying safety challenges in Oak Park, Vision Zero plan recommendations have been drafted. Community members are invited to review the traffic safety recommendations and provide feedback during the Vision Zero Open House planned for 2 to 4 p.m. July 20 in the Ridgeland Commons Recreational Complex Large Activity Room, 415 Lake St.

Light refreshments, activities for kids and a chance to win a raffle prize will be part of the family-friendly event. Feedback gathered will help the team refine its recommendations for the final Vision Zero plan, which is expected to be completed this fall. For more information about the Vision Zero project, visit www.engageoakpark.com/visionzero.



View with a smartphone camera.



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



Village President Vicki Scaman

Trustees
Susan Buchanan
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Village Clerk Christina M. Waters
Village Manager Kevin J. Jackson

Residential Customer Local
Oak Park, Illinois

Postal Carrier
Pre-Sort

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

Tips for planning a great block party

The Village encourages block parties as a way to build community spirit, meet neighbors and have fun. Each block may sponsor two block parties per year, but since some weekends fill quickly, plan early to get preferred dates. A petition signed by at least 10 separate addresses on the block is required to schedule a block party. Approved petitions allow the neighborhood to close off a street to vehicle traffic for the entire day. Block party organizers are urged to remember the following rules:



- Include everyone on the block — especially renters in multifamily buildings.
- Use a north-south block. Due to public safety and traffic considerations, block parties are not allowed on east-west streets.
- Make sure emergency vehicles can get through if needed. Tables, chairs or other items should not project more than six feet from the curb. And don't stretch wires, ropes, nets, lights, banners or other items across the street.
- Supervise children at all times. Even though the street may be closed, accidents can happen.
- Use only street barricades provided by the Village. Cars parked in a street as a barricade may impede emergency vehicles and could be ticketed.
- Keep sidewalks clear. Sidewalks are public ways that may not be obstructed even during a block party.
- Use only chalk for street and sidewalk art.
- If alcohol is present, keep it on private property. Alcohol may not be sold.

For more information, call 708.358.5700, email publicworks@oak-park.us or visit www.oak-park.us/blockparties.

Make it green... Oak Parkers are invited to go green at their next block party. Residents who sign up for a green block party receive a kit that includes compostable bags and pop-up waste sorting boxes with signage indicating what waste goes where. Fun, interactive and kid-friendly activities are also available via local non-profit One Earth Local. Find more information at www.oak-park.us/blockparties.

Follow policy-making online, on demand

Residents interested in keeping up with local municipal policymaking can follow Village Board meetings at www.oak-park.us/boardtv, where meetings are streamed live and archived for on-demand viewing. The online meetings database offers the option to search the meetings archive using key words to find a particular topic of interest. Users also can select a video by meeting date and then choose to view only the portion of the meeting that addresses the topic of interest just by clicking on the agenda item. Village Board meetings continue to be broadcast live on VOP-TV, which is available to Comcast subscribers on channel 6 and AT&T Uverse customers on channel 99. For those residents who want to dig even deeper into the details, complete board packets — the materials trustees use to prepare for meetings — are posted on the board TV web page as well, along with the approved minutes of past meetings, which are the official record of Village Board actions. The page also links to information on how to contact officials by telephone and email. For more information on Village Board practices and processes, email village@oak-park.us.