

Golden Valley 2006

CITYNEWS



Think Globally, Act Locally

Envision Golden Valley is alive and kicking and hoping to kick higher in 2006. At its January 17 meeting, the City Council heard recommendations from the *Envision* Connection Project Board of Directors that will involve every-day folks in making the community's collective vision come to fruition. The Council will attend the January 26 Connection Project Board meeting to further discuss the plan.

Under the plan, individuals may come forward on their own or work collaboratively through neighborhoods, clubs, churches, or other associations. Key components include linking people and groups through a Connection Project Web site and other engagement tools, and keeping citizens informed about *Envision* outcomes with ongoing communications about the positive community action spawned by *Envision*.

Since publication of the 2004 *Envision* Report, *A Shared Vision of Golden Valley's Future: Creatively Connecting People and Places and Inspiring Care for Community*, the City Council has reflected the community vision in a number of ways. First, it reaffirmed its commitment to involve citizens by forming the *Envision* Connection Project. Second, the Council has used *Envision* as a guide when considering new issues and ways of doing business. One example is a new emphasis on housing maintenance (see page 15). Another example is the I-394 Corridor Study, which involved citizens and business in considering the future of this important area. This planning approach will be extended to other highway corridors in 2006. The Council is also seeking to involve its Boards and Commissions in the community vision in 2006.

Watch for more information in future editions of *CityNews*. If you have questions about the *Envision* Connection Project or wish to participate, contact Assistant City Manager Jeanne Andre at 763-593-8014 or jandre@ci.golden-valley.mn.us.

STATE OF THE CITY IS FEB 9

The Golden Valley City Council will present its 2006 State of the City Community Update Thursday, February 9, at 7:30 am, in the City Hall Council Chambers. All members of the community are invited to attend. The video will then be replayed several times a day on *GV 16*, the City's government access cable channel.

The annual State of the City reports the City's accomplishments of the past year and previews goals for the coming year. This is the third year the report will be presented in a video format.

This year's State of the City highlights will focus on community connections, inspired by themes from *Envision Golden Valley*, the City's community visioning process (see article at left). Look for information and updates regarding development, transportation, community engagement, environment, recreation, and government, with a specific focus on how projects and initiatives connect the community at large.

For more information about the State of the City, contact Communications Coordinator Cheryl Weiler at 763-593-8004.

IN THIS ISSUE

VOLUME 19 NUMBER 1

- COUNCIL SEEKS APPLICANTS FOR ELECTION TASK FORCE|2
- CARPET AND COUNTERTOPS ENTER THE RECYCLE LOOP|4
- GOLF SEASON IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER|6
- FEATURE ARTICLE 8-9|WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE? A LOOK AT HOME IMPROVEMENT PROFESSIONALS
- BURGLAR ALARMS: UNDERSTANDING THE BASICS|10
- STANCH SEWER BACKUPS|12
- PERMITS AND INSPECTIONS ENSURE COMMUNITY SAFETY|14
- 3|SIGN UP TO RUN THE VALLEY April 8
- 5|SELECT NATIVE TREES FOR A WATER-FRIENDLY LANDSCAPE
- 7|REC PROGRAMS: NOT JUST FOR KIDS AND ELDER
- 11|SMOKE ALARMS PROTECT YOUR HOME FROM FIRE
- 13|"PAY NOW" APPROACH KEEPS STREETS ON TRACK
- 15|MAINTENANCE STANDARDS STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY

AUTOMATIC PAYMENT EARNS YOU A BUCK

The City of Golden Valley's Utility Bill (UB) Automatic Payment Plan offers a free, fast, easy way to pay your utility bill. Forget about checks, stamps, or late charges. Instead, have the amount of your utility bill automatically deducted from your checking or savings account. As an added bonus, residents who enroll earn a \$1 credit per quarter on their utility bill.

To get started on the automatic utility payment program, complete the authorization form available at City Hall or from the City Web site at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/streets/PDF/UtilityBillingAPPform.pdf. Include a voided check (for checking accounts) or deposit slip (for savings accounts). Make sure both bank and individual account routing numbers are located at the bottom of the check or deposit slip (for example, :091400046:200030119). Send the completed form along with your next utility bill, drop it in the box marked "Utilities" in front of City Hall, or mail it to City of Golden Valley, Utility Billing, 7800 Golden Valley Rd, Golden Valley, MN 55427.

The City bills quarterly, so if you return the authorization with your current payment, the first automatic payment should occur with the next quarterly billing. Please continue to pay the bill as usual until the message "Do Not Pay—Automatic Withdrawal On Due Date" appears on the top of your bill. Your monthly bank statement will clearly reflect the automatic payment, and your next utility bill will include a debit for that amount.

If you need a new authorization form or have questions about your bill, contact the City Utility Billing/Accounts Payable Technician Carol Zerull at 763-593-8016. Forms are also available online at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/streets/utilitybill.htm.



Council Seeks Applicants For Election Task Force

Golden Valley residents with experience or an interest in elections are encouraged to consider serving on a new task force that will evaluate the City election process and make recommendations to the City Council on several election issues. The seven-member advisory group will be appointed in February and will meet the fourth Monday each month throughout 2006.

The non-partisan Election Task Force will include one member from the Golden Valley League of Women Voters (LWV) and six members at large.

The group will discuss and make recommendations on a variety of election-related issues, including whether the City should:

- hold its elections in even years instead of odd years
- change from a two-year to a four-year mayoral term
- consider adopting a ward system
- consider holding City primaries
- change the process for appointing people to vacant City Council seats
- adopt a City election code of ethics
- review Council salaries

"Most election processes are set-up and controlled by the State," says Golden Valley Finance Director Sue Virnig, who will attend the Election Task Force meetings as a staff liaison. "The Task Force will review issues that effect City elections only."

The Task Force will present recommendations in a final report for City Council action by the end of the year.

The application deadline is 4:30 pm, February 10, 2006. Interested residents can apply online at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us or request an application from Virnig at 763-593-8010. The seven Task Force members will likely be appointed at the February 21, 2006 City Council meeting.

Council Adopts 2006 City Budget

At its December 20, 2005 regular meeting, the Golden Valley City Council adopted the 2006 City budget and certified a net property tax levy of \$13,267,960, a 5.7% increase over the 2005 adopted budget. On an average Golden Valley home valued at \$266,200, this would be an increase of \$61 (\$5.08 per month) for the City's portion of the property tax.

The budget review and approval process included monthly City Council work sessions from July through December and consideration of citizen input at the December 5 Truth in Taxation Hearing. Budget information was also published in the November/December 2005 issue of *CityNews*, on the City Web site (www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us), and in a flyer included in the Truth in Taxation notices mailed by Hennepin County.

The City continually seeks to improve public information concerning the City's finances and invites the community to provide feedback. If you have comments or questions about your property taxes or the City budget, contact Golden Valley Finance Director Sue Virnig at svirnig@ci.golden-valley.mn.us or 763-593-8010.

Sign Up To Run The Valley April 8

Plan now to join friends and neighbors at 8:30 am, Saturday, April 8, 2006, for one of Golden Valley's most popular community events, the 12th annual *Run the Valley*. Sponsored by the Golden Valley Human Services Foundation (GVHSF), this 5K/10K race and 5K walk is a successful fund-raiser for organizations that benefit the community. The 2005 event drew 607 participants and raised \$11,600 for the GVHSF, which allocates the funds to local human service organizations.

The race will start and finish near the Davis Community Center parking lot at Meadowbrook Elementary (one block west of Hwy 100 at the intersection of Glenwood and Xenia Aves). The certified course runs through residential Golden Valley; water stops and post-race complimentary snacks are provided. Participants receive a long-sleeve T-shirt (see related article below).

For registration materials, call 763-593-8010. Register in person or by mail (no faxes) up to three days before the race at Golden Valley City Hall, 7800 Golden Valley Rd (hours: 8 am–4:30 pm). You may also register online at www.active.com or in person at Davis Community Center on race day between 7:15 and 8 am. Entry fee is \$20 before March 1, \$25 March 1 through April 5, and \$30 the day of the race.

For more details about *Run the Valley* and the GVHSF, watch for the next issue of *CityNews*, click to www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/community/runvalley.htm, or call 763-593-8010.

run the valley T-SHIRT DESIGN CONTEST

The Golden Valley Human Services Foundation (GVHSF) is looking for colorful, eye-catching, and unique graphic design entries for the annual *Run The Valley* 5K/10K Walk/Run T-shirt contest. Each race participant receives a T-shirt.

There is no particular message to convey. The designer may choose content; however, either the City of Golden Valley logo or the name "Golden Valley Human Services Foundation" must appear somewhere within the design. There are no size requirements for this. The GVHSF reserves the right to add these features to the design if not included. The use of humor is not required but perfectly acceptable.

The T-shirts will be white, all cotton, long sleeve. Printing will be three-color silk-screen (two colors are acceptable if the graphic design is better suited to this format). The designer may choose the colors. There are no color requirements for the Golden Valley logo or Golden Valley Human Services Foundation lettering. Submit design in camera-ready format for use by the printer (color separations preferred). The GVHSF will handle all printing. The designer may proof the printing, if desired.

The winning design is selected arbitrarily (no ranking system is used) by consensus of GVHSF members and possibly City staff. The selected printing company will be asked for input regarding the mechanics in printing particular designs. The winning designer (or designers, if co-designed) will be awarded 10 T-shirts after printing and be acknowledged in *Golden Valley CityNews* and the *Sun-Post* newspaper. GVHSF shall have sole ownership of the winning design and permission to reuse it when so desired.



Barbara Keith, 2005 Winner

Deadline for entries in the 2006 Run the Valley T-shirt Contest is Friday, February 4, 2006.

GVHSF Supports Community



Since 1992, the Golden Valley Human Services Foundation (GVHSF) has worked to support human service organizations that serve Golden Valley residents. Each year, this board of citizen volunteers reviews funding requests and allocates funds raised by the Foundation through various annual fund-raisers, such as April's *Run the Valley* and September's *Golden Valley Golf Classic*. The Foundation also receives 10% of the pull tab monies collected in the City.

For 2005, the GVHSF allocated \$82,500 to 10 local human service organizations: Northwest YMCA Detached Work Program (\$25,000), Home Free Domestic Assault Intervention Project (\$20,500), Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery (\$10,000), PRISM Food Shelf (\$9,000), Senior Community Services Home Program (\$4,000) and Outreach Program (\$1,500), Suburban Northwest Dinner at Your Door (\$5,000), Crisis Connection (\$3,000), Kids and Cops Program (\$2,500), and Community Mediation Services (\$2,000). To qualify for funding, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- The services must not be duplicated by a level of government.
- The service provided is for Golden Valley residents at a time of crisis.
- The service must include cooperation or collaboration between organizations.
- Foundation funding should be a "last resort" source for funding the services.
- The organization should use the funds granted by the Foundation to serve Golden Valley citizens.
- Funding shall be granted to human service organizations and not to an individual or individuals.
- Funding will not be granted to any organization licensed in the City of Golden Valley for lawful gambling operations.

For more information about GVHSF activities and events, or to join the list of contributors and volunteers, please call 763-593-8010.

RECYCLOPEDIA Is Updated

In December, most Golden Valley residents received the latest edition of the *Recyclopedia*, a 32-page alphabetical guide with numerous listings, sorted by material, on how and where to dispose of materials safely, recycle more, reuse resources, and reduce waste.

Listings range from businesses that take used building materials (doors, windows, and lumber) to those that take used eyeglasses. Of great concern is the disposal of hazardous wastes, such as paint strippers, brake fluid, photochemicals, oven cleaners, and adhesives. In 2003 alone, more than 109,000 tons of hazardous materials were recycled in Minnesota.

Since 1995, the cities of Golden Valley, Hopkins, Minnetonka, Plymouth, St Louis Park and the West Hennepin Recycling Commission (WHRC) cities of Greenfield, Independence, Long Lake, Loretto, Maple Plain, Medina, and Orono have cooperatively produced the *Recyclopedia* to address waste concerns in the western suburbs.

The *Recyclopedia* offers resources to help residents properly recycle, reuse, or dispose of building materials. For example, the Reuse Center in Minneapolis (<http://site.mawebcenters.com/thereusecenter/>) accepts cabinets, doors, architecturally significant trim, millwork, windows, sinks, tubs, toilets, tables, etc. Its retail center sells such items. There is also www.twincitiesfreemarket.org, a free service for online users to either list or search for items. All items are free and available on a first-come, first-served basis. Other organizations that accept gently used building materials, such as Habitat for Humanity (612-331-4090 ext 611), are also listed in the *Recyclopedia*.



Carpet And Countertops Enter The Recycle Loop

Two areas that get a lot of use in any home are floors and countertops, and both are often overlooked until they are worn and in need of replacement. Let's take a look at how remodelers can observe the reduce-recycle-reuse recycling loop when replacing carpets and countertops in their homes.

REMOVING AND REPLACING CARPET

When you're thinking in the recycling loop, "out with the old" takes on a new meaning. In fact, it actually becomes more like "reuse the old" and, with the growing demand and subsequent scarcity of virgin materials, the battle cry of the future.

If you believe your old carpet can be reused as is or in room-sized pieces, check your *Recyclopedia* (see sidebar) for organizations that buy and sell used remodeling materials. If your carpet needs to be cut up due to wear and tear or stains, consider reusing it in areas you need patches of carpet, such as in a boat, vehicles, closets, pet carriers, kennels, etc. If your carpet is beyond reuse, there is no other option than the landfill, since used residential carpet is not yet recycled into other products. Often garbage haulers will remove discarded carpet for a fee. Hennepin County Hazardous Waste sites (612-348-3777) will also accept it for a fee.

When replacing carpet, think recycled. According to Recycle Minnesota, carpet with recycled content or that is recyclable, or both, is available. If you're considering polyester carpet, ask if it contains recycled PET plastic (often from recycled bottles).

REMOVING AND REPLACING COUNTERTOPS

Updating your kitchen? As with carpet, consider reuse if your countertops are on their way out. Maybe the countertops could be useful somewhere else in your home. Many garage work spaces benefit from the addition of some countertops. If you can't reuse them, perhaps someone else can. Check your *Recyclopedia* for reuse centers (see sidebar). If they are too far gone (think twice about this—as the saying goes, "one person's trash is another's treasure"), then countertops, like carpet, must go to the landfill.

After you've moved those countertops out, join many others who have replaced old countertops with ones made, at least partially, from recycled materials. A new trend in countertops is exposed aggregate, which combines minerals and natural substances to garner the earth-friendly label. A less expensive option that is obviously in the recycling loop is glass tiles. Made from recycled windshields, these glass tiles are created through glass fusion, combining glass and minerals for a distinctive look.

Buying Recycled

For a list of companies that offer home improvement products considerate of the recycling loop, visit www.greenguardian.com/buy.asp. It includes links to the *Minnesota Recycled Products Directory* and the *Recycled Products Guide*. Both identify recycled products and where to buy them.

Golden Valley Recycles



The Golden Valley Recycling Program is partially funded by the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners.

Holiday Schedule

Holiday Week	Pick-Up Date
Memorial Day	Sat, June 3
Fourth of July	Sat, July 8
Labor Day	Sat, Sept 9
Thanksgiving	Sat, Nov 25
Christmas	Sat, Dec 30
New Year's	Sat, Jan 6

Missed Pick-Ups

If your recycling is missed on Friday, call Waste Management at 952-890-1100 before noon on the following Monday.

If you have specific recycling questions, call 763-593-8030.

Select Native Trees For A Water-Friendly Landscape

'Tis the season to start planning spring landscaping projects. Those considering a new tree or two to improve aesthetics and increase property value may want to consider native trees, which tend to grow better because they know the land, so to speak. Native trees also conserve water by requiring less (after established) and help water quality by requiring less fertilizer and fewer pesticides.

Many trees native to Minnesota can be used for landscaping, but finding them may be a challenge. The following information from the University of Minnesota Extension Service will help your search.

AT THE NURSERY

There is currently a limited availability of nursery-grown native trees, but, more are being grown to meet the increasing demand. Nursery-grown plants often come with better root systems than wild trees, which helps them survive transplanting better and reestablish their roots faster.

Native MINNESOTA TREES

- Black, Green, and White Ash
- Large-toothed and Quaking/Trembling Aspen
- Basswood or American Linden
- Blue Beech or American Hornbeam
- Paper and River Birch
- Butternut, Black Walnut
- Red Cedar, Balsam Fir
- Black Cherry, Pin Cherry, and Common Chokecherry
- Kentucky Coffeetree
- Cottonwood
- Elm
- Hackberry
- Hawthorn
- Bitternut and Shagbark Hickory
- Ironwood or Hophornbeam
- Juneberry or Serviceberry
- Black, Red, Silver, and Sugar Maple, Box Elder
- American and Showy Mountain-ash
- Bur, Northern Pin, Northern Red, Swamp White, or White Oak
- Jack and White Pine
- Wild Plum
- Black and White Spruce
- Tamarack or Larch

IN THE WILD

You must have permission to remove a tree from private or public land. Transplant trees in early spring before growth starts, and retain as much of the root system as possible. Trees that develop a tap root, such as oaks, are extremely difficult to move and should only be transplanted when very young. Root pruning a year or two before transplanting from the wild will help develop a more compact root system. To root prune, push a sharp shovel straight into the ground one foot from the trunk to form a circle around the tree.

STARTING FROM SEED

Starting from seed is another, but rather difficult, way to get hard-to-find native trees. Some seeds are viable for only a short time or require two or more years to germinate. Other seeds, such as oak, won't germinate if dried before planted. Most tree seeds need to be stored properly for several months before planting.

For more information on native trees and other plants, go to www.extension.umn.edu/topics.html?topic=5. For questions about trees in Golden Valley, call the Assistant City Forester at 763-593-3976.

GV ORDINANCE PROTECTS TREES

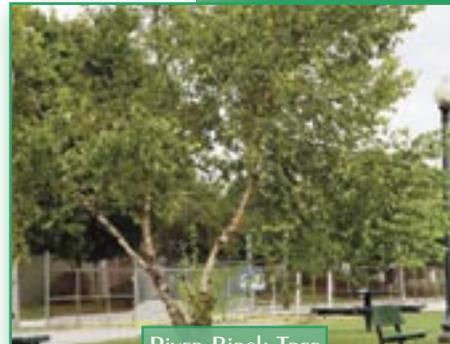
Trees are a prime commodity in first-ring suburbs like Golden Valley. That's why the City Council created a special ordinance in 1999 to protect and enhance the community's natural environment.

Golden Valley's tree preservation ordinance was developed to:

- protect and preserve the environment and natural beauty of the city
- assure orderly development and redevelopment to minimize tree and habitat loss
- prevent or reduce soil erosion, sedimentation, and storm water runoff
- evaluate the impacts of development on trees and wooded areas
- establish minimal standards for tree preservation and the mitigation of environmental impacts resulting from tree removal
- provide incentives for creative land use and environmentally compatible site design that preserves trees and minimizes tree removal and clear-cutting during development
- enforce tree preservation standards to promote and protect community health, safety, and welfare



BLACK WALNUT TREE



RIVER BIRCH TREE



SUGAR MAPLE TREE

If you have questions about tree preservation in Golden Valley, visit the City Web site at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/environment/forestry.htm or contact Public Works at 763-593-8030.

SENIOR STUFF

Support your Seniors Program by paying your \$5 annual dues. Starting in April, newsletters are mailed to members only. Non-members can pick them up at Brookview.

All activities are at Brookview Community Center and require advance registration unless otherwise noted.

Wellness and You—March 2: "Container Gardening," 1:30 pm, Dover Hills Midrise

Tax Aide Program—March 2, 16, and 30 and April 6, 9 am–noon

Defensive Driving—Eight-hour course: March 7 and 14, 6–10 pm, \$18; Four-hour refresher: April 13, 9 am–1 pm, \$16

Money Matters—March 16: "Asset Preservation," 10–11 am

Entertainment—March 17: "Anything But Green" dinner and fun, 12:30 pm

Blood Pressure Screening—March 22, 11 am–noon

Coffee Talk—March 22: "On The Homefront: Life In Minnesota In The 1940s," \$2 at the door

Remember When?—March 23: "Remembering Pets," 1:30–2:30 pm, Dover Hills Midrise

Meet The Author—April 4: Pete Hautman, author of "Godless," 1:30–3 pm, Robbinsdale City Hall

Upcoming Trips (register early)—April 11: LeDuc Historic Mansion, April 25: Art of Russian Culture, May 23–26: Spring Blossoms In Door County

Five Cities Transportation Program offers rides to seniors for shopping, social activities, and senior program events. To reserve a ride, call the Five Cities office at 763-531-1259, 8 am–3 pm, Monday–Friday.

For more information, to receive the Seniors Newsletter, or to register for a program or trip, contact:

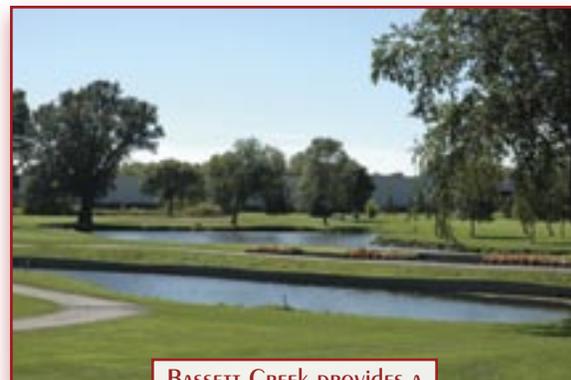
Golden Valley Seniors Program
Brookview Community Center
 200 Brookview Parkway
 Golden Valley, MN 55426
 763-512-2339
 8 am–5 pm, Monday–Friday

Golf Season Is Just Around The Corner

There may be snow on the ground, but there's no frost on the folks at Brookview Golf. Preparations are under way for the 2006 season at the City-owned course adjacent to Brookview Park at the southwest corner of Hwy 55 and Winnetka Ave.

Brookview offers fun, challenging golf in a relaxing, beautiful setting set against the backdrop of Bassett Creek. The traditional 18-hole Regulation Course features moderate bunkers, bent grass greens, and multiple tee settings, with total yardage ranging from 6,387 to 5,328 yards. Water is the main hazard, coming into play on 15 holes.

Brookview's nine-hole Par 3 Course, with its abundance of trees and water hazards, offers an enjoyable experience for golfers of any age or ability. It's perfect if you're short on time and want to get in a quick round of golf. Or, tuck into a bucket of balls and



BASSETT CREEK PROVIDES A SCENIC BACKDROP FOR GOLF.

hit from grass or mats at the Driving Range (irons only), then grab a quick meal at the Brookview Grill (see box). Chipping green and practice bunker are also available.

Groups of all sizes are welcome at either course for formal tournaments or casual outings. Brookview's banquet area, deck, gazebo, and patio provide a great setting for food and fun either before or after golf.

If it's education you're after,

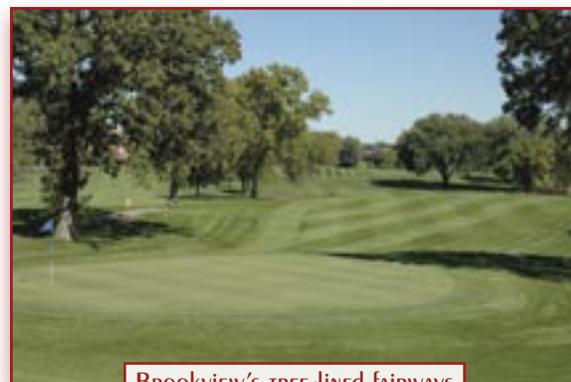
BROOKVIEW GRILL

The Brookview Grill is a casual diner open to both golfers and the general public during the golf season, offering hearty, homemade breakfasts, burgers, hot and cold sandwiches, and beverages. Off-season, the Grill's warm and comfortable atmosphere is perfect for small- and moderate-sized parties or meetings for corporate (retreats, meetings, seminars, parties, receptions) and private (receptions, reunions, bridal or baby showers, parties) groups.

Brookview's golf instructors offer private and group lessons for people of all ages and abilities. Clinics can be customized to meet group or company needs. Brookview promotes youth golf and provides lesson and playing programs throughout the summer for juniors ages eight to 17.

Watch for details in the City's Park & Recreation Spring Activities brochure, which will be published in mid-March, or visit the City Web site at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us.

Learn more about Brookview Golf Course and its amenities at www.brookviewgolf.com, or call Brookview Golf directly at 763-512-2300. 🌿



BROOKVIEW'S TREE-LINED FAIRWAYS OFFER RELAXING, CHALLENGING GOLF.

Recreation: Not Just For Kids And Elders

Adults need to express themselves, continue learning, and have some fun, even if, or perhaps especially because, there don't seem to be enough hours in a day. Whether you're up for something new or know what you like, it's possible to widen your horizons close to home. Golden Valley's Park and Recreation Department offers a variety of classes and activities to suit a multitude of interests.

LOOSEN UP

Join the estimated 20 million Americans who practice *Yoga* and take a gentle, non-religious eight-week class to stretch, strengthen, and balance the body. The newer *Pilates-Inspired Workout* strengthens and lengthens muscles, relaxes joints, and builds better posture. A combined *Yoga and Pilates* class develops strength, flexibility, and balance. For those who know the drill, *Power Yoga and Pilates* will take you right through postures and exercises while using light weights.



DANCE

Want to shake your booty? Belly dancing is not only beautiful, it strengthens and stretches muscles in a low-impact workout. No experience is necessary for *Beginning Belly Dancing*. Once the basics are down, try an intermediate level and then the *Sword Technique* class. If it's really the band wagon you want to hop on, consider *Swing and Social Ballroom Dancing* and learn the Fox Trot, Waltz, Polka, Latin, Swing, and the Hustle. If you're looking to kick it up, *Line Dancing* is fast-moving, easy to learn, and great exercise.



GET CRAFTY

Organize your photos in a three-hour power class, then advance to *Simple Scrapbooking* for a fast, step-by-step method, or *Big Picture Scrapbooking* to lay out 150 to 200 photos in 30 pages.

A *knitting class* can get you started, or reacquainted with, a variety of basic skills, including purling and changing colors. After six weeks, knit scarves with confidence and tackle patterns for simple hats and sweaters.



SPEND SOME ME TIME

Stop to smell the flowers for an hour and walk away with test bottles in *What Are Flower Essences* class. Or, identify ways to maximize your personal potential in the *Personality/Behavior Style Workshop*. The *Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT)* class demonstrates techniques to help eliminate undesirable feelings, fears, phobias, anger, pain, cravings, etc.

If practicality rules, *Self-Defense for Women* teaches quick responses for "no win" situations, what to say or do when confronted by a threatening stranger, easy maneuvers to get out of a hold, and how to be confident while taking control of the situation.

EXPLORE YOUR OPTIONS

For details on these and other Golden Valley Park and Recreation offerings, read the City's seasonal Park and Recreation Activities brochure, visit the City Web site (www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us), or call Park and Rec at 763-512-2345.

RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Check out the City's Winter Recreation Activities brochure (online at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us) for a complete list of activities.

BROOKVIEW COMMUNITY CENTER

Kids Club (ages 3–5)—Mon/Wed, Feb 27–Apr 5 or Tue/Thu, Feb 28–Apr 6, 9:30–11 am, \$34

Power Yoga & Pilates—Thur, Feb 23–Mar 30, 6:35–8 pm, \$60

Yoga—Tues, Feb 7–Apr 4, 11 am–noon, \$58.50

Line Dancing—Wed, Feb 8–Mar 29, 6:30–8 pm, \$58.50

What Are Flower Essences?—Tue, Feb 22, \$16

Simple Scrapbooking—Wed, Feb 22, \$15

DAVIS COMMUNITY CENTER

Family Gym Time—Sun, 1–3 pm, through Mar 26

Shoot Some Buckets (ages 7+)—Fri, 6–8 pm, through Mar 31, or Sun, 3–5 pm, through Mar 26

Cheer America (ages 4–16)—Tues, Feb 14–May 2, \$4 enrollment fee, \$6 per night

Teen Open Gym—Sat, 10–11:30 am, through Mar 25

Pilates—Mon, 6:30–7:30 pm, Feb 6–Mar 27, \$52

Co-Rec Volleyball—Tue and Thu, 8–10 pm; Sun, 3–5 pm

Over 40 Basketball—Mon, 8–10 pm

Adult Open Basketball—Wed, 8–10 pm; Sat, 8–10 am

Register in person, by mail, by fax (763-512-2344), or online (www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us).

For more information, contact:

**Park & Recreation
Brookview Community Center
200 Brookview Parkway
Golden Valley, MN 55426
763-512-2345
Monday–Friday, 8 am–5 pm**

WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE?

A LOOK AT HOME IMPROVEMENT PROFESSIONALS

Everyone considering a home improvement project faces a multitude of fundamental questions. "Do I do this myself?" "How can I get the best work and materials possible at the best price?" "Who can I trust?" Since many people consider their home their largest financial investment, these are wise questions. According to home improvement experts, including Golden Valley's City Inspections Department, the more time homeowners spend preparing, planning, and if desired, hiring the right professionals, the fewer problems there are likely to be.

HOME IMPROVEMENT ROUTES

When it comes to hiring home improvement professionals, there are endless combinations to consider. Perhaps you want to hire someone to draw up project plans so you can do the actual construction work yourself. Or, maybe you want to be your own general contractor and hire the designer and all the construction subcontractors. Or, could be you'd like to work with one professional who can handle everything for you from start to finish.

In the traditional design/bid/build process, the owner supplies the design alone or in collaboration with an architect, designer, etc to those who can complete the necessary work (often called contractors, such as roofers, foundation layers, painters, etc). Advocates of this method cite owner control over a design that incorporates their personal needs and goals. And design professionals, particularly architects, understand the biggest possible picture, including the pros and cons of various approaches, the types of professionals needed to do the job, and what permits will be required.

In the newer design/build process, a design/build contractor (similar to a general contractor) is responsible for the designing and building the project, carrying the job from concept to completion. Advocates of this approach cite that the single point of responsibility for quality, cost, and schedule adherence allow the owner to focus on defining necessities and needs and make timely decisions, rather than on coordinating the designer and builder. Construction costs are often known far earlier than in the design-bid-build method and, since design and construction often overlap, total design and construction time can be reduced. By choosing the design/build option, homeowners put the choosing and hiring of all the subcontractors (when necessary) in the hands of the design/build.

Whatever path you decide to take, this article is intended as an introduction to the home improvement specialists available for hire. Fees are listed if available. If not, assume the professional would bid or estimate the project. (For information on permits and inspections and tips on hiring home remodeling professionals, see page 14).

RESIDENTIAL DESIGNERS (RESIDENTIAL PLANNER)

Residential designers most often have two years of vocational training to enable them to design interiors that make the space efficient, and they tend to focus on the floor plans. They do a detailed lifestyle evaluation and design functionality. Homeowners often consult Residential Designers (sometimes called interior specialists) to critique floor plans for a specific area of the home, such as a bathroom or kitchen. Residential designers may offer advice on trends and products, so their services can overlap with those of an interior designer. A residential designer is sometimes described as a creative draftsman (see box at far right), capable of making some minor design decisions.



GENERAL CONTRACTORS

A general contractor (GC) orchestrates your project to the degree you agree upon in the final contract. The GC contracts to construct and coordinate a project that will require several subcontractors (carpenters, plumbers, painters, roofers, electricians, etc). While no specific education is required, GCs must be licensed in Minnesota. Many general contractors focus on plans provided by other professionals, such as architects, designers, and draftspersons, and offer little or no design services. A general contractor is usually responsible for supplying all material, labor, equipment, and services necessary for the project.

It's a good idea to ask at least three contractors to estimate the costs of your project. Make sure that the bids contain all the details of the work, the types of the materials that will be used, and the total cost of the project.

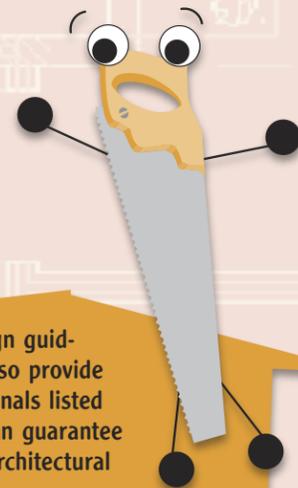


ARCHITECTS

Historically, the architect has been the coordinator of all other building disciplines. Today's architects are licensed professionals who design houses, office buildings, skyscrapers, landscapes, and even entire cities (choose one that specializes in houses). They have college degrees, a state license, and have served lengthy internships.

Architects help identify the scope of the project, provide design guidance, draw plans, and list material specifications. They may also provide project management and work closely with the other professionals listed here. As part of the design/bid/build process, the architect can guarantee the drawings and specifications are complete and error-free. Architectural services can include site inspections during construction.

Fees for a licensed architect vary, depending on the project, but may range from 10% to 15% of the total construction costs, depending on services rendered.



HOME DESIGNERS

Home designers are not licensed or regulated in Minnesota and are not legally required to pass exams or receive special licenses. Professional Building Designers, or Home Designers, specialize in specific projects, such as additions. A designer with a "Certified Professional Building Designer" (CPBD) title has completed specific training courses, practiced building design for at least six years, and passed a certification exam.

To assure the service and quality you need, verify designers' experience and professionalism by reviewing their portfolios, specifically design degrees from accredited universities and colleges and memberships/certifications from professional organizations.

Fees for a designer vary widely and may range from 3% to 6% of the total construction cost.



STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS

Structural engineers are experts in the behavior and design of structures. They have four-year degrees, and often graduate credits, and they apply mathematical and physical sciences concepts to building structure and related health, safety, and welfare issues.

Whether or not you hire an architect or designer (the architect could hire this professional), consulting a structural engineer may be required if you want to move a bearing wall or change any major structural element of your home. This professional will provide the required stamped drawings, along with architectural drawings, to the City Inspections Department. A structural engineer can also inspect your foundation.



DRAFTSPERSONS

Draftspersons generally have two-year associate's degrees, though some have four-year degrees. They work in Computer Aided Drafting and Design (CADD) software to prepare the necessary technical renderings of looser drawings provided by designers, architects, or even the homeowner. Many are employed by architectural or engineering firms and can be knowledgeable about local zoning and building codes.

When you have a good idea of the floor plan you want, this professional can be useful for drawing plans before you discuss your ideas with the general contractors chosen to bid on the project.



CHECKING CREDENTIALS

Before hiring any home improvement professional, be sure to verify their professional licenses, certifications, and associations. These resources will help.

- Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (DLI): www.doli.state.mn.us
- Minnesota Board of Architecture, Engineering, Land Surveying, Landscape Architecture, Geoscience, and Interior Design (AELSLAGID): www.aelslagid.state.mn.us
- American Builders Association of Minnesota: www.bamn.org
- American Institute of Architects—Minnesota Chapter: www.aia-mn.org/chapters/minneapolis.cfm
- American Institute of Building Design (AIBD): www.aibd.org
- National Council of Building Design Certification (NCBDC): www.ncbdc.com
- National Association of Remodeling Industry (NARI): www.narimn.org

ALARM SYSTEM CHECKLIST

When shopping for a burglar alarm system, use the following checklist to evaluate the equipment you are considering as well as the dealer.

THE BUSINESS

- Is it local?
- Does it have a state license?
- Does it offer 24 hour service?
- Will the business work with your insurance company for reduced rates?
- Is there a warranty?
- Is there a service contract?
- If the system is monitored by a central station, is it a person or tape recording?
- If you are out of town, or if the system is for a commercial premise, will the company have someone respond to the location to assist the police?
- Are there complaints on file with the Better Business Bureau (651-699-1111)?

EQUIPMENT

- Do you have pets that roam your house freely? If so, you may want to avoid motion detectors.
- Is the system electrically or battery operated?
- If electrically operated, does it switch automatically to battery power without activating (in the event of a power failure)?
- If activated, will it automatically shut itself off, and will it reset for another attack?
- If the control box is exposed, will it activate if tampered with?
- Are all wires protected from the elements and rodents?
- Does the system have a time delay to allow deactivation without false alarms?
- Is the system approved by Underwriters Laboratory (UL)?

Burglar Alarms: Understanding The Basics

Burglar alarms are standard in stores and other businesses, and they're becoming more common in private homes. A variety of options are available, ranging from \$10 do-it-yourself kits to sophisticated whole-house networks that must be installed by professionals; however, most alarm systems are actually built around the same design concepts. This article will help you understand the basics.

ELECTRIC CIRCUITS

Other than the family dog, the most basic burglar alarm is a simple electric circuit built into an entry way or window. In any circuit, electricity only flows when you give it a path between two points of opposite charge. In closed-circuit alarm systems, electricity can flow as long as the door is closed. Opening the door opens the circuit and interrupts the flow of electricity. This triggers an alarm. The opposite is true in an open-circuit system, where opening the door closes the circuit and causes electricity to flow, thereby triggering the alarm. Closed circuits are generally a better choice because an intruder can deactivate the open circuit by simply cutting the connected wires.

To increase the system's effectiveness, most modern burglar alarms incorporate another piece into the circuit—the control box.



CONTROL BOXES

The control box hooks up to one or more alarm circuits but also has its own power supply. It monitors the circuits and sounds the alarm when they are closed or opened (depending on the design). Once an alarm is triggered, the control box won't cut it off until someone enters a security code at a connected keypad. For added security, the control box is usually placed in an out-of-the-way spot so an intruder can't find it and attempt to destroy it. In most security systems, the control box will not sound the alarm immediately when the motion detectors are triggered. There is a short delay to give the homeowner time to enter a security code that turns the system off. If the security code is not entered, the control box will activate various alarms.

While circuit alarms work well for guarding the perimeter of a house, they're not as effective inside a building. That's because it's hard to predict what intruders will do. If you don't know where they'll go or what they'll touch, a specific "trigger" isn't always going to work. To detect an intruder who's already in the house, you need a motion detector.

MOTION DETECTORS

Basic motion detectors are fairly common. Many businesses use photo-sensor motion detectors that sound a chime or bell when somebody enters the building. These detectors aim a beam of light at a light sensor across a passageway. When somebody walks between the light source and the sensor, the path of the beam is blocked briefly, causing the sensor to send a signal to the control box. In a home security system, this would trigger the alarm.

More advanced security systems include passive infrared (PIR) motion detectors that "see" the energy emitted by an intruder's body heat. When an intruder walks into the detector's field of view, the sensor detects a sharp increase in infrared energy. Of course, PIR detectors are designed to trigger the alarm only when infrared energy levels change very rapidly.

If you have questions about burglar alarms or crime prevention issues, contact the Golden Valley Crime Prevention Unit at 763-593-8058.

Smoke Alarms Protect Your Home From Fire

By providing an early warning signal, smoke alarms are the single most important means of preventing death or injury in a fire. When properly installed on every level of the home, and when properly maintained, they can provide extra security for homeowners. Home improvement and maintenance projects both offer opportunities to evaluate your home's smoke alarm configuration and consider upgrades or changes. Use this basic information about smoke alarms to help make your decisions.

Types Of SMOKE ALARMS

Battery-powered smoke alarms are stand-alone units that always need batteries to operate. They are easy to install and maintain—you just need to remember to change the batteries twice a year when you change your clocks for daylight savings time.

AC-powered smoke alarms are wired into your home's electrical system and can intercommunicate. This means that if one alarm in the house goes off, they all go off. So, even if the fire starts and is detected in the basement, people asleep upstairs will hear the alarm because all alarms sound simultaneously. The alarms include battery back-ups in case of power outages, so you still must remember to change the batteries twice a year. If your home was built in the last 10 years, chances are you have AC-powered smoke alarms.

Most smoke alarms install easily with a screwdriver, and some brands can be stuck to a wall or ceiling with self-adhesive. AC-powered smoke alarms must be installed by an electrician, and most can handle about a dozen units intercommunicating on the same wire.

SMOKE ALARM TECHNOLOGY

Smoke alarms use two basic types of technology, photoelectric and ionization, to detect smoke and sound the alarm.

Photoelectric smoke alarms are triggered when smoke enters the chamber and scatters the light particles, which activates a sensor. Because it takes a lot of smoke to completely block out the light and make the alarm go off, photoelectric alarms are better at sensing smoky fires, such as a smoldering mattress.

Ionization smoke alarms are triggered when smoke particles enter the chamber, attach to the ions, and neutralize them. The smoke detector senses the drop in current between the plates in the alarm chamber and sets off the horn. This type of smoke detector is more common because it is inexpensive and better at detecting the smaller amounts of smoke produced by flaming fires.

SMOKE ALARM PLACEMENT

The Golden Valley Fire Department recommends people install at least one smoke alarm on every floor of their home (don't forget the basement) and both outside and inside each sleeping area. Smoke alarms should be mounted high on ceilings or walls because smoke rises. Ceiling-mounted smoke alarms should be at least six inches away from the nearest wall, while wall-mounted alarms should be four to 12 inches away from the ceiling and at least six inches from the corner.

If you have questions about smoke alarms or fire prevention, contact Fire Education Specialist Sarah Larson at 763-593-3977. 

FALSE ALARMS ARE COSTLY

False alarms can be costly to both the community and to individuals. To fairly distribute the costs of handling false alarms, the Golden Valley City Council established a reporting system and user fees for repeat offenders.

When public safety personnel respond to repeated alarms when there is no safety threat or situation that requires response,

costs add up for both personnel and equipment. Such false alarms often occur when an alarm system is inadvertently activated by building occupants or through mechanical failure, alarm malfunction, or improper installation. False alarms do not include alarms caused by climatic conditions such as tornadoes, thunderstorms, utility line mishaps, violent conditions of nature, or other conditions that are clearly beyond the control of the alarm manufacturer, installer, or owner.

When individuals experience numerous false alarms, the costs to them add up quickly. If the City responds to more than three false alarms

a year, the property owner receives a notice detailing the user fees for future violations (see below).

ALARM FEES

- 1–3 false alarms: no charge
- 4–10 false alarms (upon notice given): \$75
- 11–15 false alarms (upon notice given): \$125
- 16 or more false alarms (upon notice given): \$175

If you have questions about Golden Valley's false alarm ordinance, contact Public Safety at 763-593-8079. 

Alarmed AND ALERT

The Golden Valley Fire Department has received a grant from "Alarmed & Alert: The Minnesota Initiative to Prevent Residential Fire-Related Injuries" program. This federally funded grant, administered through the Minnesota Department of Health, is being used to supply Golden Valley citizens with smoke alarms and fire prevention education.

If you do not have a working smoke detector in every bedroom and on every level of your home, or if your existing smoke detectors are 10 years old, you may have smoke detectors installed in your home by a member of the Golden Valley Fire Department.

For more information on this FREE program, contact Fire Education Specialist Sarah Larson at 763-593-3977.

STOP INFLOW AND INFILTRATION

Inflow and infiltration (I/I), or the excess flowage of clear water into the City's sanitary sewer system, will start costing the City around \$300,000 annually next year if not corrected. At current I/I rates, the wastewater treatment system's capacity cannot meet projected needs.

Inflow is commonly traced to sump pumps (used by many home-owners to keep groundwater out of their basements) that are directed (cross-connected) to discharge into the City's sanitary sewer system. They are often connected via a hose leading from the sump to a laundry tub or a floor drain. Infiltration occurs when groundwater seeps into sanitary sewer pipes through cracks or joints.

To help eradicate the problem, homeowners must direct their sump pumps to drain into the City's storm sewer system through one of two methods:

- a direct connection (a pipe from the house to the main storm sewer line), if available
- directly onto the ground (preferably 20 feet from the house and not into a neighbor's yard)

If you have a cross connected sump pump and need information about correcting it, visit the City Web site at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/streets/sumppumps.htm or call Golden Valley Public Works at 763-593-8075.

Stanch Sewer Back-Ups

Sanitary sewers get no respect—that is, until there's a problem. Blocked sinks, overflowing toilets, and flooded basements are all unpleasant emergencies and expensive problems, but much can be done to help prevent their occurrence.

Golden Valley's Public Works Utilities Division regularly maintains 120 miles of sanitary sewer lines and related equipment. City crews clean about 40 miles of sanitary sewer every year, meaning the entire system is completely cleaned on a three-year rotation.

Preventing SEWER BACKUPS

Many residential sewer problems can be avoided by having your sewer line cleaned periodically and taking care about what goes into your sewer system. The following items are the most common cause of blocked sewers.

- **Grease and Oils** Store grease in a container, and dispose of hardened grease in the trash. Use the garbage disposal sparingly, and flush with plenty of water. When possible, put food scraps in the garbage or compost.
- **Paper Products** Put in the trash, not the toilet. These items do not dissolve.
- **Lint and Hair** Screen all drains and use a lint trap on your laundry hose. Accumulated lint and hair can clog the line.
- **Roots** Avoid planting trees or bushes over your sewer line. Roots seek water in dry years by breaking into the sewer's clay tile pipes, causing blockages.
- For safety's sake, never put **medicines or hazardous materials** down the drain. Dispose of them at a household hazardous materials site.

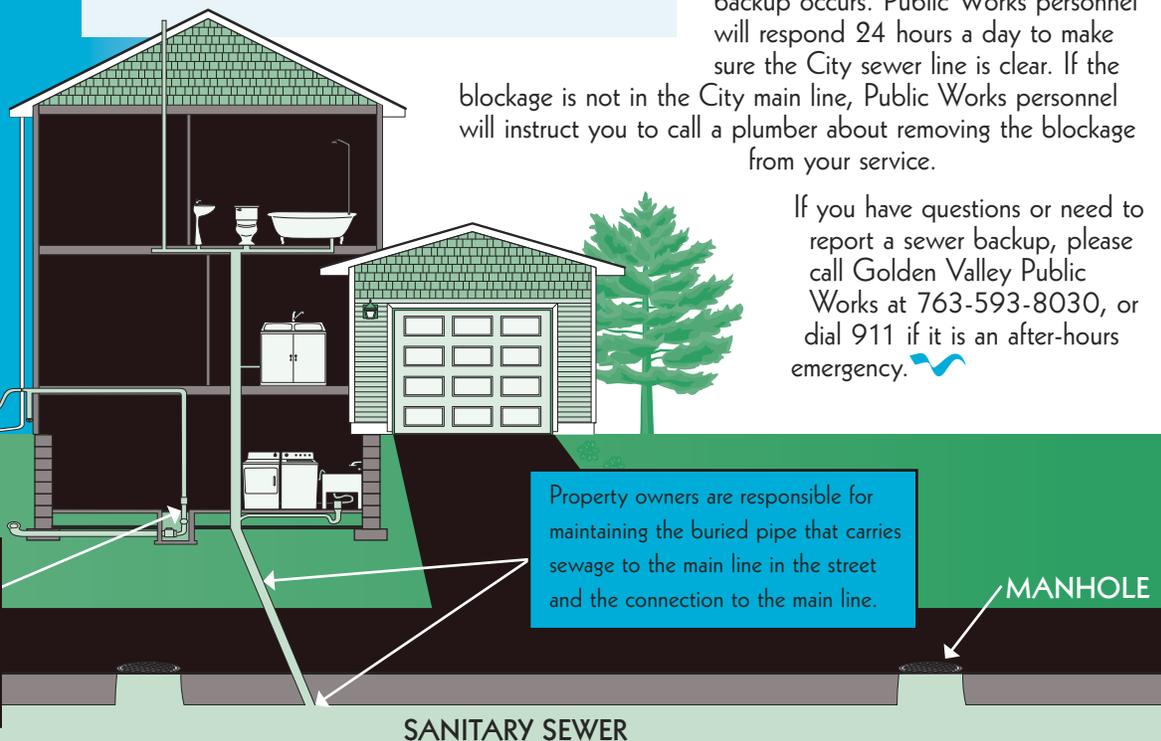
Meanwhile, property owners are responsible for maintaining their sanitary sewer service, which includes every drain and pipe in the house, the buried pipe that carries sewage to the main line in the street, and the connection to that main line (see illustration below). All property owners should know the location of their private sewer line (from the house to the street) and have it serviced regularly. They should also be aware of what causes sewer backups and take steps to avoid them (see box).

SEWER BACKUPS

If your sewer backs up only when a faucet is running or toilet is flushed, the blockage is probably in your sewer service. If your sewer backs up when there are no faucets running or toilets flushed, the blockage is probably in the City main.

In Golden Valley, only a small percentage of sewer backups are caused by problems in City lines. However, it's important to call the City whenever a backup occurs. Public Works personnel will respond 24 hours a day to make sure the City sewer line is clear. If the blockage is not in the City main line, Public Works personnel will instruct you to call a plumber about removing the blockage from your service.

If you have questions or need to report a sewer backup, please call Golden Valley Public Works at 763-593-8030, or dial 911 if it is an after-hours emergency.



Sump pumps must drain into the City's storm sewer system or directly onto the ground. They can never be connected to the sanitary sewer system.

Property owners are responsible for maintaining the buried pipe that carries sewage to the main line in the street and the connection to the main line.

MANHOLE

SANITARY SEWER

“Pay Now” Approach Keeps Streets On Track

When it comes to taking care of streets, pavement maintenance is really the key, says Tom Klatt, Golden Valley’s Public Works Maintenance Manager. Like other areas in life, it’s a pay now or pay later issue. Proper and timely preventive maintenance forestalls premature deterioration, depreciation, and expensive future repairs.

“Why do people change oil, rotate tires, and regularly service their automobiles,” asks Klatt. “Why do people paint and re-roof their homes and stain their decks? Because they are expensive to buy and people know they have to take care of them.”

Streets also deteriorate as they age, much like the roof and paint on your home. Pavement deterioration is caused by many factors, including the freeze/thaw cycle, traffic loading, the effects of moisture, and the quality of the soils beneath the street. By strictly adhering to a scheduled street maintenance program and making other repairs as needed, the City of Golden Valley protects its investment in streets and keeps residents safe.

Scheduled Maintenance

Sealcoating (hot oil and small rocks) protects the asphalt and restores the roadway to a consistent surface with added skid-resistance. It is the most common preventive maintenance and is done every seven or eight years. Every 20 to 25 years, streets are milled and overlaid with a new two-inch layer of asphalt, which reshapes them and eliminates any settling or flaws that developed over the years. The City schedules sealcoating and overlays on a different section



STREET SWEEPING

of streets each year. With proper maintenance, pavement replacement should be required after about 50 years.

Other annual street maintenance includes street sweeping, striping, and sign repair. Every spring crews sweep streets clean of sand and debris left from winter driving, and every fall, after the majority of leaves have fallen, crews again sweep all streets curb to curb. This keeps gutters and storm sewers clear and free of blockages and helps protect the waterways from pollution. Public Works crews also continuously repair street striping and road signs to enhance public safety and maintain community standards.

As-Needed Maintenance

Crews patch potholes as quickly as possible to prevent them from growing larger, compromising the street further, and damaging vehicles. Potholes are caused by the freeze/thaw cycle, and during pothole season (mid-February to sometime in April), crews repair these nuisances daily. Priority is given to heavily traveled roads, but all potholes are repaired as detected. Report dangerously large or deep potholes at 763-593-8081.

Expansion cracks in the pavement are also repaired as quickly as possible and sealed to prevent moisture from entering the pavement and reaching the base material. If left unrepaired, cracks become larger and can eventually cause an entire street to deteriorate to the point of needed costly patching or replacement.

Timely maintenance can be expensive, whether it’s on your car, your house, or your City street system. But when weighed against the alternative of even more costly repairs or replacement, regular maintenance is a bargain, and a responsibility. If you have questions about Golden Valley’s street maintenance program, call Public Works at 763-593-3981. 🌟



POTHOLE PATCHING

Traffic Sign Quiz ANSWERS

Below are the answers to the traffic signs quiz in the Nov/Dec 2005 CityNews.



1. WARNS OF THREE-WAY INTERSECTION



2. WARNS OF POTENTIAL SLIPPERY CONDITIONS



3. Yield Ahead



4. No U-TURNS



5. Bicycles Prohibited



6. Hospital



7. WARNS OF A NEARBY PLAYGROUND



8. WARNS OF A DIVIDE IN THE ROAD



9. DEER CROSSING



10. WARNS OF MERGING TRAFFIC



11. PEDESTRIAN CROSSING



12. WARNS OF A TURN IN THE ROAD



13. No RIGHT TURN



14. No Parking



15. WARNS OF A School Crossing



16. WARNS OF A 12-foot six-inch CLEARANCE



17. WARNS OF A TRANSITION TO TWO-WAY TRAFFIC



18. ENVIRONMENTAL Study Area



19. WARNS OF AN added LANE



20. WARNS OF A Traffic Circle

HIRING HOME IMPROVEMENT PROFESSIONALS

Before hiring any professional, it's a good idea to get a clear picture of the project and its goals and then get referrals from as many people as possible.

Regardless of their stated trade, general rules apply to all professional tradespeople. Be wary of anyone who:

- arrives in an unmarked van or truck or shows up unsolicited
- is willing to do the job for an extremely low price or who requires full or substantial payment before work begins
- refuses to provide a written estimate and a written contract
- refuses to provide a Minnesota Department of Commerce license number or references
- uses high-pressure sales tactics
- asks you to obtain the required permits

After you've gathered the names of several professionals in each field, be sure to:

- ask how long they have been providing their specific services
- discuss your ideas, then inquire about other similar jobs they have completed and review their plans
- ask for references, and follow through with a phone call to ask about the experience and how well the work matched their expectations
- verify insurance
- check their training and/or education along with professional associations and designation
- get a written bid and ask about payment options
- ask for a written contract, complete with a job checklist (the items you agreed upon would be included)
- keep records

The best place to start checking out a contractor is the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (MNDLI). The MNDLI Web site (<http://search.state.mn.us/doli/query.html>) provides resources for confirming license status and searching for or lodging formal complaints. ~

Permits And Inspections Ensure Community Safety

Building permits and inspections ensure that construction in Golden Valley meets local, state, and federal building standards and codes. The permit process provides a way for City building officials and inspectors to review the design and inspect construction to make sure minimum standards are met and appropriate materials are used. When a property does not comply with building codes, its value decreases. Building permits provide a way for cities to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the community and property occupants and for property owners to ensure their investment is protected.

Building permits are required for all construction and home improvement projects, whether the work is completed by you or a contractor. This includes, but is not limited to, new buildings or demolitions; remodeling, repairs, or additions; garages, swimming pools, sheds, decks, fences (more than six feet high), or porches; and re-siding, re-roofing, drain tile, and electrical revisions.



INSPECTIONS ARE NECESSARY TO AVOID CONDITIONS THAT RESULT FROM UNSAFE CONSTRUCTION METHODS.

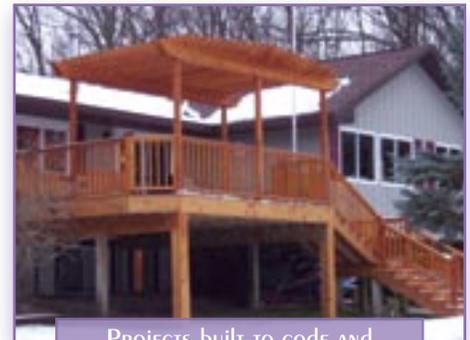
COMMON INSPECTION ISSUES

In 2005 the City issued 33 new house permits, four pool permits, two pool demolition permits, 590 remodeling permits, and 168 addition permits. When dealing with that many projects, inspectors often see issues that should be resolved before the project begins. Golden Valley Building Inspector Jerry Frevel outlines three of the most common.

"First, homeowners need to be sure that projects meets zoning [setback] requirements," says Frevel. "Residents may own the property, but that doesn't mean they can build right up to the edge of it." The setback is a leeway area to provide open space between residences. There are also utility easements along property lines (to provide space for relocation and maintenance of power lines, sewer and water pipes, and cable and phone lines) that cannot be built over.

The second issue concerns energy calculations. "While homeowners may want a wall of windows," Frevel explains, "energy calculations can limit the amount windows installed if the same system that heats the main structure is used."

Frevel says the third issue is lack of information about the foundation. "All foundations have to include vertical re-enforcing from the table provided in the building code or from an engineer."



PROJECTS BUILT TO CODE AND PROPERLY INSPECTED ARE AN ASSET TO BOTH THE PROPERTY AND COMMUNITY.

START WITH THE CITY

For all home improvement projects, call the City first to get information about City Code requirements. The Inspections Department (763-593-8090) also has handouts to explain general requirements for building projects. For basic information about hiring home remodeling professionals see the sidebar on this page or the article on pages 8-9.

For additional information, visit the free *Home Remodeling Fair* set for February 26 (see page 16 for details) City staff will be on hand to answer questions and discuss specific projects. ~

Maintenance Standards Strengthen Community

“Keeping up with the Joneses” is an old saying which, according to *Wikipedia*, refers to the “desire to be seen as good as one’s neighbors or contemporaries.” When applied to property maintenance issues, this phrase (made popular by a 1913 comic strip in which the Joneses never actually appeared) may be a key component in community relations.

Because the City of Golden Valley recognizes that maintenance is one of many factors that keep a community functional and alive, the City Council continues to pursue ways to proactively maintain the vitality and integrity of its housing stock (see *Home Remodeling Fair* article on page 16). One way to do this is to ensure minimum exterior standards through a property maintenance code.

Why A PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE?

The goal of a property maintenance code is to ensure that Golden Valley’s housing stock stays in good condition and all residents can enjoy a high-quality place to live.

In February 2005, the Golden Valley City Council adopted property maintenance standards for multi-family dwellings. Now it is looking to do the same for single-family homes and duplexes.

Considering that property maintenance can be a highly personal issue, enforcing property maintenance standards is a demanding and delicate job for local government. In the past the City has approached such issues on a complaint basis, receiving an average of 40 complaints a month. Because of deteriorating and aging housing exteriors (see box), property maintenance complaints are expected to escalate in the future. That’s why the City wants to be more proactive in addressing common issues before they become common complaints.

The City plans a proactive enforcement approach on property maintenance issues that will involve community education about the new maintenance standards, advice to assist homeowners, and penalties for property owners who fail to respond. Watch the City Web site and upcoming issues of *CityNews* for lists of common property maintenance issues and ordinances that deal with property maintenance.

A Look Ahead

Currently, a number of City ordinances address property issues such as lawn maintenance, driveways, fences, and outdoor storage. Throughout 2006, the

City Council will look at creating standards to help determine when exterior structures need maintenance and repairs, such as exterior walls, roofs, and windows. The Council will also consider updating existing ordinances that deal with common property maintenance issues and adopting other ordinances to address community concerns such as wood-piles and graffiti.

For more information about property maintenance in Golden Valley, contact the City Property Maintenance Inspector at 763-593-8074.

Community Reality Check

The need for property maintenance standards becomes apparent in light of two community facts:

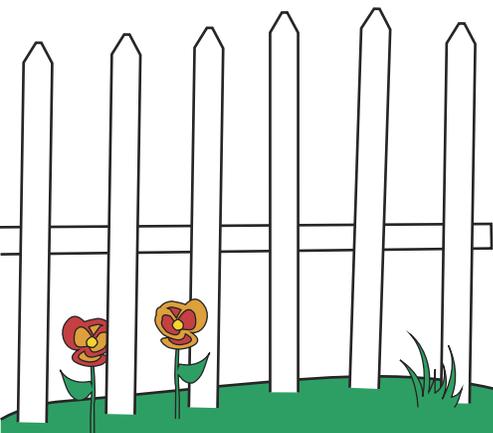
- most residences are in close proximity to each other
- 78% of Golden Valley’s homes were built before 1970

MAINTAINING YOUR HOME

Regular maintenance is not only a great way to keep your home in shape, it also shows your pride in the community. The following spring home maintenance tips were provided by organizers of the annual *Home Remodeling Fair* (see page 16).

When the weather turns warm, check and repair, if needed:

- foundation walls, floors, concrete, and masonry (including chimneys) for loose, deteriorating, or missing mortar
- grading for proper slope away from foundation. Build up soil where needed.
- all wood surfaces—especially at soil level—for weathering, peeling paint, or dry rot
- deck, patio, porch, and exterior stairs and railings for deterioration
- roofs for missing, loose, or damaged shingles, open seams, blisters, or bald areas; flashing around all surface projections and sidewalls; antenna supports for possible leak sources; fascia and soffits for deterioration and damage; roof louvers for damage and plugging (bird nests, etc); gutters and downspouts for debris and leaks. (If ice dams were a problem last winter, have your attic properly insulated and ventilated.)
- windows for loose and missing glazing putty or deteriorating weather-stripping and caulking. (Once windows can be opened, do interior painting, varnishing, or other projects where odor can be a problem.)
- screens for tears and windows for cracks. Replace broken sash ropes or hold-open devices.
- basement and crawl space for moisture or leaking water. Take care of all moisture problems.
- home’s cooling system before hot weather arrives
- slow drains or sewer back-ups (see article on page 12)
- smoke detectors when you change the clocks ahead (see article on page 11)
- door and window hardware. Replace as needed.





HOME REMODELING FAIR

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26

10:30 AM-3:30 PM

EISENHOWER COMMUNITY CENTER

1001 HIGHWAY 7, HOPKINS

WWW.HOMEREMODELINGFAIR.COM

SEMINARS & DEMONSTRATIONS

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Free Home Remodeling Fair Is February 26

A free Home Remodeling Fair featuring nearly 80 exhibitors, 19 seminars, and an "Ask the Pro" booth will be held Sunday, February 26, from 10:30 am-3:30 pm at Eisenhower Community Center, 1001 Hwy 7, Hopkins (one mile west of Hwys 7 and 169). Parking is available at the Community Center, and free shuttle service is available from the parking lot at Oak Ridge Country Club, (two blocks north of Hwy 7 on 5th Ave/Oak Ridge Rd).

Exhibitors include remodeling contractors, architects, landscapers, designers, electricians, roofers, siding and window contractors, lenders, city inspectors, and more. There will be free seminars and demonstrations for the do-it-yourselfer (see box at left). Architects and interior designers at the "Ask the Pro" booth will provide free, no-obligation advice—bring your photos, sketches, and questions. Food concessions will be available in the cafeteria.

This is the 14th year the Home Remodeling Fair has been organized by several western suburbs to promote improvements to their housing stock. Sponsors are the Cities of Golden Valley, St Louis Park, Hopkins, and Minnetonka and St Louis Park, Hopkins, and Minnetonka Community Education. Co-sponsors are Boyer Building, Bremen Builders, CEE Financial Resources, DreamMaker Bath & Kitchen, Excellence in Remodeling, Heritage Builders, John Orfield Construction, Neighborhood Building and Remodeling, Plekkenpol Builders, Renewal By Andersen, V2K Window Decor & More, and Welcome Additions.

For more information, go to www.homeremodelingfair.com or contact Golden Valley Planning Director Mark Grimes at 763-593-8097.

City of
Golden Valley

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