

Golden Valley

CityNEWS

Everyone's Talkin' Trash, And So Will GV

Trash talk is in the air. In the past few months, metro area waste collection practices have been the subject of several *Star Tribune* news articles. At the Jan 5 Golden Valley City Council meeting, five Golden Valley sixth graders presented a skit based on their research of Twin Cities waste collection practices as part of the Robbinsdale Area School District's Lego League (see photo). And in 2010, the City of Golden Valley will study waste collection and recycling to see if there are ways to provide more services to residents at a reduced cost.

The driving force behind the Golden Valley study is the simple fact that the City can no longer sustain the cost of its recycling program (which includes weekly curbside pick-up as well as an annual curbside brush pick-up, leaf drop-off, and clean-up day) without raising rates for residents. The City avoided a rate increase this year because of a good market for recyclables early last year, but that may not be the case for 2010.

The City Council has directed staff to gather research on the subject and provide it to the Environmental Commission, a group of citizens who advise the Council on environmental issues and their impact on the community. Staff will also prepare a plan for sharing the information with residents and taking community input. Based on the research and community input, the Environmental Commission will recommend solutions to the Council and community by the fall of 2010.

The Lego League experience mirrors this approach to problem-solving as it works to prepare our younger citizens for the roles and responsibilities they'll face as adults. The program encourages kids to think about problems in our world, do the research, look for an innovative solution, and present the information to peers.

To stay abreast of Golden Valley's waste collection study, join the Talkin' Trash email listserve notification service at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/gvdirect-connect/index.html.



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: AMELIA HEUSINKVELD, BEN GALLUP, JESSE SPAULDING, GARRETT WILLIAMS, AND ISAAC GRIFFIN-WIESNER.

State of the City Is March 19

The Golden Valley City Council will present its 2010 State of the City Community Update Tuesday, Mar 16, at 6:30 pm and Friday, Mar 19, at 7:30 am in the City Hall Council Chambers. All members of the community are invited to attend.

The video report 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. For more information, contact Communications Coordinator Cheryl Weiler at 763-593-8004.

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New Market Values Will Be Mailed In March

Each year the City of Golden Valley begins another round of property assessments to establish valuations for the next year's property tax statements. The City uses its portion of collected property taxes to fund services such as police and fire protection, street and park maintenance, government administration, inspections, and recreation programming for all ages.



STEPS TO APPEAL

If you disagree with the City's value assessment of your property, follow these steps for appeal (as established by Hennepin County):

Step 1: Talk to your assessor. Call the number listed on the valuation notice you receive in mid-March and discuss your concerns and sales information. If you can't resolve the problem, move to step two.

Step 2: Attend the Board of Appeal and Equalization (Open Book style) meeting April 27, 4–6 pm, at City Hall. Appeal in person, by letter, or by designated representative. Tell assessors ahead of time you will be attending the meeting so they can bring the appropriate information. If the problem is not resolved, move to step three.

Step 3: Attend the County Board of Appeal and Equalization, which meets in June. Appeal in person, by letter, or by designated representative. ✓

Establishing property values requires careful valuation of every house and a scientific knowledge of the overall housing market year by year. There are four major steps to establishing accurate assessments:

1. About every fifth year an appraiser views your property, inside and out.
2. The appraiser gathers information on property characteristics that affect market value, such as size, age, quality, and accessory structures.
3. An assessor analyzes actual sales of property in the city, reviewing last year's open market sales to determine the sale price of similar properties.
4. The property characteristics are entered into a computer appraisal system, and information is updated to reflect market trends and the value of each property.

The City of Golden Valley contracts with professionals from Hennepin County to appraise the market value of your home.

The market value estimated by the assessor should be very close to the amount the property would sell for if placed on the open market. (State law defines the market value of a house as "the usual selling price at the time of assessment.") The value and classification of real estate must be established by Jan 2 every year.

The Jan 2 assessment establishes the basis for the following year's property tax. For example, the value and classification on Jan 2, 2009, is used to calculate the tax payable in 2010. Hennepin County then mails property valuation notices in March. You may appeal if you disagree about the assessed value of your home (see box at left).

The County mails Truth in Taxation notices in November and property tax statements in March (see box below).

For more information, contact the Hennepin County Assessor's Office at 612-348-3046, or visit the Hennepin County Web site at www.co.hennepin.mn.us, click on the "Environment, Property, and Transportation" link, then click on the "Property" link. ✓

from Assessment to Taxation

A 3-Part Process, 2-Year Cycle

Year One



Hennepin County assesses property values as of Jan 2 and mails valuation notices in late February or early March.



Truth in Taxation notices are then compiled and mailed in November.

Year Two



In March, the County mails Property Tax Statements based on the prior year's assessments.

Run The Valley For A Stronger Community

Strong communities have committed neighbors who go the extra mile to help one another out in times of need.

Plan now to join friends and neighbors April 10 for one of Golden Valley's most popular events, the annual *Run the Valley*, sponsored by the Golden Valley Human Services Foundation.

This 10K race and 5K run and walk, now in its 16th year, raises funds for organizations that benefit the community (see sidebar). In 2009, the event drew 500 participants and raised \$15,357.

The certified course runs through residential Golden Valley—water stops and post-race complimentary snacks are provided. Participants will also receive a long-sleeve T-shirt.

When: Saturday, April 10, 8:30 am for 5K run, 8:40 am for the 10K run, and 8:45 am for the 5K walk

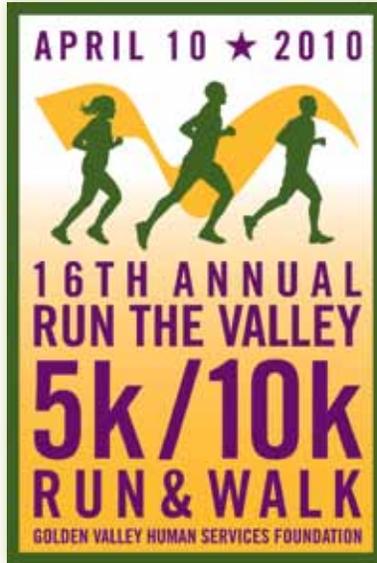
Where: Start and finish near the Davis Community Center parking lot at Meadowbrook Elementary (one block west of Hwy 100 at the intersection of Glenwood and Xenia Aves)

How To Register: Online at www.active.com through April 7. By April 8, in person or by mail with check, cash, or Visa/MasterCard to 200 Brookview Parkway, 55426; by phone (763-512-2345); or by fax (763-512-2344). In person, April 8 from 8 am–7 pm and April 9 from 8:15 am–3 pm at Brookview Community Center, 200 Brookview Parkway. On race day, from 7:15–8 am at Davis Community Center.

Cost: Entry fee is \$20 before March 1, \$25 March 1–April 8, and \$35 on race day.

Last year's corporate sponsors were the Golden Valley Rotary, Liberty Diversified Industries, Lupient Enterprises, and Cable 12. Sponsors included Al's Coffee, BNC Bank, Byerly's Golden Valley, City of Golden Valley, Einstein Bagels, Go Health Chiropractic, Great Glacier Water, Old Fashioned Donut Shoppe, Perkins Family Restaurants, Valley Pastries, and Yoplait USA.

For more information, visit www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/community/runvalley.htm, or call Park and Recreation at 763-512-2345.



T-SHIRT DESIGN Winner

Each year the Golden Valley Human Services Foundation looks for colorful, eye-catching, and original graphic design entries for the annual *Run The Valley* 5K/10K Walk/Run T-shirt design contest. Every *Run the Valley* participant gets a T-shirt to commemorate the event. The design is changed annually and the process is open to the community.

This year's T-shirt design contest winner is Golden Valley resident Eric Lichtenberg (see design above).

The winning design is selected by consensus of GVHSF members. The winning designer(s) are awarded 10 T-shirts and acknowledged in *Golden Valley CityNews* and the *Sun-Post* newspaper. GVHSF will have sole ownership of the winning design and the right to reuse it when desired.

If you're already thinking about next year's contest, you can find guidelines on the City Web site.

GVHSF Benefits Community



Since 1992, the Golden Valley Human Services Foundation (GVHSF) has worked to support 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 fundraisers, such as April's *Run the Valley*, July's *Golden Valley Golf Classic* and November's *Taste of Golden Valley*. Since the GVHSF's inception, \$1,057,000 has been allocated to agencies.

For 2010, the GVHSF allocated \$40,500 to nine local human service organizations: Community Mediation Program (\$1,500), Crisis Connection (\$1,500), Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery (\$7,500), Home Free (\$2,500), Northwest Suburban Dinner at Your Door (\$5,000), PRISM (\$5,000), Senior Community Services HOME Program (\$5,000), Senior Community Services Outreach (\$2,500), Tree House (\$5,000), and YMCA (\$5,000).

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 763-512-2345.

In the mail: Updated Recyclopedia

If you're interested in using fewer toxic substances, preserving natural resources, and reducing waste in general, help is here. In 2009, all postal customers in western Hennepin County received an updated *Recyclopedia*, a waste reduction guide on "how to reduce, reuse, recycle, and dispose of all kinds of stuff." The first *Recyclopedia* was published in 1995.

The *Recyclopedia* is a 32-page alphabetical guide with numerous listings, sorted by material, on how and where to reduce waste, reuse resources, recycle more, and dispose of materials safely. The 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, more than 109,000 tons of hazardous materials were recycled in Minnesota.

Many people believe the primary reason for recycling is related to the capacity of our landfills. Each person in the United States makes about 4.5 pounds of trash a day, or about 1,642 pounds a year, and most of this trash goes into landfills. We can cut these numbers dramatically by practicing the "Three Rs" (reduce, recycle, and reuse). For example, right now we recycle about 40% of our waste—about 2 million tons—that could have ended up in landfills.

Reducing trash flow to landfills, however, may not be the greatest benefit of recycling. Economic analysts believe the greatest benefit is how recycling conserves energy and natural resources and prevents pollution in manufacturing (Wall Street Journal, January 1995).

A resource similar to the *Recyclopedia* is available at www.hennepinatoz.org.

Remodeling? Consider Going Green

Planning a remodeling project this spring? Consider it an opportunity to think "green," says Al Lundstrom, Golden Valley's environmental coordinator. Using environmentally sound techniques in your remodel can make your home a healthier place to live and save you money in the long run.

Building green means "using design and construction techniques to achieve energy and water efficiency, healthy indoor air quality, inclusion of products that are better for the environment, and reduced material waste," states the Minnesota Office of Environmental Assistance (MOEA). The following are tips for a green remodel.

Plan Ahead

One of the best things to keep in mind before starting a remodeling project is the importance of picking the right materials for the job. Do the research and don't rush your decisions, says Gary Johnson, Golden Valley building official.

"Selection of building materials that require less maintenance long term will minimize the amount of work required later," he adds.

One of the main components to a green remodel is using recycled or salvaged materials. So plan ahead and give yourself time to track down material that can be reused. It's generally easier and less expensive to incorporate "green" materials in your remodel, but because green remodeling is a fairly new concept, it can take some effort finding the materials you need. One way to speed up the process is to get creative with your project. Got some leftover floorboards lying around your garage? Turn them into bookshelves. Use your imagination.

Consider A "No Build" Strategy

Less construction means less waste, so figure out ways to build around and within existing structures, rather than tearing them down or building entirely new ones. By the same token, plan your building so that its features will be easy to renovate, build around, or remove in the future.

ONE WAY TO SPEED UP THE PROCESS IS TO GET CREATIVE WITH YOUR PROJECT.

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, Jun 5
July 4	Fri, July 9
Labor Day	Sat, Sept 11
Thanksgiving	Sat, Nov 27
Christmas	Fri, Dec 24
New Year's	Fri, Dec 31

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.

Use Vegetation

If you're redoing your landscape, look for ways to prevent water runoff. Build a rain garden to absorb water. Plant more trees (see page 5 sidebar). Or build a "green roof," which means to literally create a garden on top of your house. This helps reduce runoff and storm sewer maintenance and improve water quality. However, the structure of a green roof would need to be engineered, says Johnson.

Consult

Before taking on a green remodel, consult with local officials or encourage your contractor to do so, says Johnson, adding that building officials appreciate being aware of such proposals early in the process. It may be worth your while to seek out contractors who are already knowledgeable about building "green."

For more information on building green, visit www.moea.state.mn.us/greenbuilding.

Compostable Yard Waste Bags Now The Law

As of Jan 1, most metro-area residents, including Golden Valley residents, are required to put all yard waste and organics in compostable bags for curbside pick-up.

Compostable plastic bags are distinct from regular plastic bags because they are usually clear or a green-tinted opaque color. To be sure you're buying the right bags, look for the word "compostable" on the box. The words "lawn and leaf" or "yard waste" do not guarantee the bag is acceptable to use under the new rule. **The bags should clearly state that they meet ASTM D6400 standards for composting.** Bags marked "biodegradable" or "degradable" do not meet the state law.

Not only does this law help the environment, but it also saves time and money in regard to the recycling process. When organic material no longer has to be separated from the bags it's disposed in, it boosts efficiency, says Al Lundstrom, Golden Valley environmental coordinator. This is especially helpful, he says, during the Fall Leaf Drop-Off program.

Once your yard waste or source separated compostable waste is picked up, it is delivered to a compost facility. Waste at composting facilities must be debagged, which increases costs and the chance that plastic bags will be blowing around on site, causing a safety hazard. Some compost sites shred the bag and its contents and attempt to screen the torn pieces of plastics later. Unfortunately not all plastic shreds can be screened out, which reduces the value and quality of the finished compost.

Most home improvement, grocery, and hardware stores now carry the compostable bags. The shelf life of a compostable bag is approximately one to three years. Be sure to review the label and purchase accordingly. Once you place organic materials in the bag and set it outside, however, you should have a disposal plan, because the biodegradable bags may begin to break down, Lundstrom says.

The new law affects residents in the following counties: Anoka, Carver, Hennepin (excluding the City of Minneapolis), Ramsey, Scott, and Washington. Dakota County has required compostable bags for years.

For more information on the new compostable plastic bag requirements and how they will affect you, visit RethinkRecycling.com.



Plymouth Tree Sale Approaches



Golden Valley residents are once again able to participate in the City of Plymouth's spring tree and shrub sale, which offers inexpensive, easy-to-transport options to help residents improve their surroundings, says Al Lundstrom, Golden Valley environmental coordinator.

The program sells bare-root plants, meaning the plants do not come with soil on the roots. Golden Valley Assistant Forester Tim Teynor (see contact information below) is also available as a resource.

HOW TO ORDER

The plants are available to order until **April 16**. Shade trees and evergreens start at \$15, and all shrubs range from \$6 to \$10. Golden Valley residents pay an additional \$5 non-Plymouth-resident fee per order.

Order forms are online at www.ci.plymouth.mn.us. Click on "Services," then "Environmental," then "Trees and Gardens," and then "Bare Root Tree and Shrub Sale." Or, request a form from Golden Valley City Hall. Plants will be available for pick-up May 1 at the Plymouth Public Works facility (14900 23rd Ave N) from 8 am to noon.

WHAT'S AVAILABLE

Several varieties of trees and shrubs are available, from the majestic oak and maple, to the eye-catching Copper Curls lilac tree, to the wildlife enhancing dogwood and University of Minnesota fruit plant varieties. MnDOT offers an online tool that can help you decide which kind of plant to get based on site characteristics: <http://dotapp7.dot.state.mn.us/plant/>.

Lundstrom stressed that Golden Valley residents will pick up their ordered trees from Plymouth but should contact Golden Valley staff with questions.

OTHER QUESTIONS

For more information, check the Golden Valley Web site at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us or contact Tim Teynor at 763-593-3976 or tteynor@ci.golden-valley.mn.us.

Emerald Ash Borer Quarantines Wood Removal

While this is a time of year many residents, businesses and contractors trim shrubs and trees, Hennepin County has an Emerald Ash Borer quarantine barring anyone from moving any hardwood (non-coniferous) species from the Hennepin and Ramsey County areas. This includes taking firewood with you to camp sites or cabins.

The quarantine boundaries may be adjusted as more is learned about the size of the infestation. The emergency quarantine has been enacted to protect ash trees in other parts of Minnesota.

The impact of the Emerald Ash Borer in the years ahead is yet to be determined, but experts predict disheartening outcomes.

"It's going to be a big issue," says Al Lundstrom, Golden Valley environmental coordinator. "It has the potential to be bigger than Dutch Elm disease."

Recreation OPPORTUNITIES

Find details on the following recreation opportunities in the Fall Recreation Activities Brochure or the City website (www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us).

YOUTH PROGRAMS

Preschool Playtime (ages 1–5 with an adult)—Fri, 9:30–11 am, through April 3, Brookview. \$3/time/child or \$25/Res, \$28/Non-Res 10-time punch pass.

Kids' Club (ages 3–5)—Feb 18–Mar 30, Mon and Wed, 9:30–11 am. Brookview, \$38.

Art Expo (ages 6–12)—Mar 11: "Color Pencil Power," Mar 22: "Clone Wars." Both 6:30–8 pm, Brookview, \$18.

Science Explorers (ages 3–5 w/ adult)—"Einstein's Laboratory," Feb 20, 9:30–11 am, Crystal Community Center. \$11/Res, \$17/Non-Res.

Indoor Nerf Soccer (ages 5–7)—Thu, Apr 8–May 13, 6 or 7 pm (depending on game schedule), Davis Community Center, \$30.

Art Skool (ages 3–6)—"All About Drawing," Mar 19 & 26, 11:45 am–12:45 pm, Brookview, \$28.

ADULT PROGRAMS

Line Dancing—Wed, Feb 17–Mar 24, 6:30–7:30 pm, Brookview, \$42/Res, \$46/Non-Res.

Yoga & Pilates—Tue, Mar 2–Apr 27, 5:30–6:40 pm, Brookview, \$70/Res, \$74/Non-Res.

Power Yoga & Pilates—Tue, Mar 2–Apr 27, 6:45–8:15 pm, Brookview, \$96/Res, \$100/Non-Res.

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

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

Plan Your Spring Party At Brookview Facilities

If you're in the market for a pleasant, cost-effective venue for a party or group event, check out Brookview Community Center or Brookview Park.

PARK PICNIC SHELTERS

The picnic shelters at Brookview Park (southwest corner of Hwy 55 and Winnetka) are available mid-April through the first week of October, from either 11 am to 4 pm or 5 pm to dusk. Both shelters are easy walking distance to the playgrounds and sand volleyball courts. Brookview Park's total capacity is 300.



The large shelter toward the center of the park has 15 picnic tables for 100 people, two parking lots, six charcoal grills, rest rooms, a fireplace, running water, and 16 electrical outlets. Parties renting the large shelter may also reserve the small softball field to the southwest. Fee: \$95 resident, \$105 non-resident.



The small shelter at the north end of the park has a parking lot, 10 picnic tables for 50 people, four charcoal grills, and six electrical outlets. Fee: \$80 resident, \$90 non-resident.

A permit is required to consume beer or wine. The \$20 fee is payable at the time of reservation. A play equipment kit may be rented for \$15, plus a \$30 refundable deposit, for 72 hours.

Brookview accepts picnic shelter reservations from Golden Valley residents, businesses, churches, or organizations. Beginning Feb 12, anyone outside of Golden Valley may make reservations. Residents may not reserve shelters for outside groups or individuals. **New this year: a \$100 refundable deposit is payable at time of reservation.**

BROOKVIEW COMMUNITY CENTER

Nestled in the tranquil setting off Brookview Golf Course, Brookview Community Center, 200 Brookview Parkway, offers space year-round for gatherings of up to 200 guests. Facilities include a large banquet room with neutral decor, a caterer's kitchen, and a patio, deck, and gazebo that provide expansive golf course views. During colder months, the Brookview Grill offers the same views and a warm, comfortable atmosphere for up to 60 people.



For parties and social events with more than 75 people, fees range from \$550–\$635 for up to 12 hours of use. Fee includes set-up/takedown and clean-up. For events with fewer than 75 people, fees range from \$25–\$35 per hour for up to five hours of use plus a \$25–\$35 set-up/takedown fee and a \$60 clean-up fee. All parties must pay a refundable policy compliance/damage deposit.

For meetings, fees range from \$25–\$55 per hour (plus a \$25–\$55 set-up/takedown fee). Golden Valley civic and non-profit organizations ("Golden Valley" must be incorporated in the name) may use the Community Center free of charge during normal

business hours (Monday–Friday, 8 am–5 pm) or for \$25 per hour, plus a \$25 set-up/takedown fee, outside of normal business hours.

Reserve Now

To reserve facilities at Brookview Community Center or Brookview Park, call the Park and Recreation office (763-512-2345) Monday through Friday, 8 am – 4:30 pm. For more information, visit www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us.



Mark Your Calendars For 2010 GV Events



If engaging with your community is one of your New Year's resolutions, clip the following list of activities. Then mark your calendars, invite your neighbors, and plan to attend.

For details on times and places of specific events, monitor upcoming issues of *CityNews* or the community calendar at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/community/calendar.htm. Details about the City's *Concert in the Park* series, held most summer Mondays at 7 pm in Brookview Park, will be published in the March/April *CityNews*. Updates on Historical Society events are available at goldenvalleystoricalsociety.org.

For information about volunteering to help with community events, contact Jeanne Andre at 763-593-8014 or jandre@ci.golden-valley.mn.us.



2010 GOLDEN VALLEY EVENTS

FEBRUARY

Feb 11 - Golden Valley Historical Society: Don Stoltz, "The History of the Old Log Theatre and Twin Cities Live Theatre"

Feb 28 - West Metro Home Remodeling Fair (see page 16)

MARCH

March 11 - Caring Youth Recognition

March 11 - Golden Valley Historical Society: Judy Dutcher, "The Museum of Russian Art"

APRIL

April 8 - Golden Valley Historical Society: "The Yamamoto Mission," the 66th Anniversary of Pearl Harbor

April 10 - *Run The Valley* (see page 3)

MAY

May 3 - *Step To It* sign up begins

May 5 - Bike Rodeo

May 11 - Golden Valley Historical Society: Gedney Tuttle, "The History of the Gedney Pickle Company of Chaska, MN"

May 21-23 - Golden Valley Days (www.goldenvalleystoricalsociety.org)

JUNE

June 7 - *Views of the Valley* Photo Contest deadline

June 16 - Fire and Police Open House

June 19 - Fire Relief Association Street Dance

JULY

July 9 - Golden Valley Golf Classic

July 19 - Concert In The Park & Bridge Builders' Ice Cream Social

AUGUST

Aug 3 - Minnesota's Nite To Unite

SEPTEMBER

Sept 1 - Read Around Town Kick-off (children's book donations)

Sept TBD - Lilac Planting Party

OCT/NOV/DEC

Nov 2 - Election Day

Nov TBD - *A Taste of Golden Valley*

Senior *Stuff*

Unless noted otherwise, most activities are at Brookview Community Center and require advance registration with the Seniors Program office (see below).

LIVING WISE AND WELL

Mar 4: "Immunizations: Are You Up-to-Date?" • April 1: "Are Your Feet Happy?"

All at 1 pm, Calvary Cooperative, 7600 Golden Valley Rd. Free.

DEFENSIVE DRIVING

• 4-Hour Refresher Course—Feb 11 & March 11, 9 am–1 pm, \$17

Register by sending a check to Minnesota Safety Council, 474 Concordia Ave, St Paul, MN, 55103.

MONEY MATTERS

Feb 18: "A Gift of Love to Survivors: Funeral and Memorial Pre-planning Makes Cents" • Mar 18: "How to Gain the Highest Return in Personal Real Estate" Both 10–11 am. Donation for refreshments.

COFFEE TALK

Feb 24: "The Link," evidence linking animal abuse to human violence • Mar 24: "Native American Folklore and Natural Remedies"

Both at 9:45 am, \$2 payable at door. Register the Monday before the program.

"MARY WANDERERS" TRIP PROGRAM

• Mar 24: "The Dixie Swim Club" at the Old Log, \$48 (includes lunch, play, motorcoach and escort). 10:45 am bus pick-up/4:45 pm return. Register by Mar 10.

• April 21: Golden Strings at the LaFayette Club, \$59 (includes lunch, concert, motorcoach, and escort). 10 am bus pick-up/3:15 pm return. Register by Mar 22.

Golden Valley Seniors Program

Brookview Community Center
200 Brookview Parkway
Golden Valley, MN 55426
763-512-2339

8 am–5 pm, Monday–Friday

30 Years of Progress: A Valley Square

A 30-year redevelopment project straddling Winnetka Ave just north of the Hwy 55 and Winnetka intersection has set another milestone in the history of Golden Valley's downtown—a special taxing district set up to help pay for the public costs of the redevelopment has closed, and that's good news for the City.



Blacksmith Shop, SE corner of Golden Valley Rd & Winnetka, now home to Doolittle's Woodfire Grill.



NW Corner of Golden Valley Rd & Winnetka



Former shopping center at NE Corner of Hwy 55 & Winnetka



Intersection of Winnetka & Golden Valley Rd

A Look Back

The area now referred to as Valley Square has long been the commercial center of Golden Valley. Well before Hwy 55 was built, it was the spot to visit for your blacksmith needs. By the 1940s it had a movie theater, and by 1950 it boasted one of the country's first suburban strip malls (the Golden Valley Shopping Center, with a Red Owl Grocery). As cars became a staple of the suburban landscape, the intersection bustled with activity, with gas stations on three corners.

As outer suburbs grew bigger and shopping migrated to major malls such as Ridgedale, City officials knew local shopping could not thrive without changes. In the 1970s, a number of special task forces and commissions studied downtown Golden Valley to develop a long-term vision for the area. With new Tax-Increment Financing (TIF) legislation approved, the way was paved for creation of the Valley Square Redevelopment Area and its corresponding TIF District in 1978 (see sidebar for details about TIF).

The Valley Square Redevelopment Area stretches from Pennsylvania/Kelly Ave on the east to Boone Ave on the west, and from Hwy 55 on the south to the Union Pacific Railroad on the north. The redevelopment included a mix of office and housing divided into subareas that could each be redeveloped separately, coming together like a jigsaw puzzle to realize the overall vision. Thirty-one years later, Valley Square is thriving. And like a well-kept home, it will continue to be remodeled as times and fashions change.



Golden Valley Commons shopping area at NE Corner of Hwy 55

Public Benefits

While a large part of redevelopment is meant to spark private investment and enhance property values, redevelopment also allows for improvements to the public infrastructure. By 1978, traffic on Winnetka was about 14,700 vehicles a day, which caused a significant backlog at each stoplight. The solution was a ring-road system that would allow cars destined to go east or west on Hwy 55 to turn on 10th Ave and catch Rhode Island, Wisconsin, or Boone Aves. Today there are about 13,600 vehicles a day on Winnetka north of 10th Ave, with 3,840 diverting to Rhode Island and 1,100 diverting to Wisconsin. Without this relief,

Winnetka at Golden Valley Rd would be far more congested.

Redevelopment also helped decrease the number of driveways along Winnetka between 10th Ave and Golden Valley Rd. These driveways interfered with traffic and created safety problems. When the City and Hennepin County collaborated on the reconstruction of Winnetka Ave between 10th Ave and Harold Ave, traffic flowed better with fewer driveways. TIF funds also allowed the City to acquire additional right-of-way to provide landscaping and pedestrian improvements that give Valley Square a special sense of place and character.

Three of the buildings in the Commons area, which were part of the City Hall building, were built in 1986. City Post Office is the main building. After major renovation, the US Post Office in Golden Valley is now in N. Park. The Commons area has improved institutions.

Retrospective

Intersection
in 1978 to

NW Corner of
Golden Valley Rd
& Winnetka



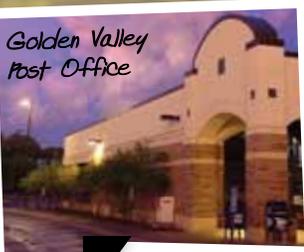
Shopping center
Golden Valley Rd & Winnetka



The Future

The TIF district is now closed, meaning the district's property values, no longer needed to finance the redevelopment, may now be used to generate revenue for the entire City. It doesn't mean redevelopment won't continue. Private development tends to follow the framework already established in an area, so the City's efforts to guide development in Valley Square will continue to benefit the community in years to come. ~

Golden Valley
Post Office



the driveways belonged
Golden Valley Post Office,
as located on Winnetka (between
ll and McDonald's) in a minimal
with inadequate parking. At the
Centennial Town Meeting the
office traffic safety was identified
most significant issue in the City.
any years, the City convinced the
al Service to relocate to a site at
Valley Rd and Rhode Island Ave
ng and circulation was greatly
d, and the post office is a key
n drawing people to downtown.

Intersection of Winnetka &
Golden Valley Rd



Valley Square & Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is one way to pay for needed improvements outlined in a redevelopment plan. Other financing tools include tax abatements, assessments, grants, municipal state aid, and special levies.

When a TIF district is created, the market value of all property in the district is frozen, or fixed at its current level for the purpose of determining taxes payable to city, county, school district, and other taxing agencies.

Through redevelopment, new buildings replace older ones and increase the taxable value. Generally that new value would be included in the overall tax base. With TIF, the new value is instead set aside to help pay for the public costs of the redevelopment (road improvements, land, etc).

For example, if the taxable market value of TIF district properties is assessed at \$3 million before redevelopment and in a few years goes up to \$4 million because of redevelopment, the tax revenue from that new \$1 million in taxable market value goes not to the standard taxing agencies (city, county, schools, etc) but instead to the public agency that created the TIF district. But after a TIF district is closed, all property tax revenue is once again distributed to the standard taxing agencies.

The Valley Square TIF district was divided into subareas, 60 percent of which closed by 2006. The last subarea (bounded by Winnetka Ave, Golden Valley Rd, Wisconsin Ave, and Bassett Creek) closed this year. When the district was created in 1978, this subarea had a taxable market value of about \$3 million. The taxable market value of this same area now is about \$56 million, and the City of Golden Valley and other taxing agencies will receive tax revenue based on that increased value.

Police Annual Review Keeps Department On Track

Every December, Golden Valley police officers meet to review the last 12 months and establish clear goals for the next.

The day-long officer meeting is for the 11 Golden Valley police officers in supervisory roles. It's a way to ensure the department remains on a successful and forward-thinking track, says Police Chief Stacy Altonen.

"It's an opportunity for planning and making sure everyone in the department understands the direction for the coming year," she says. "We consider both short-term and long-term planning."

At the annual review, officers discussed goals and priorities for the next several years, which include:

- training and development of new officers
- staffing levels
- developing an employee wellness plan
- building, booking, and equipment improvements
- increasing public education on crime prevention
- establishing stronger partnerships with other law enforcement agencies
- continuing to deliver excellent police services

Goals the department met in 2009 include:

- achieving a 91 percent improvement in traffic enforcement (officers wrote twice as many tickets as the year before)
- shifting from paper to electronic roll calls (nearly eliminating all use of paper in the day-to-day written communications among officers)
- updating the property room and installing new technology in the training room, including a smart screen
- revising the policy manual
- rejuvenating the bike patrol (the department has put renewed emphasis on community outreach policing, which focuses on developing face-to-face relationships between residents and law enforcement and leading to, among other things, increased bike patrols in the City).



Golden Valley police officers achieved a 91 percent improvement in traffic enforcement in 2009.

Warming Up The Car Invites Thieves

"Warming up the car" has long been a winter tradition in many parts of Minnesota. It is also the equivalent of putting a big sign on your car that says "take me, I'm yours." Crime prevention experts caution to never leave your vehicle running unless you're in it. Not even for a minute. Not even in your driveway.

"An unattended, running car is an invitation to a car thief," says Crime Prevention Specialist Joanne Paul. "In the US, a vehicle is stolen approximately every 30 seconds. That means during the two minutes you leave your running car unattended, four cars were stolen—one could be yours."

That's why some cities, like Minneapolis, have ordinances making it illegal to leave keys in the ignition of an unattended vehicle. If a vehicle is reported stolen and the keys were in it, the driver will get a ticket. Police also issue tickets to vehicles left running with no driver present.

Vehicle Theft Prevention Tips

It is completely up to you to take steps to prevent your vehicle from being stolen.

- Never leave your car running unattended, even if it's locked.
- Close all windows, lock the doors, and take your keys. Don't even think about hiding your keys somewhere in the car.
- Don't leave valuables or identifying information in the car.
- Don't leave remote garage door openers in vehicles parked outside your home. This is an easy way for burglars to gain access to your home. (And remember to lock the door leading from the attached garage into the house!)
- Park in well-lighted areas.
- Invest in a car alarm or other theft deterrent.



Neighborhood Watch Meeting Dates Set

- Zone 8 – Monday, March 1
- Zone 6 – Monday, March 15
- Zone 5a – Tuesday, April 20
- Zones 9 & 10 – Thursday, March 11
- Zone 5b & 7 – Tuesday, May 11

All meetings are at 7 pm in the Golden Valley Police Department Training Room.

File Of Life Can Make Big Difference In Emergency

A few years ago, the Golden Valley Police and Fire Departments began distributing to residents an invaluable resource to emergency responders in life-threatening situations. The File of Life provides a substantial preventive step people can take for their own safety. It allows first responders (police officers, firefighters, and paramedics) instant access to medical facts and data that can make the difference when every second counts.

“One of the most difficult things to obtain during a medical emergency can be information,” says Stephen Baker, fire education specialist and paramedic. “The File of Life allows people to put the medical info on a card and place it on the refrigerator. It is extremely helpful when the patient can direct first responders to the card in the event of an emergency.”

The card, which is kept in a red plastic pocket labeled File of Life, lists household members’ names, emergency medical contacts, insurance information, health problems, medications, allergies, recent surgeries, and much more. The entire pocket is held with a magnet to the outside of the refrigerator. First responders know to look at the refrigerator for this information.

The card will allow paramedics to obtain accurate medical information about the patient, who, in a frightened state or having a medical emergency, may have forgotten or is unable to provide.

If you would like more information or to receive a File of Life, please contact the Stephen Baker at 763-593-3977. 

File of Life BENEFITS



EMERGENCY PERSONNEL

- faster help for citizens in emergencies
- first responders instantly know the medical history of patient
- upon arrival to the hospital, data is immediately available to medical staff

Individuals

- easy access to potentially life-saving information
- assurance that proper persons will be notified quickly

GVFD SEEKS FIREFIGHTERS

Joining the Golden Valley Fire Department (GVFD) is a real skills-driven commitment that will leave you prepared to face any number of unique challenges, both as a firefighter and a citizen, says Stephen Baker, fire education specialist.

First-year firefighters attend two to three nights of training per week, for 225 hours of training in the first six months. They’ll come away with new or refined skills in search and rescue, CPR, hazmat management, traumatic stabilization, shock management, critical thinking under pressure, emergency vehicle driving, and of course, fire fighting.

The GVFD is seeking men and women to join its long tradition of community service by becoming paid, on-call firefighters.

There are two ways to serve. If you live within six minutes of a Golden Valley fire station, apply to become a night-time/ weekend responder. If you live in another community but work in Golden Valley, check out Corporate Call, a collaboration with local businesses to recruit daytime responders (available Monday–Friday, 6 am–6 pm).

Learn more at goldenvalleyfire.com or call 763-593-8057. 

**Dad of Three.
Badgers Fan.
Firefighter.**



Tim
New Recruit, 1989
Battalion Chief

TIM GERRITS HAS BEEN A GOLDEN Valley firefighter for 20 years. After moving here from Wisconsin, he initially joined to meet new friends and neighbors. But it is an experience like no other, he says.

“I have seen and done things some people can only dream of,” says Gerrits, “like going into burning buildings, pulling people out of smashed autos, and driving a fire truck with the lights and siren going.” He also manages hazardous materials and educates kids about the fire department.

“There’s just so much more to it than fighting fire,” he adds. “By joining the department, you get a top-notch education about firefighting and EMS. And you’ll get to know a great group of people who will be your friends forever.”

goldenvalleyfire.com

I/I Inspection Process

To comply with mandates to reduce peak flows to the regional wastewater collection system (see story at right), the City of Golden Valley requires all properties to have an Inflow and Infiltration (I/I) inspection before they are advertised for sale.

This Point of Sale ordinance is intended to help reduce peak sanitary sewer flows caused by I/I, or flow of clear water into the sanitary sewer system. It allows for inspection of private properties to ensure there are no illegal connections to the sanitary sewer system that contribute to excess peak flows.

Property owners have two options for a Point of Sale I/I Inspection: an inspection performed by the City, or an inspection performed by a licensed plumber. Plumbers who do inspections must be pre-approved by the City and must submit inspection results to the City for review. Inspections include a televised observation of the sanitary sewer service.

Before selling or transferring title of property, property owners must obtain a Certificate of I/I Compliance from the City. If the property fails inspection, the City will issue a correction notice. Any improper connections or significant I/I defects in the sanitary sewer service pipe must be corrected before the City will issue a Certificate of I/I Compliance. If a Certificate of I/I Compliance is more than one year old, a sump pump inspection is required before a sale or transfer of ownership.

Fees

- *City Inspection Fee:* \$250 for residential properties, \$750 for non-residential properties, \$75 for subsequent inspections of a sump pump discharge.
- *Review Fee For Inspection By Licensed Plumber:* \$100 for residential properties, \$375 for non-residential properties.

Permit Application

To schedule an I/I Compliance Inspection, contact Golden Valley Public Works at 763-593-8030. Permit applications are available online at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us or at City Hall. For more information about I/I, go to www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us.



City Answers Common I/I Inspection Questions

In 2006, the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (MCES) launched an Inflow and Infiltration (I/I) program to reduce the amount of clear water entering sanitary sewers. Golden Valley was identified as a contributor of excess I/I and promptly began working to resolve the problem rather than face MCES surcharges. After several years, questions still arise about I/I and the City's reduction program.

What is I/I? Infiltration is when groundwater seeps into sewer pipes via cracks or leaky joints. Inflow is when clear water from illegal connections of sump pumps, downspouts, and foundation drains is channeled directly into sanitary sewer pipes. This excess clear water uses sanitary sewer capacity needed for wastewater. The result is sewer backups and increased costs for needlessly putting clear water through the wastewater treatment process. Instead of investing nearly \$1 billion to build additional sewer infrastructure to provide capacity during big rain storms, the MCES decided to require communities with excessive I/I to invest in local reduction remedies, which would provide a regional solution for roughly \$150 million.

Why is Golden Valley a leader in this program? Although Golden Valley has led the Twin Cities metro area in reducing I/I, we are not the leader in Minnesota. Other cities (Duluth, Waseca, Glencoe, Hamburg, Tower) have been working for years to reduce I/I and continue to complete private property inspections as part of the effort. Once Golden Valley's City Council and staff understood the environmental, sanitation, and financial impacts of I/I, they committed to a proactive approach to reduce it. To track progress, staff monitors sewer flow at nine sites throughout the city and groundwater levels at seven sites. However, dry weather conditions in recent years make it difficult to document the true effects of I/I related improvements.

Do other metro area cities require private property inspections? Yes. These include West St Paul, Eden Prairie, Minnetonka, Waconia, and Eagan.

When is the inspection required? The inspection is required before a home can be advertised for sale. Repairs should be completed, and a certificate of compliance issued, before the closing. If repairs cannot be made before a title transfer, then escrow is required. The certificate of compliance stays with the property after the sale.

Why does the City require inspections only for homes that are for sale? After studying other programs, City officials concluded the cost of such a repair might be easier on homeowners at the time of a sale, when they typically have access to funding from home equity.

If I have the inspection and then decide not to sell, do I still need to complete the repairs? Repairs should be completed within 180 days of the first inspection, and the City can grant an extension of another 180 days. If repairs are not completed within one year of the first inspection, the inspection(s) become invalid and the process needs to start again, which includes paying the applicable inspection fee.

Can the buyers assume responsibility for the repairs? Yes, if arrangements are made for escrow with the closing agent and an I/I Compliance Agreement is signed by the City and the responsible party. The seller is responsible for the initial inspection.

How is MCES regulating I/I compliance? While some cities have been successful at reducing I/I, the regional problem is still significant and more participation is necessary. To enforce this, starting in 2013 MCES will implement a wastewater demand charge for communities with excessive I/I, including those with reduction programs. This means a city could get assessed a surcharge if it were to exceed sanitary sewer flow levels during a major rain storm, even if it had previously shown reduced flow rates through I/I mitigation.

New City Utility Rates To Take Effect In April

Some City utility rates will increase in 2010 to cover increased costs to provide services and maintain and repair the municipal water and sewer system. New water rates will reflect a conservation rate structure mandated by state statute, and the City continues to move toward consumption-based rates for sanitary sewer discharge.

Water Rates

The new water rate structure will cover three types of accounts: commercial, residential, and irrigation. Commercial water rates will increase from \$4.05 to \$4.18 per 1,000 gallons per month. Most commercial accounts have a separate meter for irrigation. All irrigation rates increased from \$4.05 to \$4.21 per 1,000 gallons per month (April–November). Residential water rates will increase from \$4.05 to \$4.18 per 1,000 gallons per quarter up to 79,000 gallons used. For accounts that use 80,000 gallons or more, the rate is \$4.21 per 1,000 gallons per quarter. For all water accounts, there is a minimum charge based on meter size for the first 1,000 gallons.

The new rates reflect the increased amount the Golden Valley-Crystal-New Hope Joint Water Commission (JWC) will pay to buy water from the City of Minneapolis. The rates will also cover costs for system operations and management as well as maintenance, construction, and repair of water lines.

Sanitary Sewer Rates

Golden Valley's flat rates for residential sanitary sewer service are based on consumption. All wastewater is carried through pipes on residential property into the municipal sanitary sewer pipe, which connects to a regional sewer interceptor into the wastewater treatment plant in St Paul. The City's consumption-based sanitary sewer rates are tied to water usage and match the way the MCES bills the City.

Most residential units have one water meter to account for all household water consumption. The City bases residential sanitary sewer rates on winter water consumption. Winter consumption is used because residential units do not water lawns or gardens in the winter, and water used outdoors does not flow into the wastewater system.

The quarterly utility bill rates are based on water consumption used in January, February, and March 2010. The residential sanitary sewer rates are: \$52 for those that use 5,000 gallons of water or less, \$56.10 for 6,000 to 15,000 gallons, \$62 for 16,000 to 19,000, \$65 for 20,000 to 25,000, \$72 for 26,000 to 39,000, \$78 for 40,000 to 79,000, and \$84 for 80,000 or more. Commercial sanitary sewer rates will increase from \$3.25 to \$3.37 per 1,000 gallons used. For commercial accounts, there is a minimum charge based on meter size for the first 1,000 gallons.

These rates reflect the increased amount the City pays Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (MCES) to treat its wastewater as well as costs for operation, management, and maintenance and repair of the municipal sanitary sewer system.



Streetlights

Residential streetlight rates will increase from \$8.50 to \$8.80 per quarter for ornamental lights and from \$5.25 to \$5.55 per quarter for overhead lights. Commercial streetlight rates increased from \$2.84 to \$2.94 per month for ornamental lights and from \$1.75 to \$1.85 per month for overhead lights. Some commercial lighting districts may be billed differently. This increase pays for one-half of the maintenance for the city-wide street light system that includes Xcel costs.

If you have questions about the utility increases, the conservation rate structure for water, or the consumption-based sanitary sewer rate, contact Finance Director Sue Virnig at 763-593-8010. 

MCES Proposes Force Main Improvements

The Metropolitan Council, operator of the metro area wastewater collection and treatment system, is proposing improvements to the regional sanitary sewer system serving southern Golden Valley and northern St Louis Park.

The recommended improvements would provide additional sewer capacity to serve growth and redevelopment in Golden Valley and St Louis Park. Construction would be scheduled for 2012-2013.

The Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (MCES) Draft Facility Plan outlines alternative studies and resulting recommendations for the sewer improvements, which include:

- constructing a new lift (pumping) station at a location to be determined in the southwest quadrant of the intersection of Hwy 100 and I-394
- constructing a new force main interceptor sewer from the new pumping station and connecting with MCES's existing Plymouth Force Main on the north side of Hwy 55. The new sewer line would run north to Wayzata Blvd, then west to cross under I-394 and continue north on Turners Crossroads S to Glenwood Ave. It would continue west on Glenwood to Turners Crossroad N, then north on Turners to cross under Hwy 55 just west of Hwy 100.

An alternate route, to be evaluated in the proposed project's design phase, would follow Golden Hills Dr and Xenia Ave S to Glenwood Ave.

Copies of the Draft Facility Plan are available for review at Golden Valley City Hall and the Golden Valley Library. Input was solicited at a public information meeting Jan 6 and a public hearing Jan 27, both at Golden Valley City Hall.

Citizens can still provide input on the proposed plan to MCES. **Submit comments no later than Feb 8** to Tim O'Donnell, Metropolitan Council Environmental Services, 390 Robert St. N, St Paul, MN 55101; Fax: 651-601-1477; TTY: 651-291-0904; Public Comment Line: 651-602-1500; or data.center@metc.state.mn.us. 

Winter Safety *In* Your Neighborhood

The challenges presented by winter require special attention on the home front. Please be aware of the following two safety issues and take steps to help manage them.

Safe Winter Play

Help keep your family safe by reminding children to not build snow forts or other structures on your lawn's boulevard area, where children at play may not be visible to traffic and snowplow drivers. County and City plows sometimes use wing blades to push the snow bank away from the curb to make room for more snow. To be safe, stay at least 15 feet away (25 feet on wider streets or corner lots).



Too close to the road

Shoveled-Out Fire Hydrants

The Golden Valley Fire Department seeks help keeping fire hydrants clear of snow. A six-foot clear space around the circumference of the hydrant will help reduce the time it takes firefighters to hook up hoses if a fire occurs in your neighborhood. The best time to shovel out a hydrant is after the streets are plowed, before snow accumulates and freezes.



This fire hydrant is not properly cleared. A six-foot clear space around the hydrant is necessary for speedy hookup in the event of a fire.

Be Prepared For Winter Driving

While Minnesotans pride themselves on the hard-core winter driving experience that's a by-product of living in the great white north, the return of snow and ice each year prompts the realization that a few safety reminders can't hurt anyone. Proper preparation is key and, as always, common sense rules.

▼ Safety First

Follow standard cautionary considerations. Be patient and slow down. Accelerate and decelerate gradually. Allow extra following distance for more time to maneuver or stop. And of course, wear your seat belt! It's the law in all seasons.

Do not warm the vehicle in an enclosed area, like your garage. Clear snow and frost from all of your windows and mirrors before you leave the driveway or parking lot (see sidebar). Keep windows, headlights, taillights, and turn signals free of road grime that can decrease visibility. Replace your windshield wipers when needed.

▼ Think Ahead

It's important to know how your vehicle handles, as front wheel drive and rear wheel drive vehicles behave differently in slippery conditions. Be extra cautious when driving an unfamiliar vehicle.

Make sure tires are properly inflated, and keep your windshield washer reservoir full and have more available.

Plan your trip allowing extra time for winter delays or detours. More idling time may take more fuel, so keep the tank filled. This helps prevent gas line freeze-ups too, especially for older cars and fuel mixtures without ethanol.

Carry a shovel and some sand in your trunk to use if you get stuck, and always have a set of jumper cables in your vehicle.

▼ Drive Deliberately

Do not use cruise control on slippery surfaces, and watch out for ice on bridges, low points and shaded areas. Use signals and brake lights to communicate your intentions to other drivers. When approaching congestion in heavy traffic, be conscious of possible escape maneuvers. If possible, do not stop when going up hills, and if you are already stuck, do not spin the vehicle wheels.

For longer trips, monitor weather reports and consider not traveling if it becomes hazardous. When planning your trip, determine alternative routes you can take if needed. Always let someone know the planned route, possible alternatives, and your estimated time of arrival. Do not travel alone when possible.

Before you leave, pack warm clothing and other emergency supplies in the vehicle and make sure your cell phone is charged.

Finally, get plenty of rest before your trip. With less sunlight and potential hazards on the road, a fatigued driver is a danger to everyone.



Avoid Dangerous Peephole Driving



"Peephole driving," or the practice of scraping only a small portion of the windshield before driving away, dramatically reduces the driver's field of vision and increases the chances of a traffic crash. In addition, excess ice from your vehicle could dislodge, become airborne, and strike other vehicles. For the safety of everyone on the road, make sure your vehicle is clear of ice and snow before you drive.

Spring & Summer Projects Require Thinking Ahead

Amid negative temperatures and snow-coated land, the last thing on your mind might be building a summer-time veranda or outdoor porch. But right now is exactly when you should be thinking about it.

If you have a building project planned for this spring or summer, get your permit early. Don't wait until the last minute; a building permit review by the City will take five to 10 working days. Permit processing can take several weeks. For more information, call the Golden Valley Inspections Department at 763-593-8090.

✿ Which Projects Need Permits?

Each year the City of Golden Valley issues thousands of permits for property improvements. Projects range from simple maintenance items to extensive remodeling, additions, or new buildings. Permits ensure projects are up to code and meet minimum requirements for safety and material.

Projects that need building permits include:

- construction of a shed greater than 120 square feet
- garages or room additions
- decks, porches, or gazebos
- swimming pools
- window replacement
- retaining walls higher than 48 inches above grade
- re-roofing and re-siding
- interior remodeling (plumbing and mechanical permits may also be required)



TO PREVENT DELAYS IN YOUR UPCOMING PROJECTS, GET YOUR PERMIT BEFORE SPRING BLOOMS IN GOLDEN VALLEY.

✿ How Many Permits Will My Project Require?

The number of permits and the types of inspections vary based on the project. Some may require a single inspection when the work is completed, while others may require several inspections as the work progresses. With each project, City officials determine what inspections are required to ensure compliance with the state building code (inspection fees are included in the cost of the permits).

✿ How Long Is My Permit Valid?

It's important to remember that permits expire after 180 days of inactivity, according to the state building code. If you do not complete the necessary work in the allotted time, the project will be deemed suspended or abandoned, meaning you may need to obtain another permit and pay a new permit fee to continue work.

To determine the status of various permits, the City Inspections Dept may do a review of permits issued. All projects require a final inspection when the work has been completed. Unfortunately, some permit holders fail to request this final inspection, which can result in a permit becoming invalid and a new one needing to be issued. A project will not be deemed code compliant without a final inspection, potentially resulting in hassles if or when you try to sell your home.

Keep in mind that if you hire a professional to work on your property, it's a good idea to request verification of final inspection before making final payment. If you're doing the work yourself, be sure to call for your final inspection to close out your permit—it could save you a headache in the future if you decide to sell your home. ~

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 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. ~

City of
Golden Valley
7800 Golden Valley Road
Golden Valley, MN 55427

PRSR STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 1659
Minneapolis, MN



This document is available in alternate formats upon a 72-hour request. Please call 763-593-8006 (TTY: 763-593-3968) to make a request. Examples of alternate formats may include large print, electronic, Braille, audiocassette, etc.



Check Out These **SEMINARS** at the Remodeling Fair ▼

- ▶ Kitchen and Bath Remodeling 2010: Small Innovations to Total Renovations
- ▶ Decks and Three- and Four-Season Porches
- ▶ Refinishing Wood Floors
- ▶ New Trends In Interior Design
- ▶ Bath Remodeling
- ▶ Kitchen Design Workshop
- ▶ Restore Your Old Windows
- ▶ Current Kitchen Design Trends, Including Handmade Tiles
- ▶ Rain Gardens and Barrels
- ▶ Home Modifications for Maintaining Independence
- ▶ Spring Into Landscaping
- ▶ A Homeowner's Guide to Remodeling Green
- ▶ New Trends in Interior Design

In addition, the Idea Center will feature demonstrations on plumbing basics, lowering energy costs, ecologically friendly gardening, and more.

Free Home Remodeling Fair Returns Feb 28

The 19th annual Home Remodeling Fair, an indispensable tool for the do-it-yourselfer in all of us, is just weeks away.

The Fair, a multi-city effort to boost housing conditions throughout the western suburbs, will feature nearly 100 exhibitors, many free seminars and demonstrations (see sidebar), and an "Ask the Pro" booth. Exhibitors include architects, landscapers, designers, electricians, roofers, lenders, city

WEST METRO HOME REMODELING FAIR

inspectors, and more. Architects and interior designers at the "Ask the Pro" booth will offer no-obligation advice (bring your photos, sketches, and questions). Food concessions will be available in the cafeteria.

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 Corp; Great Lakes Windows & Siding/Owens Corning Basement Finishing System; Heritage Builders; JW Williams Construction Inc; Neighborhood Building & Remodeling; Otagawa-Anschel Design Build; Renewal by Andersen; Shoreline Builders—Home Renovation and Design Inc; Sicora, Inc; Steele Construction Services, Inc; Stonehearth Custom Homes; and White Crane Construction LLC.

For more info, go to www.homeremodelingfair.com or contact Golden Valley's property maintenance inspector at 763-593-8074.

If you go...

WHAT: The annual *Home Remodeling Fair*

WHEN: Sunday, Feb 28, from 10:30 am to 3:30 pm

WHERE: Eisenhower Community Center, 1001 Hwy 7, Hopkins (one mile west of Hwys 7 and 169). Parking is available at Eisenhower, 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). Watch for signs.

COST: Free

City of
Golden Valley

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TTY: 763-593-3968
www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us

Mayor/Council Message Line: 763-593-8001

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