

Opportunities abound for getting involved in policy making

When it comes to citizen monitoring and involvement in the process of making public policy, opportunities abound in Oak Park to stay informed and involved in municipal government.

From volunteering to serve on one of the many separate advisory boards, commissions and committees, to providing public comment on meeting topics, resident input always is welcome.

And monitoring policies under consideration is as easy as reviewing agenda action materials online at www.oak-park.us/boardtv, where you also can watch meetings live and on demand.

Volunteers always needed

As part-time lawmakers, the Village president and trustees rely on the more than 20 advisory boards, commissions and committees to do much of the investigative work associated with particular issues.

For more information on volunteering, visit www.oak-park.us/volunteer, call 708.358.5670 or email clerk@oak-park.us.

Commenting on agenda items

Every Village Board meeting includes an agenda with details on all items being considered. Residents are invited to review and submit comments, viewpoints and suggestions either by email or telephone.

Once board meetings return to in-person forums, residents are invited to speak at any meeting.

For information on commenting, call 708.358.5670 or email clerk@oak-park.us.



Contacting officials

Contacting Oak Park's elected officials is as easy as sending an email to board@oak-park.us. Telephone numbers and email addresses for individual officials are posted at www.oak-park.us/board.

Information on contacting senior Village administrators also is available. Just visit www.oak-park.us/directors.

Staying informed

An involved citizenry relies on information about the policies, programs and services that are created, implemented and revised as circumstances require.

Residents can sign up for news via email, follow Village social media posts, check the front page and calendar of the Village website and even sign up for emergency alerts via text, email or telephone. Residents are invited to sign up for e-news at www.oak-park.us/enews, follow the Village at www.facebook.com/vopnews and www.twitter.com/vopnews, sign up for direct alerts at www.oak-park.us/notifyme and check the Village website at www.oak-park.us.

On the horizon

Adding additional, more interactive ways to get involved with public policy making is a top priority in the pursuit of government transparency and citizen participation. Monitor the Village website and social media pages for more information about these new technologies in the year ahead.



Trick-or-treating hours under review

With COVID-19 still present in the community as Halloween approaches, officials are considering the best hours for trick-or-treating. But one thing is certain — guidelines from local, state and federal public health officials are sure to apply. These include reducing close contact with those outside of a person's household. Residents also are encouraged to celebrate with lower-risk activities, such as pumpkin carving with members of their own household or outdoors at a safe distance with friends. Virtual costume parties, holiday decorating and outdoor Halloween movie nights are other recommended options. Households not participating in trick-or-treating are encouraged to post a sign on their door to discourage visits. Costumes that allow cloth face coverings and proper, regular hand hygiene are recommended. Those with underlying health conditions are strongly encouraged to avoid Halloween festivities and gatherings. In addition, residents are encouraged to opt for gatherings outdoors, avoid indoor parties, keep guests to a minimum, require guests to wear cloth masks that cover their nose and mouth when adequate social distances cannot be maintained and tell guests to stay home if they are sick. The latest information about Halloween in Oak Park — including hours and printable signs — will be posted at www.oak-park.us/halloween.



Health Department staff with mobile response van.

Health Department takes COVID-19 vaccines, rapid testing to the community

The Oak Park Department of Public Health is taking its mobile response van into the community to provide convenient COVID-19 vaccinations and rapid testing at public events such as block parties, picnics and other large community gatherings. Health officials and volunteers traveling with the van also are available to answer questions about COVID-19. To request a visit of mobile response van, email covid19vaccine@oak-park.us.

Planning for boosters... The Oak Park Health Department is providing third shots of COVID-19 vaccines to residents with compromised immune systems and is prepared to administer booster shots if officially approved at the federal and state levels. Pfizer and Moderna booster vaccines also are expected to be widely available through pharmacies, medical care providers and other resources. Getting more people vaccinated is the key to slowing the spread of COVID-19, according to public health officials. All of the approved vaccines have proven effective against COVID-19 mutations, including the more contagious Delta variant. Visit www.oak-park.us/vaccine for links to a wide range of vaccination options.

Disease-carrying mosquitoes still biting

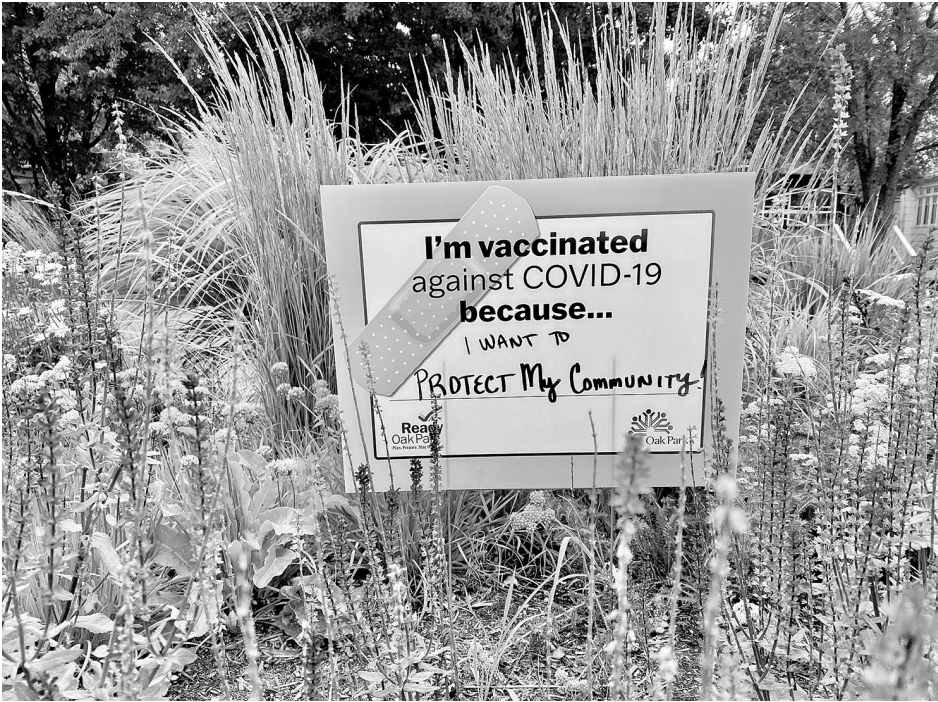


While mosquitoes tend to become less active as summer heat diminishes, the threat of these disease-carrying pests could continue as late as mid-October. Public health officials advise residents to avoid being bitten by wearing long sleeves and pants, limiting time spent outdoors at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active and wearing insect repellent that contains DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-menthane-diol. Residents also are urged to eliminate potential breeding sites by storing containers such as buckets, plant pots and uncovered rain barrels upside down so that they do not hold water. Visit www.oak-park.us/fightthebite or email health@oak-park.us for more information.

Housing News

Rehab assistance... Helping homeowners pay for needed repairs they otherwise wouldn't be able to afford is what the Village's single-family rehab loan program is all about. The rehab program offers loans of up to \$25,000 to correct health and safety issues and building code violations, such as broken pipes, a leaking roof, crumbling entry stairs, dangerous electrical systems and accessibility obstacles. No monthly payments are required and loans don't have to be repaid for 20 years or until the property is transferred. Grants do not have to be repaid. Eligibility is determined by federal income limits. For example, a family of four with a total household income below \$74,550 and a family of two with a household income below \$59,650 would qualify for a loan and grant. For more information visit www.oak-park.us/housing, email housing@oak-park.us or call 708.358.5410.

Handyman help for seniors... Oak Park residents ages 60 and older can get help with simple home maintenance repairs through North West Housing Partnership, a Housing and Urban Development approved housing counseling agency. Fees range from \$20 to \$40 an hour depending on income and repairs are done by insured, reliable professionals. Examples of eligible work include repairing screens, faucets, sinks, soffits, toilets and windows; installing grab bars, door locks, ceiling fans, light fixtures and shelves; hanging curtains and pictures; and gutter cleaning. The senior handyman program is supported in part by the Village of Oak Park, Village of River Forest and Oak Park and River Forest townships. Call 847.969.0651 or email michellehill@nwph.net for more information. For more information about housing programs in Oak Park, visit www.oak-park.us/housing, email housing@oak-park.us or call 708.358.5410.



COVID-19 News

Breaking down vaccine hesitancy... Tens of thousands of Oak Park residents are vaccinated against COVID-19, but vaccine hesitancy still persists in our community. Oak Parkers are invited to help break down vaccine hesitancy by sharing why they got vaccinated on yard signs available from the Oak Park Department of Public Health. Residents can email health@oak-park.us to request a yard sign be dropped off at their residence or stop by Village Hall between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday to pick up a sign. Supplies are limited. Residents are invited to share the messages on their yard signs on social media using the hashtag **#OakParkVaccinated**. The Health Department is also addressing vaccine hesitancy by training volunteers to help answer questions and provide information about COVID-19 vaccines. Be on the lookout for volunteers with the Village's Medical Reserve Corps and Community Emergency Response Team who will be accompanying the Health Department's mobile response van at community events. COVID-19 vaccines are safe, highly effective and help protect the most vulnerable among us, including those who are not yet eligible or may not be able to receive vaccines. For more information about vaccination opportunities in Oak Park, visit www.oak-park.us/vaccine. For information about volunteering with the Medical Reserve Corps and Community Emergency Response Team, visit www.oak-park.us/emergencypreparedness.

Frequent testing essential... COVID-19 testing remains an important tool in the fight against the virus as it allows public health officials to isolate those who are contagious and alert those who were exposed through contact tracing. Local health officials encourage anyone experiencing COVID-19 symptoms such as fever and/or cough to get tested, even if they are vaccinated. COVID-19 testing is available at many pharmacy locations, through most healthcare providers and the Oak Park Health Department, which offers rapid testing through its mobile response van. The Illinois Department of Public Health also operates free COVID-19 testing sites where no appointment or insurance is necessary. Find the list of locations at www.dph.illinois.gov/testing.

Pick Oak Park supports local business community

Oak Park is home to many independently owned restaurants, breweries, boutiques and health and fitness studios offering everything you, your kids and even your pet may need. Local businesses are owned by neighbors and friends who care about their customers and are invested in the well-being of the community and its future. *Pick Oak Park* is a Village-wide campaign to support the more than 1,200 local businesses that call Oak Park home. Continued support for local stores and restaurants is critical as businesses work to serve customers safely and navigate the challenges brought on by COVID-19. When considering shopping online or in person, residents are encouraged to look first at local businesses. Visit www.pickoakpark.com and follow Pick Oak Park on Facebook and Instagram to learn more about Oak Park's creative, innovative, diverse and committed business community. The Pick Oak Park website also includes a directory of local businesses by business district.

Vaccination urged as flu season approaches

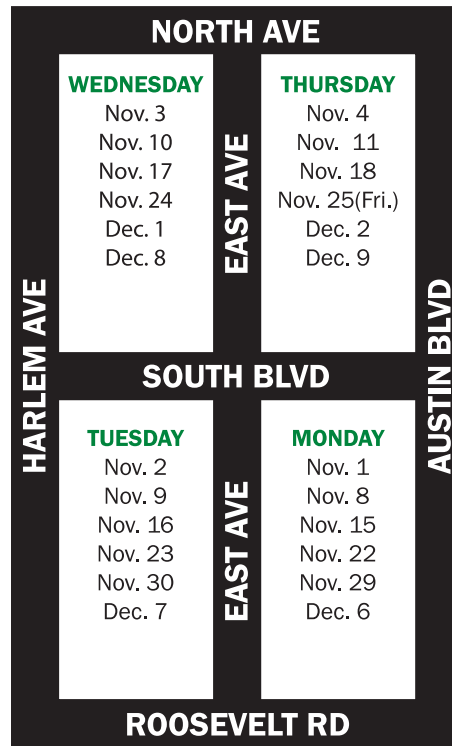
As the flu season approaches, local public health officials are reminding residents that shots are recommended for everyone older than six months. Flu vaccine is offered at numerous commercial pharmacies, grocery stores and other retail sites in the Oak Park area. Most of these sites accept private insurances and Medicare Part B to help cover the cost of the flu shot. Many sites will vaccinate children as young as 18 months. Help finding a flu shot provider is available at flushot.healthmap.org. Residents also can email health@oak-park.us or call 708.358.5480 with questions about access to an affordable flu shot.

Village to begin collecting leaves in November

The Village and its contractors will collect fallen leaves from Nov. 1 – Dec. 10. Six pickups are planned for each section of the Village as indicated on the map. Leaves should be raked into the street at least 18 inches from the curb the day before the scheduled pickup dates. Leaves will be collected the following day. Residents who miss a scheduled pickup date should keep their leaves on the parkway until the night before the next scheduled pickup. Cooperation is essential to the success of program, so please follow these simple rules:

- Consider composting or using the leaves as garden mulch instead of raking.
- Rake leaves into the street the day before the scheduled pickup date.
- Leaves only — do not add brush, grass clippings or yard waste.
- Do not park on or near a pile of leaves, which can hinder leaf removal operations. Heat from a car also could ignite the leaves.
- Rake leaves onto side streets whenever possible, avoiding major thoroughfares where piles of leaves might create traffic hazards.
- Do not rake leaves into or close to cul de sacs or traffic diverters — the equipment needs room to operate.
- Do not rake leaves into or close to bus shelters or bicycle racks.
- Keep catch basins clear of raked leaves to avoid flooding.
- Inform landscape services of the leaf collection schedule.
- Obey all parking restrictions — regulations will be strictly enforced.
- Dampen piles after raking to avoid leaves being blown by the wind.
- Drive carefully. Leaves are slippery when wet and large piles may hinder visibility.
- Be alert — crews may need to create safe work zones and briefly close intersections while removing large leaf piles.

For more information call 358.5700 or email publicworks@oak-park.us.



2021 LEAF MAP

Clip and Save

Who to Call

Dial Direct (area code 708)

Village Hall	oak-park.us
TTY	711
Adjudication	358.5630
Development Customer Services	358.5420
Business Services	358.5425
Neighborhood Services	358.5410
Housing	option 1
CDBG	option 2
Property complaints	option 3
Permits & Inspections	358.5430
Planning	358.5440
General questions	option 1
Historic Preservation	option 2
Zoning	option 3
Finance	358.5460
Utility Billing Inquiries	358.5478
Fire (nonemergency)	358.5600
Human Resources	358.5650
Job Hotline	358.5650
Mayor & Trustees	358.5784
Police (nonemergency)	386.3800
Crime Tip Hotline	434.1636
Public Health	358.5480
Animal Control	358.5680
Public Works	358.5700
Parking	358.7275
Village Clerk	358.5670
Village Manager's Office	358.5770

EMERGENCIES **911**

Park District	www.pdop.org
Administration	725.2017
Customer Service	725.2000
Building & Grounds	725.2050
Business Operations	725.2015

Public Library	www.oppl.org
Main Library	383.8200
Maze Branch	386.4751
Dole Branch	386.9032

School District 97	www.op97.org
Administration	524.3000

School District 200	www.oprfhs.org
Administration	383.0700

Township	www.oakparktownship.org
Senior Services	383.8060
Youth Services	445.2727
General Assistance	383.8005
Assessor Services	383.8005
Mental Health Board	358.8855
Transportation	383.4806

Organize a neighborhood clean-up event



Residents and organizations located in Oak Park can help improve the community by organizing a neighborhood clean-up event as part of the Keep Oak Park Beautiful initiative. The Village will provide up to 10 heavy duty trash bags, 10 pairs of gloves and 10 pink refuse stickers that can be used to collect litter from alleys and parkways. Brooms and shovels are also available to borrow on a first come, first served basis. Visit www.oak-park.us/neighborhoodcleanup to sign up and for tips to hosting a safe and successful event. For more information about the program, email publicworks@oak-park.us.

oak-park.us/enews

facebook.com/vopnews

instagram.com/oakparkil

twitter.com/vopnews

youtube.com/vopnews

Social Services News

Homelessness assistance resources...Residents who are homeless or who know someone who is homeless or at risk of being homeless now have a single resource for all suburban Cook County support services. Called *Entry Point*, trained staff works with households to understand their needs using a standardized assessment based on federal eligibility guidelines and uniform prioritization policies. The goal is to ensure individuals are referred to the right programs based on their preferences and needs. The service is available through the Suburban Cook Call Center at 1.877.426.6515 and Housing Forward, 6634 W Roosevelt Rd. More information about the program is posted online at www.myentrypoint.org.

Social services referrals...Online referral network The HUB connects individuals with a broad network of local and regional agencies and institutions that offer free and reduced-cost social services, including senior and youth services, developmental disabilities, medical health care and behavioral/mental health services. The service is available around the clock at www.healthconnectionhub.org.

Senior benefits counseling...Senior citizens and individuals with disabilities can get help understanding and enrolling in local, state and federal assistance programs, including Medicare, through the Oak Park Township. Counselors are available by appointment from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., weekdays — call 708.383.8060. Information on Township Senior Services programs is posted online at www.oakparktownship.org/senior-services. Counselors also can help with understanding options in a Medicare Part D prescription plan.

Youth hygiene closet...Residents are invited to donate new sealed, unopened hygiene products that can be distributed to Oak Park teens in need. Personal products like shampoo, toothpaste, soap, lotion and shaving cream are needed. Call Oak Park Township Youth Services at 708.445.2727 to arrange a donation or an at-home pick-up.

Memory café...Individuals living with memory loss and their caregivers have a safe online space to connect, and enjoy recreational and educational opportunities at The Memory Café. Online gatherings are set for 2 p.m., Tuesdays, Sept. 21 and Oct. 19. Call 708.383.8060 or email memorycafe@oakparktownship.org for more information or to register. Volunteer opportunities also are available.

Drivers urged to take extra care



should never attempt to pass a stopped school bus with lights flashing. To protect the many students who typically trek along Oak Park streets to their neighborhood schools, police have stepped up their presence with additional enforcement efforts at key crossings and along walking routes. For more information about Oak Park Police Department school programs, call 708.386.3800 or email police@oak-park.us.

Still time for community awards nominations

There is still time to submit nominations for the 2021 aging in place, historic preservation and sustainability awards that recognize efforts made by organizations, individuals and businesses that have played roles in improving the community. Winners will be recognized by the Village Board.

Aging in Place...Oak Park businesses, organizations and other entities that provide extraordinary accessibility for older residents and their families may be nominated for efforts to provide easy access to older residents, create an inviting physical space and offer a welcoming, helpful, service-oriented attitude. The deadline for nominations is Oct. 15. More details and an online nomination form are posted at www.oak-park.us/aginginplaceawards.

Historic Preservation...Nomination categories include restoration, rehabilitation, adaptive use, additions/new construction, stewardship, detail and design. Nominations need not be in a historic district and interior work may be considered in conjunction with exterior work. The deadline for nominations is Oct. 15. More details and a link to the online nomination form are posted at www.oak-park.us/preservationawards.

Sustainability...Efforts have broadened to recognize people, organizations, businesses and volunteers who actively seek to help our community adjust to a rapidly changing climate. Examples include energy efficiency, renewable energy, green infrastructure, water mitigation, climate action education, environmental justice, and composting education. Nominations may be submitted on behalf of any person, organization, group or business. The deadline for nominations is Oct. 15. More information and a nomination form are posted at www.oak-park.us/greenawards.

View with a smartphone camera.



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



Village President Vicki Scaman

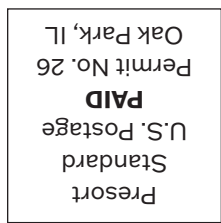
Trustees

Susan Buchanan
Lucia Robinson
Chibuke Enyia
Jim Taglia
Ravi Parakkat
Arti Walker-Peddakortia

Village Clerk Christina M. Waters
Interim Village Manager Lisa Shelley

Residential Customer Local
Oak Park, Illinois

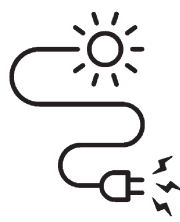
Postal Carrier
Pre-Sort



Sustainability News

New campaign to promote energy efficiency home improvements

Oak Park is rolling out its *Better Homes, Better Planet* sustainability campaign to pair homeowners, renters and landlords with tools to help lower energy bills and reduce the Village's carbon footprint on the planet.



The energy used by Oak Park's residential properties is the biggest local contributor to climate change. That's why the Village is focusing on programs that not only are environmentally friendly, but also help make homes more comfortable and lower utility bills. Programs in place and on the drawing board include support for community solar initiatives, energy assessments, weatherization, energy efficiency improvements and

grants for income-eligible residents. For more information, call 708.358.5770, email sustainability@oak-park.us or visit www.oak-park.us/housing.

Electricity aggregation supports renewable initiatives

Oak Park has extended its electricity aggregation program for an additional seven months with Chicago-based MC Squared Energy Services, LLC (mc2). Effective with the October meter reads, the contract ensures aggregation participants will never pay more than those customers whose electricity is supplied by ComEd. In addition, the electricity supply rate includes the three-tenths of one cent per kilowatt hour fee that goes into a Village fund created in 2015 to help support local renewable energy projects. Oak Park residents and small businesses also may continue to subscribe to the community program that supports northern Illinois solar facilities that are expected to come online later this year. More details on community solar is posted at www.oak-park.us/communitysolarsignup.

About aggregation...Electricity aggregation allows municipalities to bundle residential and smaller business accounts, then use competitive bidding to seek lower rates from alternate suppliers. Aggregation does not alter the actual delivery of electricity, which is provided by ComEd. In fact, consumers have the option of choosing from retail electric suppliers approved by the Illinois Commerce Commission. Officials urge those who elect to choose an electricity provider from the state's list to read the fine print carefully. Contracts may contain unexpected fees and penalties to cancel. For answers to questions about Oak Park's Community Choice Electricity Aggregation Program, call 708.358.5778 or email sustainability@oak-park.us.

Get neighborhood policing updates

Residents interested in timely and informative updates from their police residential beat officer (RBO), may sign up for monthly newsletters and attend regular virtual meetings. RBOs use the newsletters and meetings to provide helpful, practical information tailored to the neighborhoods they serve. They discuss issues, report on crime trends, provide crime prevention tips and answer questions. More information about each officer, a map of the zones and how to sign up for email and meeting alerts is available at www.oak-park.us/rbo.

News from the Farmers' Market

With fall comes a changing variety of produce at the Oak Park Farmers' Market. Plums, nectarines, peaches, pears, grapes, apples and cider are just some of the seasonal favorites now available along with meats, eggs, honey and cheese from the nearly two dozen regular Market vendors.

The Oak Park Farmers' Market is held from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Saturday from mid-May through October on Lake Street, just west of Ridgeland Avenue. For more information, visit www.oak-park.us/farmersmarket.