

Volunteers to play vital role in emergency responses

When first responders in Oak Park need a hand with first aid, crowd control or search-and-rescue, they can count on a group of trained, local volunteers to pitch in and help out.

The Village's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) is now up and running, with about 25 volunteers trained and equipped to assist public safety officials in Oak Park and surrounding towns.

The CERT Program is all about raising the community spirit in the emergency preparedness arena, officials say. Volunteers will play a vital role in the Village's disaster response and recovery capabilities.

CERT volunteers come from a variety of backgrounds, including health care and public education. Local school districts 97 and 200 also sent representatives.

Training was provided by the Illinois Terrorism Task Force and the Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System, statewide organizations that coordinate mutual aid and promote preparedness.

Three, day-long training courses focused on first aid, basic firefighting and emergency response techniques. Hands-on workshops taught



Oak Park's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

participants how to properly search using a grid pattern, which they employed to find an infant mannequin hidden in an urban area.

Training participants learned about what CERT is, what it means and why it is important to prepare ordinary citizens to help first responders.

Now that the CERT team is ready to go, the Village's Emergency Preparedness Division, housed in the Public Health Department, intends to keep

the individual volunteers motivated and engaged with future training in radio operations, forestry, advanced first aid, traffic control and weather monitoring.

Oak Park's CERT team, which is registered through the Federal Emergency Management Agency, can be deployed as one large group or split up into several smaller response teams as needed.

For more information on CERT and emergency preparedness, call 708.358.5488 or email health@oak-park.us.

New overnight parking program offers more passes, online option

Oak Parkers now can request up to 10 temporary, overnight on-street parking passes per month — three are free and the other seven are \$7 each. In addition to significantly increasing the number of passes, users can request free passes and purchase additional passes online. To use the system the first time, go to www.oak-park.us/onlineservices, click on *Overnight Parking Pass* and create an account. You will need a credit card, telephone number and the vehicle's license plate number. One

account can manage multiple license plate numbers. Just enter the block and street where the vehicle will be parked. The system will keep track of the number of times per month that vehicle is parked. The first three are free, and then your credit card will be billed for each additional pass you request that month — up to the maximum. Parking enforcement officers will be able to check which vehicles have passes via a smartphone. The new service was developed by PassportParking, an

industry leader in integrated cloud-based parking solutions that offer user-friendly cashless payment options. PassportParking also developed the Village's mobile payment parking system. At this time, the live overnight parking pass request telephone system will continue to issue the free passes. The additional passes can only be purchased online or in person during normal business hours at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. For information on parking in Oak Park, visit www.oak-park.us/parking.

Village preparing to seek bids for electricity aggregation program

The Village is preparing to go back onto the open market to seek bids from electricity providers for the Community Choice Aggregation Program that bundles residential and small business electric accounts to reduce costs. Meetings to gather public input on how the program will be administered are scheduled for 7 p.m., March 6 and 13 at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. The Community Choice Aggregation Program was approved by voters in April 2011 and the subsequent bid process garnered a provider that not only offered a lower cost, but also guaranteed power from cleaner sources. Officials say the upcoming bid may be affected by anticipated rising costs associated with changes in the energy market and delivery of electricity. For more information on Oak Park's Community Choice Aggregation Program visit www.oak-park.us and search aggregation.

Tuesday lectures tackle environmental issues

The Environment & Energy Commission has partnered with local organizations to present the ninth annual Green Tuesday environmental lecture series scheduled for 7 to 8:30 p.m. each Tuesday in April at the Oak Park Public Library, 834 Lake St. Like Green Tuesdays of the past, the 2014 series will focus on current unique local environmental challenges. As the world's population migrates to cities, and as the reality of climate change becomes increasingly clear, the need to create sustainable communities is more important than ever. Green Tuesdays in the Village will seek to do just that locally by aligning with the 2014 Earth Day global theme of Green Cities. For more information, call 708.358.5700 or email publicworks@oak-park.us.

Township offers financial aid

Unemployed, typically single, non-dependent, adults seeking employment or applying for Social Security Disability Insurance may be eligible for monthly financial aid and other assistance through Township General Assistance (GA). Applicants must be Oak Park residents with no, or very low, income and liquid assets and not be eligible for other government-sponsored assistance. Able GA clients are required to seek volunteer work for at least eight hours monthly to maintain personal and work skills for continuity in the job search. Additional assistance for GA clients this spring includes an April 30 workshop on how to market yourself and a May 28 job fair. Call 708.383.8005 or visit oakparktownship.org for more information.

Rental property owners, managers get new crime-fighting tool

With the recent adoption of a crime-free housing ordinance, Oak Park rental property owners and managers now have a powerful new tool to help reduce the chances of criminal activity in individual rented units. The cornerstone of the new program is a lease addendum that puts potential tenants on notice that they are liable for any criminal activity within their units. And if criminal activity does occur, the lease can be terminated and eviction action initiated. The ordinance is very specific about what is considered criminal activity. Care also was taken to ensure a property owner or manager can't simply make an accusation as a reason to terminate a lease. For example, the ordinance clearly exempts victims of domestic violence. Police will make the final determination if the criminal activity rises to the level of the crime-free ordinance. In addition, the ordinance extends the Village's existing rental property licensing requirement for buildings with four or more units to all rental property, including single-family, condominiums and two- and three-flat homes. For more information on the crime-free housing program, call 708.358.5410 or email housing@oak-park.us.

Participants sought for sustainability research study

Oak Parkers are invited to participate in a study to determine what factors actually contribute to sustainability in an urban/suburban context. Entitled *A Study of the Sustainability Implications of Differing Urban + Suburban Locations in Chicago*, the project is a partnership between the Village, the Illinois Institute of Technology and the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat (CTBUH). To get involved in the study, just go to edu.surveymz.com/s3/1521932/ **Oak-Park** and take a survey, which covers topics such as energy consumption, transport movements and quality of life. All responses are confidential. The project is being led by Oak Park resident Antony Wood, Ph.D. Questions about the survey or the study should be directed to pdu@iit.edu.

Deadline nears for health award nominations

March 21 is the deadline to nominate someone for a Fitzsimmons Award, which honors those who made exceptional contributions to improving the health of Oak Parkers during 2013. A nomination form is posted at www.oak-park.us and available at Village Hall. Completed forms should be mailed to or dropped off at the Oak Park Department of Public Health, Village Hall, 123 Madison St., Oak Park, IL 60302, Attn: Public Health Awards. Nominations also may be sent via email to health@oak-park.us. Nominations submitted via email should include responses to all fields listed in the original nomination form. The award is named for local physician and humanitarian William Fitzsimmons who served as the Health Department's medical consultant from 1976 to 1992. For more information on the awards program, call 708.358.5480 or email health@oak-park.us.

Customer service reinvigorated at Village Hall

Residents looking ahead to a spring kitchen remodel — and developers with a project plan — should be in for a new experience at Village Hall, thanks to the reorganization of municipal resources related to redevelopment and property improvements. The new *Development Customer Services Department* brings building permits, inspections, code enforcement, business licensing, planning, historic preservation, zoning, housing and federal grant administration into a new management structure designed to streamline Village Hall processes and enhance customer service. Property improvement projects big and small often have to navigate multiple processes designed to ensure public safety and historic preservation through a wide range of local, state and federal regulations. With all of these programs now linked within a central management process, the Village is embracing the ideal of one-stop shopping when it comes to investing in an Oak Park property. As technology upgrades are installed later this year, customers can expect a new focus on streamlining processes and improving overall service. The end result should be quicker response times and speedy resolution of issues that can affect a property improvement project or investment opportunity.

Daylight Saving Time returns

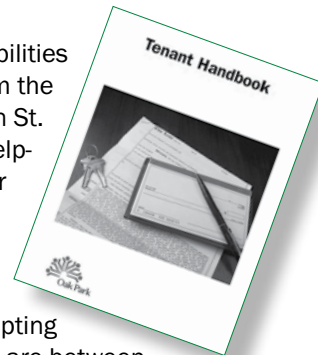
Daylight Saving Time will begin at 2 a.m. on Sun., March 9. Clocks should be set ahead one hour. The Oak Park Fire Department recommends using the time change as a convenient reminder to replace the batteries in all smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. More than 90 percent of homes in the United States have smoke detectors, but one-third are estimated to have dead or missing batteries. For more information, call 708.445.3300 or email fire@oak-park.us.

News for Renters

Discrimination complaints... Village Code defends the rights of individuals within the protected classes of race, sex, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, veteran status, sexual orientation, age, marital status, familial status or disability in the purchasing, leasing, securing a loan, renting or occupying housing or other real estate. Any person otherwise qualified who is denied or discriminated against in these processes should call 708.358.5407 or email community@oak-park.us for more information, conciliation or to file a formal, written complaint.

Interest rates on security deposits... Tenants of apartment buildings containing four or more units are entitled to interest on their security deposits. Interest must be paid or applied toward rent within 30 days of the expiration of each 12-month period. The security deposit must have been held for at least six months and the rent must be current to be eligible for interest. Call 708.358.5407 or email community@oak-park.us for more information.

Tenant handbook... A free handbook outlining rights, responsibilities and regulations is available online at www.oak-park.us or from the Community Relations Department in Village Hall, 123 Madison St. The handbook does not offer legal advice, but does contain helpful hints and tips for positive landlord/tenant relationships. For more information call 708.358.5407 or email community@oak-park.us.



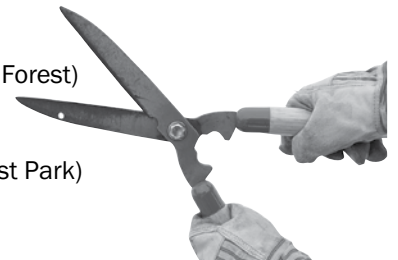
Dispute resolution... Free mediation services are available to help landlords and tenants resolve issues that may be disrupting quality of life. Participation is voluntary and agreements made are between the two parties and not enforced by the Village. To learn more, call 708.358.5407 or email community@oak-park.us.

Yard waste collection to begin

Collection of yard waste will begin April 1. Bundled brush no larger than two feet in diameter and four feet in length and yard waste such as grass clippings, leaves, shrubs and vines will be picked up on regular refuse collection days. A green yard waste sticker must be attached to each brush bundle, 32-gallon paper bag and rigid container. Residents are urged to look for alternatives to bagging yard waste such as mulching mowers, leaf shredders or backyard compost piles. For more information, call 708.358.5700 or email publicworks@oak-park.us.

Where to Buy Yard Waste Stickers

- Village Hall, 123 Madison St.
- Jewel Food Stores, 438 Madison St., 7036 Roosevelt Road and 7525 Lake St. (River Forest)
- Dressel's Ace Hardware, 1137 Chicago Ave.
- Fair Share Finer Foods, 6226 Roosevelt Road
- Schauer Ace Hardware, 7449 Madison St. (Forest Park)



Early voting offered

Registered voters can cast a Primary Election ballot at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. from March 3 – 15. Village Hall voting hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., including Saturdays. Valid photo identification is required to cast an early vote. Valid forms of ID include a current driver's license, state-issued ID card, university/college ID or another government-issued ID with a photograph. For more information on the March 18, 2014 Gubernatorial Primary Election, including polling places and offices on the ballot, visit cookcountyclerk.com.

Police News

police@oak-park.us

Cell phone use regulations enforced... Oak Park Police aggressively enforce state laws that make it illegal to use a hand-held cell phone while driving. Under state law, motorists are prohibited from using a cell or smart phone while driving unless via a hands-free device. With research supporting that all cell phone use is equally distracting once a conversation begins, Oak Park Police urge motorists to put their devices aside while driving.

Concealed-carry... Oak Park Police are working with local businesses and organizations to help them understand their rights and responsibilities under the state's new concealed-carry law. Carrying a concealed firearm is prohibited in most public buildings and gatherings, including schools, parks, playgrounds and government facilities such as Village Hall, as well as establishments where more than 50 percent of the gross receipts are from alcohol sales. Property owners who wish to prohibit patrons from carrying a concealed firearm on their premises must display a state-approved sign. For more details on the new law, including sign specifics, call 708.386.3800 or visit www.isp.state.il.us and click on firearms under the agency links tab.



Police escort... Any resident uneasy about walking to or from a public transit stop, public garage or other site in the community may contact the Police Department for an escort from dusk until dawn. Residents are asked to consider seeking assistance from friends and family first, since officers may be needed for emergency calls. Call 708.386.3800 for information or an escort.

Get to know your resident beat police officer... The Resident Beat Officer Program emphasizes the value of open communication between the Oak Park Police Department and the community by assigning sworn officers to work from their homes in the community. Each Resident Beat Officer – or RBO – works directly with neighbors to identify and address local problems. All RBOs can be reached by telephone or email. For information on your neighborhood's RBO, visit www.oak-park.us/police.

Crime Tip Hot Line... Citizens are urged to report any suspicious activity to the Police Department's Crime Tip Hot Line at 708.434.1636. All callers remain anonymous. Anonymous tips also can be made at www.oak-park.us/police. In an emergency, always call 9-1-1.

Don't hesitate to call 9-1-1... Oak Park's community policing approach relies on residents taking an active role. If you see unusual activity, suspicious people or vehicles in your neighborhood, call 9-1-1 immediately. For more information on the Community Policing Program, or to contact your Resident Beat Officer, call 708.386.3800 or visit www.oak-park.us/police.

Learn to save money by not wasting food

Oak Park households are being sought to participate in a free, two-month program to learn how to support sustainability and save money by not wasting food. The program, entitled *Food: Too Good to Waste*, is sponsored by the Village, the USEPA and Seven Generations Ahead, a local organization that promotes ecologically sustainable and healthy communities. Participants will learn to save money by shopping smarter, keeping fruits and vegetables fresh, eating what they buy and composting what they cannot eat. A household of four is projected to save \$30 a week by using the program's toolkit. To sign up or learn more, email jennifer@sevengenerationsahead.org or call 708.660.9909, ext. 7.



Clip and Save

Who to Call

Dial Direct (area code 708)

Village Hall	oak-park.us
TTY	711
Adjudication	358.5479
Building and Property Standards	358.5430
Schedule an inspection	option 1
Review status check	option 2
Report property condition	option 3
Speak with an inspector	option 4
Community Planning	358.5420
Historic Preservation	358.5417
Zoning	358.5449
Business Services	358.5648
Housing	358.5410
Community Relations	358.5405
Graffiti Hotline	358.5429
Neighborhood Programs	358.5405
Finance	358.5460
Utility Billing Inquiries	358.5478
Fire (nonemergency)	358.5600
Human Resources	358.5650
Job Hotline	358.5650
Police (nonemergency)	386.3800
Crime Tip Hotline	434.1636
Public Health	358.5480
Animal Control	358.5680
Public Works	358.5700
Parking	358.7275
Day Parking Passes	option 3
Extended Pass	option 4
Night Parking Pass	option 2
Parking Permits	option 5
Snow Hotline	option 1
Vehicle Stickers	option 5
Village Board	358.5784
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	434.3107

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

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Earth Fest 2014 set for April 26

The Village's fifth annual celebration of green living — Earth Fest — is scheduled for 10



a.m. to 2 p.m., Sat., April 26, in the LEED® Gold-certified Public Works Center, 201 South Blvd. This year's event will highlight green block

party planning, eco-friendly businesses, local

chefs and restaurants, games and activities for children, items for sale and entertainment. In addition, Recycle Alley is back by popular demand, with drop-off boxes for prescription glasses, hearing aids, rechargeable batteries, cell phones and old blue jeans. Visit www.oak-park.us/earthfest for more information.

Vendors sought...Vendors are now being sought to display their ecofriendly goods and services at Earth Fest 2014. Special sponsorship opportunities also are available. For more information, call 708.358.5778 or email sustainability@oak-park.us. Applications also are available online at www.oak-park.us/earthfest.

Earth Hour is March 29...Oak Parkers are invited to turn off their lights for one hour beginning at 8:30 p.m., Sat., March 29, to stand up, take responsibility for and get involved in working toward a sustainable future. Since Earth Hour was launched in 2007, it has become the world's largest voluntary action with people, businesses and governments in 135 countries across every continent coming together to celebrate a commitment to the one thing that unites us all — the planet. For more information, visit www.earthhour.org.



Housing News

Sewer backup protection grants...Applications are now being accepted for financial assistance to install an overhead sewer or a backflow prevention system to protect homes from backup during a heavy rain event. Eligible homeowners may qualify for a grant of 50 percent of the total cost of sewer backup prevention improvements, up to a maximum of \$3,500. Anyone who meets the program guidelines can apply, regardless of income. Details on the program, including the application materials, are posted at www.oak-park.us — just search sewer grant. For more information, call 708.358.5410 or email housing@oak-park.us.

Free water-saving kits...Residents interested in saving water and energy are eligible for free water saver kits that can save up to 57 gallons of water per person per day. Each kit contains a low-flow shower head, low-flow kitchen and bath faucet aerators, and a toilet tank displacement device that can make any toilet a low-flow unit. Requests for a free kit may be made in person at the Housing & CDBG Programs Division office in Village Hall, 123 Madison St. or via email to housing@oak-park.us.



Energy and water efficiency rebates...Residents who install low-flow toilets with the WaterSense label may qualify for a \$100 rebate. The program, funded by the Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation and administered by the Village, will offer rebates to about 50 single-family households. Another 300 households will receive free water-saving shower heads and faucet aerators. For details, call 708.358.5410 or email housing@oak-park.us.

Accessibility modification loans...Forgivable loans of up to \$15,000 each to fund accessibility modifications for homes or apartments are available to residents who meet income restrictions. Applicants must have a physical or age-related impairment that requires modifications such as ramps, lifts or handrails, including for kitchens and bathrooms. Loans will be forgiven over five years. Call 708.358.5410 or email housing@oak-park.us for more information.

Down payment assistance...The West Cook County Housing Collaborative is making homeownership more affordable with \$10,000 in down payment assistance for select updated and rehabbed homes. Financing and the supply of homes is limited. Call 708.771.5801 to set up an application appointment. An application form also is available at www.westcookhomeownership.org.

First-time homebuyer seminars...Individuals interested in learning more about buying a home and securing a mortgage are invited to attend free seminars offered at 7 p.m., on the fourth Tuesday of every month in Village Hall, 123 Madison St. For more information, call the West Cook Homeownership Center at 708.771.5801.

Free condo board training...A series of free, one-hour training seminars to help condominium board members learn more about how to meet their responsibilities begins in March and runs through May. The seminars, presented by the Association of Condominium, Townhouse and Homeowners Associations (ACTHA), are scheduled for 7 p.m., at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. Advance registration is not required. Call 708.358.5410, email housing@oak-park.us or visit www.oakparkcondocorner.wordpress.com for more information.

Farmers' Market seeking volunteers

Volunteers are being sought to become Friends of the Oak Park Farmers' Market, with plans well underway for the opening of the 39th season. Friends of the Market become part of this quintessential Village experience by helping out at the commissioners' booth on Saturday mornings and contributing to the smooth running of the market. The market is open from 7 a.m. – 1 p.m., every Saturday, from mid-May through October, in the Pilgrim Church parking lot, 460 Lake St. For information on volunteering, email jrinks@oak-park.us, call 708.358.5780 or visit www.oak-park.us/farmersmarket.



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



OP/FYI

Village President Anan Abu-Taleb

Trustees

Peter Barber
Glenn Brewer
Adam Salzman
Ray Johnson
Bob Tucker

Village Clerk Teresa Powell
Village Manager Cara Pavlicek

Residential Customer Local
Oak Park, Illinois

Postal Carrier
Pre-Sort

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

Recycling opportunities ahead

The Village of Oak Park supports a variety of special recycling events in addition to its regular collection program. For more information on recycling in the Village call 708.358.5700 or email publicworks@oak-park.us. Here's a list of the upcoming events:

Lawnmower buy back...To help clean up the air in one of the state's most heavily polluted regions, the Village is inviting residents to exchange gas-powered lawnmowers for rebates of up to \$150 on the purchase of any new electric, battery-powered or non-motorized push mower. Lawnmowers can be dropped off from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Sat., March 29 at the Public Works Center, 201 South Blvd. All gas and oil must be emptied from the lawnmower.

Paint exchange...Safely dispose of unwanted, but useable latex paint or get free paint at the Great Paint Exchange, scheduled for Sat., April 12, at the Public Works Center, 201 South Blvd. Half-to-full cans of latex paint will be accepted from 9 – 11 a.m. Anyone in need of paint may pick it up from 12:30 – 2:30 p.m.

Paper shredding...Help prevent identity theft by shredding documents containing personal information at a free recycling event scheduled for 9 a.m. – noon, Sat., May 3, at the Public Works Center, 201 South Blvd. Each household is limited to two bags or small boxes. Only items with personal information such as canceled checks, documents containing credit card numbers, social security numbers and medical information will be accepted. Paper materials that can be placed in the recycling cart or bin, such as newspaper, magazines, chipboard or junk mail, will not be accepted.

Old clothing...The Public Works Department has partnered with the Epilepsy Foundation to collect clothing and apparel of all types and in any condition from 9 a.m. – noon, Sat., May 3, at the Public Works Center, 201 South Blvd. Items, including shoes, belts, hats, bags, linens and towels, will be sent to developing nations to repurpose. The Epilepsy Foundation also offers residential pickup – visit www.epilepsyichicago.org for more information.



News for pet owners

Renew licenses online...Oak Park pet owners who receive an animal license renewal application in the mail are encouraged to renew online at www.oak-park.us. Pet owners who renew online can delete pets they no longer own and add new ones. Payment is made with a credit card, a receipt sent via email and the actual tag delivered in the U.S. Mail. Pet owners still will have the option of mailing in their payment or coming to Village Hall, 123 Madison St. All dogs and outdoor cats are required to display a current animal license by May 1. The license fee is \$10 for a neutered/spayed dog and all cats, and \$13 for any non-spayed/non-neutered dog. Proof of a current rabies inoculation and spaying/neutering is required for licensing a new pet. For more information call 708.358.5680 or email health@oak-park.us.

Picking up a must...Responsible pet owners agree that picking up after one's dog is the right thing to do. Dog excrement is not only a nuisance, it's unhealthy and against the law. Anyone observing someone not picking up after a dog should call 708.358.5680 or email health@oak-park.us.

Leash required...All dogs that use any public street, sidewalk, parkway or public area within the Village must be on a leash controlled by the owner. The leash can be no longer than eight feet. For more information call 708.358.5680 or email health@oak-park.us.