

May 8 deadline to choose all-green electricity

Participants in the Village's electricity aggregation program have only through May 8 to choose electricity from renewable sources that have less impact on the environment.

The program's new supplier, Constellation Energy, is offering the option of all-green power, but only to those who call 1.800.718.1493 to make the choice.

Residents who have participated in the Village program should have received information in the mail from the Village and Constellation with details about the new contract and consumer options.

Aggregation program participants have the following options:

- Do nothing and be enrolled automatically in the Village's new base aggregation contract, which uses the least expensive sources of electricity;
- Call the toll-free number in the notice from the Village and choose Constellation's all-green supply option; or
- Opt out of the Village aggregation program by returning the card included in the notice received by mail or by calling Constellation.

Residents who opt out of the Village program will default to the state-approved ComEd rate unless they choose a supplier from a list of

companies allowed to provide electricity in Illinois. Residents who choose to seek their own supplier are cautioned to carefully read the terms of any agreement before they decide.

Oak Parkers interested in exploring electricity suppliers other than Constellation, can visit www.pluginillinois.org and compare offers from a wide range of companies approved by the Illinois Commerce Commission to sell power in the state.

In addition to the change in the cost of electricity, utility bills also will include a higher delivery charge, an expense that is beyond the control of local governments. Customers who examine their bill will see the cost of power and its delivery listed separately.

Regardless of who customers choose

as their electricity supplier, ComEd will continue to manage the delivery system and be responsible for service problems and billing issues.

The Village Board chose Constellation Energy through an online auction.

Constellation's bid of 7.47 cents per kilowatt hour was the lowest of three proposals submitted for a contract beginning June 1. Constellation's all-green option is 7.57 cents per kilowatt hour.

Oak Park's contract with Constellation is for one year. The Village likely will go back onto the open market in the spring of 2015 to seek new bids from electricity suppliers.

More information on the Community Choice Aggregation Program is posted at www.oak-park.us/aggregation.

Your Options

Easiest: Do nothing. You will be enrolled automatically in the Village's base contract from Constellation Energy. At 7.47 cents per kilowatt hour, this is the most affordable option, but it is not green energy.

Greenest: Call 1.800.718.1493 to enroll in Constellation's all-green energy option. This option will add about \$1 to the average homeowner's monthly bill compared to the base contract. You will need your ComEd account number.

More Options: Opt out of the Village's program and default to ComEd's state-approved rate, or choose from a variety of suppliers at www.pluginillinois.org.

Farmers' Market to begin 39th season on May 24th

The Oak Park Farmers' Market will open its 39th season on Sat., May 24. The Farmers' Market will be held from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Saturday from opening day through Nov. 1 in the Pilgrim Congregational Church parking lot, 460 Lake St., one block west of Ridgeland Avenue. In addition to a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, flowers, bedding plants, honey, cheese, frozen meat, bread and baked goods the Market also features donuts made

on-site, fresh coffee and live bluegrass music. Regional vendors will feature sustainable, organic and locally sourced goods again this season, including several heirloom products. To help support Market administration, a variety of items will be sold at the information tent, including reusable shopping bags, t-shirts and travel mugs. This season's special events will include Go Green from 9 a.m. to noon, May 24 and 31; a corn roast from

9 a.m. – noon on Aug. 16; and stone soup from 9 to 10 a.m. on Nov. 1, the Market's final day. Non-profit bake sales will be offered each Saturday as well as occasional cooking demonstrations featuring chefs from local restaurants. A majority of the vendors now accept credit/debit cards as well as Link cards. For more information call 708.358.5780, email farmersmarket@oak-park.us or visit www.oak-park.us/farmersmarket.

Bike sharing study planned

Bike sharing, the popular program that rents out bikes on street corners throughout Chicago and other cities, may be on its way to Oak Park. A new study commissioned by the Village through the Active Transportation Alliance will focus on ways to bring bike sharing and other bike-related practices and infrastructure to Oak Park. The study will serve as an addendum to Oak Park's 2008 *Bicycle Plan*. Bike sharing is a popular strategy for encouraging community biking and a healthy, green transportation environment. Oak Park hopes to bring bike sharing to the community by extending Chicago's Divvy Bike Share System into the Village. As part of this process, planners and bike advocates will look at access to job centers, transit hubs, shopping and tourism, among other crucial destinations. The study will review the 2008 Bicycle Plan, provide a detailed analysis of target locations and technical recommendations for placing and spacing bike stations, and recommend specific treatments and facilities to implement the network. Outreach efforts, including public meetings and online surveys, are planned as well. For more information on the bike study, email parking@oak-park.us.



Organize an alley cleanup

The Village provides free plastic bags, refuse stickers, disposable rubber gloves and information to help neighbors organize a safe and successful alley cleanup event. Events held during May and June will coincide with the Great American Clean-Up, an effort organized by Keep America Beautiful to transform public spaces into beautiful places through the actions of volunteers. Committee members of the local affiliate, Keep Oak Park Beautiful, will take before-and-after photographs for its regular reports to the national organization. For more information, call 708.358.5700 or email publicworks@oak-park.us.

Adopt a block

Residents, community groups and business owners are invited to adopt a block by committing to removing litter at least once a month for a year. The Keep Oak Park Beautiful committee will provide trash bags, refuse stickers, gloves, safety vests and an adopt-a-block sign listing the name of the participating individual or group. Call 708.358.5700 or email publicworks@oak-park.us for more information.

Composting program offered

With the goal of decreasing the amount of organic refuse sent to landfills, the Village of Oak Park offers a food scrap composting program to residents throughout the community. The cost is \$14 per month, which is about the same as recycling one bag of yard waste per week under the current Village-wide program that does not accept food scraps. Participants receive a special 96-gallon mobile cart for organics, an under-sink collection bucket and a box of compostable bags for food scraps. Subscribers who use the organics cart for their yard waste and food scraps are not required to purchase yard waste stickers for grass clippings placed into the organics cart. Residents who maintain backyard compost piles or who mulch grass clippings are urged to investigate sharing organics carts and costs with neighbors. Food scraps and food-soiled paper are the largest portion of the residential waste stream, representing about 35 percent of what residents throw away. About 500 households currently participate in the Village's composting program. For more information, call 708.358.5700 or email compostable@oak-park.us.



Construction season gets underway

Warmer weather typically means road construction and this year is no exception. Among the most visible projects will be extensive work on Ridgeland Avenue beginning next month that will include replacing sewer lines along various sections of the roadway and resurfacing from I-290 to Division Street. The project also will include adding bike-share lane pavement markings from Roosevelt Road to North Avenue. Bike lanes and shared lane markings along Jackson Boulevard from Harlem Avenue to Ridgeland Avenue also likely will be part of the scheduled resurfacing of Jackson between Harlem and Oak Park avenues. In addition to new pavement planned for various other streets in the community, 13 alley segments will be replaced beginning midsummer. The Village received a federal grant for bike parking improvements at four locations near mass transit stations, including shelters at three locations near the Blue Line. A new traffic signal will be installed at the intersection of Washington Boulevard at Wisconsin Avenue/ Marion Street and the state will be upgrading signals at 28 intersections. An interactive map to track and display major construction projects planned for 2014 is available at www.oak-park.us/construction. As Village-managed project start dates near, residents who live in areas most affected will receive a written alert. Parking permit holders affected by construction will be notified prior to work beginning and temporary alternate arrangements made. A special construction telephone line — 708.358.5701 — will provide regularly updated recorded messages on the largest projects around the clock. For more detailed information, call 708.358.5700 or email publicworks@oak-park.us.

Township program can help with youth substance abuse

Parents and guardians of middle school or high school aged youth are invited to enroll in *FACE-IT* (Families Acting Collaboratively to Educate and Involve Teens), a program that provides a confidential group setting to learn about and discuss the legal and health effects of substance abuse. Topics covered include communication, handling stress and underage drinking. Two-hour weekly sessions are held from 6 to 8 p.m., Thursdays. Enrollment typically is for five to 12 sessions. For more information, call 708.445.2727 or visit www.oakparktownship.org.

What participants say

Parents:

I liked sharing with other families...

My son and I have better communication...

I learned alcohol and drug awareness and positive ways to deal with stress...

Youth:

I learned how to stay calm in bad situations...

I became a lot more honest and open with my family...

I learned a lot and will keep it in my heart...

Forum to address talking sex with teens

An interactive forum designed to help effectively communicate with kids about risky sexual behaviors is scheduled for 7 p.m., Tues., May 20, at the main branch of the Oak Park Public Library, 834 Lake St. Sara Manewith, the past president of the Illinois Caucus on Adolescent Health, and current staff member at Loyola University's School of Social Work, will lead the forum. The presentation is sponsored by the Health Department with funding from the Illinois Department of Public Health. Seating is limited. Please register by calling 708.358.5483.

Housing News

Free water-saving kits...Residents interested in saving water and energy are eligible for free 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. Kits must be picked up.

Energy and water efficiency measures...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, offers rebates to about 50 single-family households. For details, call 708.358.5410 or email housing@oak-park.us.

Sewer Backup Protection Grant Program accepting applications...Applications are now being accepted for a program that provides financial assistance to property owners who install an overhead sewer system or a backflow prevention system to protect their homes from sewer backup during a heavy rain event. Anyone who meets the program guidelines can apply, regardless of income. 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. Details on the program, including the application materials, are posted at www.oak-park.us/sewergrant. For more information, call 708.358.5410 or email housing@oak-park.us.

Down payment assistance...The West Cook County Housing Collaborative is helping make 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. The next seminar is May 27. For more information, call 708.771.5801.

Public health contributors honored

Two individuals and three local organizations are being honored with the Dr. William Fitzsimmons Public Health Award for their contributions to the health and well-being of Oak Parkers. The annual awards are presented by the Oak Park Board of Health and the Oak Park Department of Public Health. For more information on the annual Fitzsimmons Award, call 708.358.5480 or email health@oak-park.us. This year's winners are:

Dr. Paul Schattauer of the Green Medical Practice, which promotes preventing illness with a healthy lifestyle including eating well, exercise, fostering nurturing relationships, spending time with nature and avoiding toxic environments.

Greenline Wheels, which defines itself as a low-profit business with a social mission to encourage eco-friendly transportation in the Oak Park area.

Mary Ellen Sjostrom, RN, who, for almost 20 years, has been the first responder to the health needs of the thousands of adolescent Oak Park residents who attend Oak Park River and Forest High School.

Oak Park-River Forest Food Pantry, whose staff and volunteers provide nutritious groceries, produce, meat and dairy products to more than 15,000 needy families in Oak Park and surrounding communities each year.

Prevail, whose mission is to provide immediate and compassionate response to individuals and families facing financial crisis and offer supportive services.

May at the Conservatory

The Oak Park Conservatory, owned and operated by the Park District of Oak Park, offers a variety of activities and classes at its historic property, 615 Garfield St. For more information on the Conservatory or upcoming events and activities, call 708.725.2400 or visit www.oakparkconservatory.org.

Annual plant sale... A variety of vegetables, herbs and flowers grown in the Conservatory greenhouses will be on sale from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sat., May 3 and from noon to 3 p.m., Sun., May 4. This is the event's 29th year.

Plant exchange... The annual plant exchange is scheduled for Sat. May 10. Drop off plants from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., then come back to pick up plants from noon to 12:30 p.m.

Container workshop... Residents age 18 and older are invited to participate in a container workshop scheduled for 9 to 11 a.m., Sat. May 17. Participants will learn about design, plant combinations, planting, care and maintenance, then take home a fully planted, outdoor container. The fee is \$49 for residents, which includes materials. Register for class number 235265-01 at least a week in advance in person at the Conservatory or online at www.pdop.org.

Sustainable home landscaping... Learn how to design, water, fertilize, control pests and manage your landscape the green way at a class scheduled for 9 to 11:30 a.m., Sat., May 10. The fee is \$20 for residents. Register for class number 245243-01 at least a week in advance in person at the Conservatory or online at www.pdop.org.

From tiny seed to plant... Young children are invited to celebrate spring by growing a plant from a tiny seed from 10 a.m. to noon on Saturdays and 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., Sundays in May. The free Exploration Station encourages children to get dirty and plant some seeds and watch the magic happen as they grow.

Chicken health... Adults are invited to learn the signs of a sick bird, what to do to help and where to seek care during a class scheduled for 9 to 11 a.m., Sat., May 31. The fee is \$20 for residents. Register for class number 285235-01 at least a week in advance in person at the Conservatory or online at www.pdop.org.

Home energy audits offered

Assessments that can help lower a home's energy costs and boost comfort and value are available through Elevate Energy, formerly the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT). Assessments are \$99 or free to homeowners who invite five to 10 friends and neighbors to view a complete energy audit. The nonprofit organization also can connect homeowners with certified contractors, identify rebates for air sealing and insulation improvements and provide help with interest-free loans for all work completed. For more information, call 773.299.7653, email Skyler.larrimore@elevateenergy.org or visit www.elevateenergy.org.

Monthly electronic recycling returns

Electronic recycling will be offered on the last Saturday of each month beginning May 31. Items can be recycled from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the Public Works Center, 201 South Blvd. The final recycling event of the season will be Oct. 25. Acceptable items include computers, peripherals, laptops, monitors, TVs, cell phones, rechargeable batteries, printers, fax machines, MP3 players, portable digital assistants, video game consoles, video cassette recorders, digital video disk players, zip drives, scanners and microwaves. Such items are banned from Illinois landfills. The program is sponsored by the Illinois EPA, the West Cook County Solid Waste Agency and Vintage Tech Recyclers. For more information call 708.358.5700 or email publicworks@oak-park.us.

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.oprfs.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

Stay connected...

-  oak-park.us
-  facebook.com/vopnews
-  twitter.com/vopnews
-  pinterest.com/oakparkil
-  youtube.com/vopnews

Overnight parking passes available online

Oak Parkers can request up to 10 temporary, overnight on-street parking passes per month – three are free and the other seven \$7 each. Both free and paid passes can be requested 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. Then 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 \$7 for each additional pass you request that month – up to the maximum seven. Parking enforcement officers will be able to check which vehicles have passes via a smartphone. The live overnight parking pass request telephone system will continue to issue passes, but only the free ones. The additional passes can only be purchased online. For information on parking in Oak Park, visit www.oak-park.us/parking.

Outdoor sculpture walk returns



The outdoor Sculpture Walk will return on June 1, featuring 12 new works of public art. This year's walk will be in the Hemingway Business District along Oak Park Avenue between Ontario and Pleasant streets. A brochure with a map and descriptions of each sculpture will be available at the Oak Park Visitor's Center, 1010 Lake St. An interactive map will be posted at www.oak-park.us/sculpturewalk. Email sculpturewalk@oak-park.us for more information.

Vehicle sticker sales begin this month

Village vehicle stickers are scheduled to go on sale this month, as renewal notices go out to the nearly 28,000 residents who purchased stickers last year.

Every Oak Park resident who owns or leases a vehicle is required to purchase and display a Village sticker annually by July 15. Anyone who misses the deadline must pay a \$20 late fee in addition to the cost of the sticker.

Failure to display a valid Village sticker also could result in a \$50 ticket.

The late fee kicks in this year at the stroke of midnight, Mon., July 14.

Residents whose vehicles already are registered with the Village can save 10 percent by renewing online at www.oak-park.us/onlineservices, rather than via mail or in person at Village Hall, 123 Madison St.

First-time vehicle sticker purchasers — and residents who have turned 65 since they last renewed — must come to Village Hall and provide proof of residency, such as a lease, utility bill or other government-issued item. A driver's license and vehicle information also is required.

A current vehicle sticker is needed to purchase a parking permit.

Renewal forms mailed to current sticker holders include a unique web identification number that allows a vehicle owner to correct or update most data, including address and telephone number, and vehicle information. Online renewals require a credit card and an email address for confirmation.

Anyone who loses the renewal notice will be able to look up their web ID number using the email address or telephone number included in the previous year's application.

Residents who would like to renew online, but don't have access to a computer can come to Village Hall where a computer is available to the public for official Village business, or visit a branch of the Oak Park Public Library.

In-person sticker purchases and renewals are available at Village Hall from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Mondays, and 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Friday. Village Hall will be open for vehicle sticker purchases and renewals from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m., Sat., July 12, but will be closed on Mon., May 26 and Fri., July 4.

Individuals renewing in person are urged to bring their renewal notice to speed up processing.

Vehicle sticker rates vary by type of vehicle and persons age 65 and older, or who have a state-issued handicapped license plate or placard, receive a discount.

For more information call 708.358.7275, option 5, visit www.oak-park.us/parking or email parking@oak-park.us.



Yard waste collection underway

Collection of bundled brush and yard waste is now underway through November. Bundled brush and yard waste such as grass clippings, leaves, shrubs and vines are picked up along with garbage and recycling on regular refuse collection days from the same collection point. Each brush bundle should be no larger than two feet in diameter and four feet in length and have a green yard waste sticker attached. Yard waste should be in 32-gallon paper bags or rigid containers, each with a green yard waste sticker attached. Stickers are available for \$2.40 each from Oak Park grocery and hardware stores and the Cashier's Office at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. 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.



Village President Anan Abu-Taleb
Trustees
 Peter Barber
 Glenn Brewer
 Adam Salzman
 Colette Lueck
 Bob Tucker
Village Clerk Teresa Powell
Village Manager Cara Pavlicek

Residential Customer Local
 Oak Park, Illinois

Postal Carrier
 Pre-Sort

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

OP/FYI

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



Restaurants honored for sanitation efforts

Ten Oak Park restaurants received awards from the Oak Park Department of Public Health and Board of Health in recognition of their food service sanitation efforts.

These restaurants are recipients of the Johnson Restaurant Award, named for Oak Park's first lunchroom that operated in the 1890s at 124 Lake St. The award is presented each year to restaurants that consistently meet or exceed state food safety standards.

This year's Johnson Award winners were chosen from 74 eligible restaurants. The awards are based on scores from a 45-point inspection survey.

Winning eateries are responsible for some of the most complex aspects of food service and meal preparation, including cooking, cooling, reheating and serving. Each of these processes must be carried out to the exacting standards mandated by the Illinois State Food Service Sanitation Code.

The Health Department inspects more than 200 food service establishments in the Village every year, from day care centers to senior living facilities and traditional restaurants to cafes. These businesses are divided into three broad categories based on the complexity of their food service operations.

The Johnson Award winners are all restaurants that have fairly complex food service processes and are required to maintain competent management and continuous supervision of every step of their food service operations.

This is the 29th year that the Johnson Restaurant Awards have been presented. Recipients receive a door decal and a recognition certificate from the Health Department.

For more information on the awards, call 708.358.5480 or email health@oak-park.us.



2014 Johnson Award Winners

- Aripo's Venezuelan Arepa House**, 118 N. Marion St.
- Cucina Paradiso**, 814 North Blvd.
- Marion Street Grille**, 189 N. Marion St.
- King and I**, 105 N. Marion St.
- Eyrie**, 128 N. Oak Park Ave.
- Buzz Café**, 905 S. Lombard Ave.
- Edwardo's Natural Pizza**, 6831 North Ave.
- Flat Top Grill**, 728 Lake St.
- Boss Burrito**, 1110 Westgate St.
- TGI Fridays**, 401 N. Harlem Ave.

A Day in Our Village festival is June 1



The 41st annual A Day in Our Village festival celebrating diversity and community involvement is scheduled for Sun., June 1. Activity booths representing Oak Park civic, cultural, social service, educational, religious and business organizations will fill Scoville Park, Lake Street at Oak Park Avenue, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. along with live performances and a food court featuring local restaurants. Rehm Park & Pool, Garfield Street at East Avenue, also will offer many activities from 1 to 6 p.m., with \$6 wristbands for unlimited access to games, interactive inflatables, rides and an obstacle course. Admission to the pool will be reduced to \$3 from 1 to 5 p.m. An Oak Park Township mini-bus will provide free transportation between venues. For more information, call 708.358.5407 or email community@oak-park.us.