

Pay by phone parking arrives

Paying for parking in any of more than 4,000 public spaces throughout the Village will get a lot more convenient come Oct. 7, as Oak Park launches a new program that accepts payment via a smartphone app or toll-free telephone call.



The new service is provided by PassportParking, an industry leader in integrated cloud-based parking solutions. The system allows for a more user-friendly, cashless payment option, as well as for more effective and efficient parking management and enforcement operations.

To use the system, customers register via the free PassportParking Mobile Pay app or voice telephone system. The app is available for both iPhone and Android users. Simple registration instructions are conveniently located near each parking site.

Once securely registered, motorists can use the mobile payment option with the app, call a toll-free number or text the zone and space information posted at the parking site. A valid credit card is required to use the system and a 35-cent fee is levied for the initial transaction.

Motorists also can choose to receive text message reminders 15 minutes prior to the expiration of their parking session and extend the time remotely.

In addition, drivers who use the mobile pay technology also will be able to log in using a Facebook account to find nearby businesses that offer validation or other discounts.

Passport's mobile payment services already are available for public parking in the Illinois communities of Brookfield, Desplaines, Downers Grove, Glenview, Harvard, Morton Grove, Oak Lawn and Villa Park, as well as in privately owned parking facilities in several major cities including Atlanta, St. Louis and Salt Lake City.

For more information on the new pay by phone system, call 708.358.7275 or email parking@oak-park.us.

PassortParking Benefits

- Eliminates the need for cash
- Once registered, can pay from your car
- Receive notifications before the session expires
- Extend a parking session from anywhere
- Convenient, easy and secure payment
- Free quick and easy registration
- Securely view parking history and print receipts at www.passportparking.com

Health Insurance Marketplace education to begin

Anyone interested in learning more about finding affordable health insurance is invited to attend a presentation on how to navigate the requirements of the federal Affordable Care Act, which becomes effective Jan. 1. A presentation is scheduled for 7 p.m., Wed., Oct. 23 in Council Chamber of Village Hall, 123 Madison. The Health Department, in collaboration with the Infant Welfare Society Children's Clinic, Oak Park and River Forest Chamber of Commerce and the League of Women Voters of Oak Park and River Forest will host the presentation given by representatives from the Illinois Maternal & Child Health Coalition and the U.S. Small Business Administration. Those seeking affordable health insurance will need to sign up via the Health Insurance Marketplace — www.healthcare.gov — by Dec. 15 to have coverage by the first of the year. The website was created to help individuals, families, small business owners and their employees shop for health care coverage by comparing available plan options. For more information, call 708.358.5492 or email health@oak-park.us.

Please return those surveys

Residents selected to take a community survey who have not yet returned the document are urged to do so as soon as possible. Surveys were mailed in early September to addresses chosen randomly. About 1,200 responses are needed for a 95 percent confidence level. Respondents remain anonymous. While taking only about 15 minutes to complete, the surveys will help policy makers better understand priorities for government action and citizen opinions on quality of life and public services. Similar surveys were conducted here in 2000, 2004, 2008 and 2011. Results of these past surveys are posted at www.oak-park.us — just search community surveys.

**CHANGE YOUR CLOCK
CHANGE YOUR
BATTERY**

Change smoke detector batteries when changing clocks as daylight saving time reverts to standard time at 2 a.m., Sun., Nov. 3.

A special message from the Chief of Police

Speak out against distracted driving



Have you ever been stopped at a traffic signal that turns green, but the car in front of you doesn't proceed until you blow your horn? Ever had a driver make a turn without signaling? Ever seen a vehicle do less than the speed limit, while swerving ever so slightly?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, chances are you were behind a distracted driver.

Eating, drinking, talking to passengers, grooming, reading (including maps), using a navigation system, watching a video and adjusting a radio, CD player or MP3 player all are dangerous distractions. But text messaging requires visual, manual and cognitive attention from the driver and is by far the most dangerous distraction.

Studies have shown that sending or receiving a text takes a driver's eyes from the road for an average of 4.6 seconds. That's the equivalent of driving a vehicle 55 miles per hour the entire length of a football field – with your eyes closed.

In 2011, more than 3,300 people were killed in crashes involving distracted drivers. Another 387,000 people were injured, many of them seriously. And the numbers of deaths and injuries are growing each year.

The issue of distracted driving is a complex one, given the extent to which our lives have become intertwined with our mobile devices. But the risk is real. Unfortunately, public education and enforcement of traffic safety rules are

not enough to stop such risky behavior.

Personal responsibility is the best defense against potentially lethal behavior behind the wheel. Everyone needs to understand the risks of driving distracted and recognize their own inability to safely multi-task while behind the wheel. This means putting wireless devices away and keeping your eyes on the road.

Friends and family members also need to use their influence to steer others toward responsible driving behavior. Just speaking up may save a life.

For a vivid, eye-opening example of lives touched by the actions of a distracted driver, I urge all Oak Park cable subscribers to watch VOP-TV on Comcast channel 6 and AT&T Uverse channel 99 at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Perhaps after watching the video *Red Means Stop*, we will re-think some of our behaviors behind the wheel.

Rick Tanksley
Chief of Police

October a busy month at Conservatory

Here's what is coming up in October at the Oak Park Conservatory, 615 Garfield St.:

Columbus Day Hours – The Oak Park Conservatory will be open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., on Columbus Day, Mon. Oct. 14. The Exploration Station will be open until noon allowing youngsters to touch and smell various plants.

Second Sunday Tours – Guided tours of the Conservatory will be given every second Sunday of the month through March beginning Oct. 13. The tours begin at 1:30 p.m. and feature signature Conservatory plants such as the Ponderosa lemon tree and highlight seasonal displays. Tickets are \$5 for adults, \$3 for seniors and \$2 for children. To reserve a space, call 708.725.2400.

Fright Night – The Conservatory will come under the moon's spell on Fri., Oct. 25 when strange and unexplained things happen under the glass. Visitors are invited to take a walk through the dark conservatory if they dare, but there are no guarantees they will escape. Youngsters 12 and younger are invited to come from 6 to 8 p.m., while everyone else should come from 8 to 9 p.m. For all the scary details, call 708.725.2400 or visit www.oakparkconservatory.org. Admission is \$5.

About the conservatory – Owned and operated by the Park District of Oak Park, the Conservatory is one of the top three historical sites in the Village, attracting 30,000 visitors annually. Staff and volunteers grow an astounding 20,000 bedding plants from seeds and cuttings that are planted each year at 90 public



parks and sites throughout the village. The Edwardian-style glass structure, built in 1929, houses a botanical collection of more than 3,000 plants, some of which date back to the Conservatory's founding. The Conservatory was named to the National Register of Historic Places in 2005.



Condo owners and boards: Come learn about financing big projects

Condominium owners and board members interested in learning how to secure financing and owner support for large projects are invited to a free presentation scheduled for 7 p.m., Tues., Oct. 8, in Village Hall, 123 Madison St. A local condominium association will walk through the process they used to get new windows in their building. Registration is not required. For more information call 708.358.5410 or email housing@oak-park.us.

Annual property management seminar set

Owners and managers of multi-family apartment buildings with four or more units in Oak Park are required to attend an annual seminar to learn about a wide range of programs, services and legal requirements. Representatives are on hand from various Village and community organizations, including the Building & Property Standards, Fire, Health and Police departments. This year's seminar is scheduled for Wed., Oct. 30, in Village Hall, 123 Madison St. Sessions will be at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. — attendees can choose the time that best fits their schedules. Registration is not required. For more information, call 708.358.5410 or email housing@oak-park.us.

Fall leaf collection begins this month

The annual fall leaf collection program is scheduled for Oct. 21 – Dec. 5 with seven pickups planned for each section of the Village. Residents should rake leaves into the street at least 18 inches from the curb the day before the scheduled pickup dates indicated on the map. Leaves raked into the street are pushed into piles during the night, and then 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. Sweepers will be scheduled to run at the end of the collection program to clean up any residue. Cooperation is essential to the success of this operation, so please follow these simple rules:

- Rake leaves out 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. Try to avoid 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.
- 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.
- Consider composting or using the leaves as garden mulch as an alternative to raking.
- Drive carefully. Leaves are slippery when wet and large piles may hinder visibility. Watch for crews picking up leaves.

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

NORTH AVE		EAST AVE		AUSTIN BLVD	
WEDNESDAY	Oct. 23 Oct. 30 Nov. 6 Nov. 13 Nov. 20 Nov. 27 Dec. 4	THURSDAY	Oct. 24 Oct. 31 Nov. 7 Nov. 14 Nov. 21 Nov. 28 Dec. 5	TUESDAY	Oct. 22 Oct. 29 Nov. 5 Nov. 12 Nov. 19 Nov. 26 Dec. 3
SOUTH BLVD		EAST AVE		AUSTIN BLVD	
MONDAY	Oct. 21 Oct. 28 Nov. 4 Nov. 11 Nov. 18 Nov. 25 Dec. 2				
ROOSEVELT RD					

October means time for a flu shot

The Centers for Disease Control recommends inoculation for influenza as soon as the vaccine becomes available since flu seasons are unpredictable and can begin as early as October. Everyone should get a flu vaccine beginning by age 6 months, officials say, especially individuals who have medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes and chronic lung disease. Pregnant women and individuals 65 years and older also should be vaccinated, as well as people who live with or care for others who are at high risk of developing serious complications. Parents of infants under age 2 are encouraged to contact the child's physician to arrange for flu vaccinations. 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 shot. Many sites will vaccinate children as young as 18 months. Medicare HMO recipients should check with their insurer before scheduling an appointment. Help finding a flu shot provider is available at www.flushot.healthmap.org. Residents also can email health@oak-park.us or call 708.358.5483 with questions about access to an affordable flu shot.



Learn the ins and outs of buying that first home

Individuals interested in learning more about buying a first 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 meeting is Oct. 22. Among the topics covered will be identifying financial assistance, choosing a real estate agent, shopping for the best mortgage, avoiding discrimination and predatory lenders, hiring an independent attorney and inspector, and shopping for homeowners insurance. For more information, call the West Cook Homeownership Center at 708.771.5801.

Down payment assistance available

Oak Parkers who could use help with the down payment to buy a home may want to investigate a program offered by the West Cook County Housing Collaborative, a joint effort of Bellwood, Berwyn, Forest Park, Maywood and Oak Park to expand housing opportunities and strengthen neighborhoods in west suburban Cook County. Up to \$10,000 in down payment assistance for select updated and rehabbed homes may be available to qualifying applications. 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.

Last chance to recycle electronics

Sat., Oct. 26 will be the last opportunity this year for residents to safely dispose of unwanted electronic items now banned from landfills. Items will be accepted from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Public Works Center, 201 South Blvd. Just about any kind of electronic item will be accepted, including computers, peripherals, laptops, monitors, TVs, cell phones, rechargeable batteries, printers, fax machines, MP3 players, portable digital assistants, video game consoles, video cassette recorders/players, video disk players, zip drives, scanners and microwaves. Crews will be on hand to help with the unloading. For more information call 708.358.5700 or email publicworks@oak-park.us.

Volunteers needed for civic engagement

Residents interested in giving back to the community are urged to volunteer to serve on one of the Village Board's citizen advisory boards, commissions and committees. Volunteers are needed for the Farmers Market Commission, which helps to operate the seasonal weekly market, the Community Design Commission, which works to enhance the aesthetic quality of life in the Village including the urban forest, the Community Relations Commission, which focuses on intergroup relations and promoting diversity, and the Civic Information Systems Commission, which reviews information resources and services. Several other commissions also offer opportunities to serve. To learn more, and to apply, visit www.oak-park.us/volunteer, email clerk@oak-park.us or call 708.358.5670.



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
Licenses/permits	358.5433
Codes/status of plans	358.5434
Property complaints	358.5443
Inspections	358.5440
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 (non-emergency)	445.3300
Human Resources	358.5650
Job Hotline	358.5650
Police (non-emergency)	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	383.0002
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

Stay connected...

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

Loans available for accessibility modifications

Residents who need to retrofit their homes or apartments with accessibility modifications may be eligible for financial assistance through the Village. Forgivable loans of up to \$15,000 each are offered to homeowners and renters with physical or age-related impairments who meet income eligibility requirements. Ramps, lifts and handrails are typical types of modifications, usually made to kitchens and bathrooms. Loans are forgiven over five years. Call 708.358.5410 or email housing@oak-park.us for more information.

Housing collaborative launches new website

To keep up to date on the activities of the West Cook County Housing Collaborative (WCCHC), view homes for sale and learn about transit-oriented development opportunities visit the organization's new website, www.westcookhousing.org. From its beginning in 2009, the WCCHC, which is a joint effort of Bellwood, Berwyn, Forest Park, Maywood and Oak Park, has worked to expand housing opportunities and strengthen neighborhoods in west suburban Cook County. The collaboration was formed in response to the housing foreclosure crisis. Recognizing the value of collaboration, the WCCHC communities have continued working together to transform distressed properties into quality, affordable homeownership opportunities and rental housing options. For more information on Oak Park's role in the housing collaborative, call 708.358.5410 or email housing@oak-park.us.



EPA recognizes Village green-energy efforts

For the second year in a row, the use of green power through the Village's *Community Choice Electricity Aggregation Program* has earned Oak Park special recognition from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The USEPA recognized Oak Park as one of only two communities selected from among nearly 50 participating communities nationwide for a Green Power Community (GPC) Challenge award for having the highest green power percentage of total electricity use.

Launched in September 2012, the GPC competition challenges communities to boost their voluntary green power usage and compete to see which one can use the most green power and achieve the highest green power percentage of total electricity use.

The purchase of green power not only helps the Village become more sustainable, but also sends a message to other communities across the U.S. that supporting clean sources of electricity is a sound business decision and an important choice in reducing climate risk, officials say.

More than 90 percent of electricity used by Oak Park's local government, residential and business electricity users comes from renewable power sources. According to EPA, Oak Park's collective use of more than 170 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) of green power is equal to avoiding the carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions of more than 25,000 passenger vehicles per year, or the equivalent of the electricity needed to power more than 18,000 homes annually.

Green power is electricity generated from renewable sources like solar, wind, and low-impact hydropower. Communities using green power benefit from cleaner air and a healthier environment, while helping advance the market for renewable energy, EPA officials say.

The nearly 50 Green Power Communities across the country collectively buy green power in amounts that meet or exceed the EPA's purchase requirements as part of the Green Power Partnership. Other participating Illinois communities include Aurora and Rolling Meadows.

Last year, the USEPA also named Oak Park a *Green Power Community of the Year* for its electricity aggregation program that purchases power and credits from 100-percent green sources, primarily from Illinois wind farms.

More information about the Green Power Community Challenge and program is posted at www.epa.gov/greenpower/communities. To learn more about Oak Park's environmental initiatives visit www.oak-park.us.

VOP-TV series heading to film festival

Two episodes of *You Really Should Eat This*, a local series produced by VOP-TV and starring OakPark.com food critic David Hammond, will screen at the 4th annual Chicago Food Film Festival next month.



The series airs on the Village's YouTube channel www.youtube.com/vopnews and is broadcast regularly on VOP-TV, the government cable station available to Comcast subscribers on channel 6 and AT&T Uverse customers on channel 99.

In each episode, Hammond introduces viewers to a specialty dish produced by an Oak Park restaurant and offers his own commentary on the dish's place in history.

VOP-TV Manager Joe Kreml takes viewers behind the scenes — literally — with mouth-watering food prep footage and interviews with chefs and restaurateurs. The whole package is edited down into a tight video, averaging about four minutes in length — perfect for YouTube or television.

The episodes selected to screen at the Chicago Food Film Festival are segments on corned beef hash at George's Family Restaurant, and feijoada, a traditional Brazilian dish from Taste of Brasil Cafe.



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
 Colette Lueck

Village Clerk

Teresa Powell
 Cara Pavlicek

Village Manager

Residential Customer Local
 Oak Park, Illinois

Postal Carrier
 Pre-Sort

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

New Village Attorney named



Paul L. Stephanides, 48, became Village Attorney in September. With 20-plus years of municipal government-related legal experience, Stephanides was chosen from a field of more than 50 applicants for the post last held by Raymond Heise, who served as Oak Park's Village Attorney for nearly 30 years before retiring in June 2011. Among Stephanides' areas of expertise are real estate, land use and zoning, litigation, construction law, election law, labor and employment law, prosecutions and counseling for local government boards and commissions — all areas officials say are of particular importance to the Village. Prior to joining a private law firm in 2005, Stephanides was a senior assistant attorney for the City of Naperville, a post he assumed in 1992. He also has served as an assistant general attorney with the Chicago Park District. Among his current honors and achievements are state chair to the International Municipal Lawyers Association, member of the Illinois Local Governmental Lawyers Association executive board and contributing member of the Illinois Municipal League Home Rule Attorneys Committee. Stephanides has a law degree from DePaul University, where he also earned his undergraduate degree, studying political science and economics. He currently lives in Naperville with his wife and two daughters.

He also has served as an assistant general attorney with the Chicago Park District. Among his current honors and achievements are state chair to the International Municipal Lawyers Association, member of the Illinois Local Governmental Lawyers Association executive board and contributing member of the Illinois Municipal League Home Rule Attorneys Committee. Stephanides has a law degree from DePaul University, where he also earned his undergraduate degree, studying political science and economics. He currently lives in Naperville with his wife and two daughters.

Farmers' Market winding down

October is the final month for the 2013 season of Oak Park Farmers' Market, held from 7 a.m. – 1 p.m. every Saturday, mid-May through October. Traditional stone soup made from Farmers' Market vegetables will be ladled up from about 9 a.m. until the pot is empty at the final market on Sat., Oct. 26. For more information on the Farmers' Market visit www.oak-park.us, email farmersmarket@oak-park.us or call 708.358.5780.



Trick-or-treat hours set

Official hours for Halloween trick or treating are 3 – 7 p.m., Thurs., Oct. 31. Parents should accompany young children, especially after dark, and inspect all treats. Other safety tips include:

- Use make-up instead of masks
- Choose flame-retardant costumes
- Wear light-colored clothing at night or add reflective tape to dark colored costumes
- Give and accept only wrapped and packaged candy
- Go out in daylight and carry a flashlight in case of delay
- Stay within your neighborhood and visit only homes you know

For more information on trick-or-treating hours, call 708.358.5670 or email clerk@oak-park.us. For safety information, call 708.445.3300 or 708.386.3800, or email fire@oak-park.us or police@oak-park.us.