

Council Member Lisa Goodman, City of Minneapolis

# WARD 7 E-NEWS

## Be prepared for severe weather this spring

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As the anniversary of the May 22, 2011 tornado approaches, now is a good time refresh your memory the differences between tornado watches and warnings, and how to be prepared. A tornado watch highlights an area where conditions are right for tornadoes to develop. When a tornado watch is declared, continue your normal activities, but keep track of the latest weather reports, and be ready to get to a shelter. Remember - tornadoes can develop quickly.

A tornado warning means a tornado has formed. If there's a tornado warning, move to the lowest level of the building you're in, to the innermost room, or go to a pre-designated shelter area. Stay away from windows. In a hallway, crouch down and protect your head from flying debris. Avoid areas with glass and large expanses of roof with no supports.

### There are things you can do to prepare for a tornado or other emergencies.

The Minnesota Department of Public Safety has preparedness information on the web for all types of severe weather including storms, flash floods and heat wave. This information can be used as a guide to help folks make a plan, build an emergency kit, and practice drills. Check it out at [dps.mn.gov/divisions/hsem/weather-awareness-preparedness](http://dps.mn.gov/divisions/hsem/weather-awareness-preparedness).

There is also information available for residents who do not speak English, ECHO Minnesota, an organization that provides preparedness information in many languages, has a set of videos that people can view to learn more about being ready for emergencies. The videos include topics like tornado safety, emergency sirens, severe weather warnings, and flooding. Each video can be viewed in English, Spanish, Somali, Hmong, Vietnamese, Lao, and Khmer, and the flooding video is also available in Karen. To watch the videos, go to [www.echominnesota.org/library/severe-weather-awareness-week-resources](http://www.echominnesota.org/library/severe-weather-awareness-week-resources).

ECHO Minnesota created a new video called "Recovering from the Storm" following the north Minneapolis tornado in the spring of 2011, and it shows viewers how to be prepared, work together, and take care of themselves, their families, and their community when a storm hits. Even a year later, a traumatic event like the north Minneapolis tornado can be difficult to recover from, and many people continue to experience stress, worry, and fear as they deal with their loss and put their lives back together. "Recovering from the Storm" is available for viewing in English, Spanish, Somali, and Hmong. To watch the video, go to [www.echominnesota.org/library/recovering-storm](http://www.echominnesota.org/library/recovering-storm).

### Learn how to be prepared for an emergency

#### Severe Weather Warnings

Often, severe weather arrives very quickly. Planning ahead is one part of survival, but reacting calmly and correctly is important, too.



### Lunch with Lisa

May 22

June none

July 25

August 29

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## Hold off pruning ash trees until fall

As our trees, grass and flowers are getting an early start thanks to a warmer than normal spring, so is a beetle that attacks and kills ash trees. Emerald ash borers are present in Minneapolis and are normally active from May through Labor Day, but the Minnesota Department of Agriculture considers the beetles to be active already this year. That means if you have an ash tree in your yard, it is important not to prune it this time of year or move any part of an ash tree (firewood, branches, etc.) while the pests are active. Inadvertently moving the pests helps them spread to uncontaminated areas.

Emerald ash borers are a major concern because they have caused the deaths of millions of ash trees in 13 states, and approximately 20 percent of the tree canopy in Minneapolis consists of ash trees. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture has issued a state quarantine on firewood, ash trees, and ash tree products in Hennepin, Ramsey, Houston and Winona counties to slow the spread of emerald ash borers.

Research has proven that trees are a valuable investment and improve urban quality of life. Healthy trees are beautiful, increase property values, help improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gases by absorbing carbon dioxide, save energy, keep the city cooler, provide homes for wildlife and help manage stormwater. If you have space in your yard to plant a tree, consider getting one going so it can get a start on providing shade.

For more information on emerald ash borers, visit the Minnesota Department of Agriculture emerald ash borer Web page: [www.mda.state.mn.us/saveourash](http://www.mda.state.mn.us/saveourash). You can also check out the [Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board's emerald ash borer Web page](#).



## Get all the dirt on composting

With spring here and new ways of looking at composting in Minneapolis, gardeners and non-gardeners alike can put these tips to good use while cutting down on the waste stream.

**A healthy, no-waste lawn and garden:** Caring for all the green and growing things in your yard can create a lot of waste, but with composting it doesn't have to. [www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/view-document.html?gid=11377](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/view-document.html?gid=11377)

**Reduce pesticides:** Insecticides, herbicides and fungicides are chemicals designed to kill weeds, insects, rodents and mold. These chemicals can be poisonous and pose a danger to animals and people, especially children. Keep pests out of your home and yard in the first place to eliminate the need for toxic chemicals in your home and yard. [www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/view-document.html?gid=11379](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/view-document.html?gid=11379).

**How to compost:** Home composting is an easy way to turn much of the waste from your yard and kitchen into a rich material that you can use to improve your soil. [www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/view-document.html?gid=11381](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/view-document.html?gid=11381).

**Compost troubleshooting:** Does your compost pile smell bad? Does it take too long to break down? Here are some solutions to these and other common backyard composting problems. [www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/view-document.html?gid=11383](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/view-document.html?gid=11383)



## Minneapolis is getting greener

Findings outlined in the City's most recent environmental report show that Minneapolis is becoming an even greener place to live. Minneapolis' Greenprint is an annual look at the successes and challenges the City faces in its environmental work supporting a healthy, livable and sustainable city. Minneapolis is seeing progress in efforts to encourage more healthful food in the homes of lower-income residents and we're seeing a reduction in pollution that can contribute to climate change. Unfortunately the City is also facing some key challenges, including invasive pests threatening a large segment of our urban forest and Minnesota's waterways.

This is the seventh edition of Greenprint, which is a subsection of the City's Sustainability Indicators. The report lays out measurable environmental sustainability goals and annually tracks the City's progress toward meeting them. Minneapolis sustainability indicators, data and policies are helping systematically make Minneapolis a cleaner, healthier, more efficient city.

Key results in Greenprint include:

Climate change pollution decreased more than 12 percent between 2006 and 2010 thanks to lower natural gas use, Xcel Energy's cleaner electricity sources and fewer flights and better fuel economy of jets from the airport.

Healthful food became easier to get, thanks in part to expanded food assistance and Market Bucks (coupons for free produce) available at the West Broadway Outdoor Market, Brian Coyle and Augsburg farmers markets in 2011. Midtown Farmers Market, Minneapolis Farmers Market and Northeast Minneapolis Farmers Market also continued to accept food assistance. Between May 2010 and November 2011, the markets made a combined total of more than \$90,000 in food assistance sales and Market Bucks redemptions, showing that healthy food is making it into lower-income households and federal food support has improved healthy foods and the local economy.

With Ramsey County Workforce Solutions, the City completed a two-year, \$4 million federally funded green jobs training and job placement project. Over its two years, Renewable Energy Networks Empowering Workers (RENEW) trained 585 workers in green credentialing programs in manufacturing, construction, building systems, and renewable energy, and placed more than 300 of them in jobs.

A City-sponsored energy efficiency program has served more than 4,000 Minneapolis homes and created or retained more than 26 permanent jobs. About 950 of the Minneapolis households that have had a home visit have completed major energy efficiency upgrades.

In 2011, 37 miles of on-street bikeways were added including bike lanes, marked shared lanes and four bicycle boulevard corridors. Minneapolis now has a total of 167 miles of on-street and off-street bikeways. 2011 also saw a 21 percent increase in cyclists.

Challenges remain. Our tree canopy remains threatened by emerald ash borer and extreme weather such as the 2011 tornado in north Minneapolis. Asian carp are a major threat to the Mississippi River. The City must work hard to maintain the recent improvements in transit ridership, airport noise and climate change pollution reduction.

## Minneapolis is the third greenest city in America

A survey by Travel + Leisure magazine has declared Minneapolis the third greenest city in the country. The April 2012 survey asked voters to rank top U.S. cities in three survey categories: cleanliness, pedestrian-friendliness and public transit, and great public parks, which offset urban asphalt and improve air quality. The first and second rankings went to Portland, Ore., and Savannah, Ga.

The high-ranking cities support other green initiatives that benefit travelers as well as locals; for instance, Minneapolis offers cheap, easy-access bike rentals. With 46 miles of city bikeways and 84 miles of off-street paths, Minneapolis is one of the most bike-friendly cities in the nation and has a thriving community of people who bicycle to work year-round. The ranking also credits Minneapolis' many "green" restaurants.

Previous Travel +Leisure surveys have voted the Minneapolis Saint Paul area the "most intelligent," a top biking city, and cleanest city in America.

## City approves more than \$6 million in funding for neighborhoods

The City Council has approved \$5.7 million in funding to support neighborhood organizations in their efforts to reach residents, increase resident involvement, and fund neighborhood projects.

The funding is for the Neighborhood and Community Relations department's Community Participation Program that encourages and supports participation through neighborhood organizations in three key areas: identifying and acting on neighborhood priorities; influencing City decisions and priorities; and increasing involvement.

Each neighborhood will receive an allocation of Community Participation Program funds for the 18-month period starting July 1, 2012, and for three-year funding cycles starting January 2014. Neighborhood organizations may use these funds to support ongoing community engagement activities, to develop a Neighborhood Priority Plan, or in support of priorities identified in the Neighborhood Priority Plan. A Neighborhood Priority Plan defines the vision and goals for a neighborhood or group of neighborhoods to work with the City and other partners to achieve those goals.

In addition to the \$5.7 million approved for the Community Participation Program, the City Council also approved an additional \$860,000 for some of the neighborhoods that lost funding in a December 2010 budget action. These additional funds will represent a one-time adjustment to the Community Participation Program allocation for some of the affected neighborhoods.

Community Participation Funds can be used for a variety of purposes including:

- Staff, office space, supplies, neighborhood communications, accounting and related services, travel, training or other educational pursuits in connection with participation, and consultant fees that directly relate to participation activities.
- Community organizing and outreach programs, and neighborhood planning activities.
- Organization newsletters and newspapers.
- Neighborhood celebrations and events.
- Small equipment purchases.
- Fundraising expenses, if revenues are to be used in support of further community engagement activities consistent with these guidelines, or in support of implementation of Neighborhood Priority Plans or NRP Neighborhood Action Plans.
- Administrative costs associated with NRP planning and implementation.
- Implementation of Neighborhood Priority Plans.

Other activities consistent with the purposes of the Community Participation Program to identify and act on neighborhood priorities, impact City decisions and priorities, and increase involvement.

For more information visit the Neighborhood and Community Relations website at [www.minneapolismn.gov/ncr](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/ncr).

## Whether you drive or bike, make sure you know the road

The warmer weather makes for excellent biking. Minneapolis is one of the best biking cities in the country. One thing that makes it so great is the miles and miles of bike lanes and trails. Currently we have 167 miles of bikeways in Minneapolis, which includes 80 miles of bikeways on city streets.

As we add more on-street bikeways you'll see many new bike markings on the roadway and it's important to know what they mean and how to navigate on them whether you are a bicyclist or driver. You can learn all the facts by watching two new videos produced by the City that were developed to help folks understand the variety of on-street markings you may encounter and what they mean for drivers and bicyclists.

To watch the videos and learn more about biking in Minneapolis, go to [www.minneapolismn.gov/bicycles](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/bicycles).

## Be a good neighbor when it comes to recreational fires

It's getting to be the time of year when many Minneapolis residents enjoy a small outdoor recreational fire. Residents who like to have a fire in their yards should keep these City ordinances in mind so that they can be a good neighbor and keep Minneapolis safe and livable:

- Outdoor fires are permitted between 9 a.m. and 10 p.m.
- Keep fire small, less than three feet in diameter and two feet high.
- Burn only untreated, unpainted, dry wood. Never burn cardboard boxes, trash or debris, because the smoke can be toxic. [www.minneapolismn.gov/environment/air/airquality](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/environment/air/airquality)
- Fire must be at least 25 feet away from a structure or combustible material and in a fire ring or pit with edges more than six inches high.
- Have a hose or fire extinguisher present.
- Postpone the fire when the wind exceeds 10 mph.
- Fire must be constantly attended by someone 18 years or older and completely out before being abandoned
- Illegal burning can result in a \$200 fine.

To report an illegal or unsafe fire, call 911.

For more information from the Minneapolis Fire Department, go to [www.minneapolismn.gov/fire](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/fire) and click on "Recreational Fires Q & A."

### **Be a good neighbor**

When you're planning to have a recreational fire, these simple suggestions could help make sure you're being a considerate neighbor:

- Postponing a fire when Minneapolis is under an air pollution advisory or alert. Fires release fine particles that contribute to air pollution and can aggravate a number of health problems, including asthma. Sign up for air quality alerts at <http://mn.enviroflash.info>.
- Letting neighbors know when planning a fire.
- Postponing a fire when smoke will blow directly at a neighbor's house or when still weather conditions prevent smoke from moving away at all.

The Fire and Police departments are authorized to extinguish the fire immediately if it is hazardous or unsafe. For more information on recreational fires or to register a complaint about a recreational fire, contact 311.



## Protect your home as you enjoy the warmer weather

Temperatures are climbing, and that has folks all around town doing yard work and opening their windows to let in the fresh air. While everyone should keep enjoying the milder weather, the Minneapolis Police Department wants all residents to take some simple steps to avoid becoming victims of springtime crimes of opportunity.

Each year the MPD sees a rise in burglaries and thefts in the spring because of open windows and doors, as well as thefts from yards and garages.

### Some common sense tips to help prevent becoming a victim include:

- Pinning windows so that they open only far enough to allow air in but not far enough to allow a burglar to use them to gain entry to your home. Six inches is recommended.
- When working in the backyard remember to secure the front door. Some burglars are brave and fast enough to enter your home and make off with valuables before you know they have even been there.
- Don't leave garage doors open even for a few minutes. The visible items stored there make a very tempting target to someone passing by.
- Don't leave valuable items such as bicycles and lawn equipment in your yard, especially overnight.
- Beware of the influx of door-to-door salespeople and home repair contractors. Do your homework before hiring anyone to do work on your home and get a written estimate before work begins. And remember that all door-to-door salespeople must be licensed by the City, so ask to see a license.
- Report suspicious activity in your neighborhood to 911 immediately. Waiting to call will most likely take away the opportunity for officers to reach the people behind the suspicious activity. A number of home burglars have been caught as a result of neighbors calling 911 right away.

Never allow someone you don't know into your home. Common ruses used to gain entry are requests to use a phone or to get a drink of water.

For more information on burglary prevention, go to: [www.minneapolismn.gov/police/crimeprevention](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/police/crimeprevention).

In addition, the City has produced a series of videos in English, Spanish, Somali and Hmong to help explain ways to prevent burglaries:

[Burglary Prevention](#) Learn about the simple steps you can take to help prevent burglary in your home and vehicle in this edition of the Minneapolis "Did you know..." series.

## Plymouth Avenue Bridge set for repairs this summer

The City will begin repairing the Plymouth Avenue Bridge over the Mississippi River this July and anticipates that after this season's work, the bridge will to reopen to vehicle traffic in mid-October.

The repairs will be done in two phases: the first this year, and the second in 2013. Once the bridge reopens this fall, it will remain open throughout next year's work, with some lane restrictions. The bridge will close to bikes and pedestrian during this year's construction, but will be accessible during next year's work.

The Plymouth Avenue Bridge was closed in October 2010 after the bridge was found to have significant deterioration in its post-tensioning tendons, which are cables that run inside the bridge. An analysis concluded that the bridge could re-open to pedestrian and bike traffic, but would need to continue to be closed to motor vehicle traffic. The City has secured \$6 million in state funding to complete the repairs.

This summer's construction work will focus on the bridge's center span. Crews will remove deteriorating concrete and replace it, and they will replace the corroded cables. Once that span is repaired, the bridge can reopen to traffic. The bridge's other spans will be repaired in 2013, however, the bridge will not need to be closed to traffic during those repairs.

The Plymouth Avenue Bridge opened in 1982 and, before its closure, carried more than 14,000 vehicles a day. That traffic has since moved to other river crossings, including the Broadway Avenue Bridge and the Hennepin Avenue Bridge.

## Plans are under way for second “community read”

“Spirit Car: Journey to a Dakota Past,” has been selected as the next One Minneapolis One Read book. This will be the second year of the citywide “read,” where the entire community is encouraged to read a single book and join in a community conversation. The community read will launch in October.

### Read the book

“Spirit Car: Journey to a Dakota Past,” was written by Minnesotan Diane Wilson. Wilson grew up in a Minneapolis suburb and then followed questions about her family’s past to South Dakota and Nebraska, where she tracked down information about her maternal relatives through five generations. The result of Wilson’s quest for discovery is “Spirit Car,” a book of vignettes she created in her desire to honor the lives of her Dakota Indian family. The story of Wilson’s family begins with a vivid account of the 1862 Dakota War in Minnesota and then follows her family members’ nomadic travels across South Dakota and Nebraska in their struggle to survive.

At its heart, One Minneapolis One Read is a community-driven effort with individuals, neighborhood groups, educators, businesses and nonprofits all coming together to make this a truly citywide read.

“Spirit Car” is available in paperback at local independent and chain bookstores, online booksellers and [www.mhspress.org](http://www.mhspress.org). It’s also available through Hennepin County Library and as an e-book.

### Join the conversation

This second year of One Minneapolis One Read will launch in October with many opportunities for people to join in the community conversation. Neighborhood groups, book clubs, libraries, literary centers and others will hold public events where folks can come together to discuss the book. The City of Minneapolis, Hennepin County Library and Minneapolis Public Schools are promoting literacy and respectful public dialogue in this initiative. Minneapolis residents can play a positive role in their communities and explore important – sometimes difficult – issues that they face as a community by reading “Spirit Car” and getting involved.

Visit the [oneminneapolisone.com](http://oneminneapolisone.com) for more information and to get involved. You can also join in the conversation on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/OneMinneapolisOneRead](http://www.facebook.com/OneMinneapolisOneRead)) and Twitter ([twitter.com/minneapolisread](http://twitter.com/minneapolisread)).

