

FYI ALEXANDRIA

IN THIS EDITION

Alexandria's Official Resident Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2010



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12/1/2010

Got your new recycling container and you prefer a larger or smaller size? Starting December 1, call 703.746.4410 to request changing your container. Want to learn more about the City's new recycling program? Visit alexandriava.gov/RecyclingAtHome.

City Announces New Winter Weather Plan



The winter storms of 2010 are now just memories for many, but not for City staff, who have worked over the spring and summer months to update the City's snow and ice control program. Now that winter is just around the corner, the City of Alexandria and its

residents will be ready for whatever winter weather brings to the City.

The City is implementing a new system for responding to winter storms. Winter weather emergency classifications are now based on type and accumulation of precipitation, with severity ranging from Level 1 (least severe) to Level 3 (most severe). The classifications are based on similar systems used widely in other jurisdictions. In Alexandria, the City Manager may declare a snow emergency and implement parking restrictions at any level.

Sidewalks, driveways, and entrances are the responsibility of the adjacent property owner, occupant, community association, or business for

snow removal. Snow and ice must be cleared from all paved sidewalks abutting your property within 24 to 72 hours of the end of the snowfall, depending on the storm response level (**Level 1** = 24 hours; **Level 2** = 48 hours; **Level 3** = 72 hours).

The new system also ushers in standardized definitions for terms used to describe road conditions in the City during snow events. These defined terms will help the public know what to expect, based on the severity of the storm:

- **Roads Closed:** Streets are accessible to emergency vehicles only. All other vehicles should stay off the roads, as conditions are unsafe for driving.
- **Snow covered:** Street is covered with snow.
- **Passable:** Streets may be drivable and may have been plowed (possibly one lane only) but may have only been treated. Snowy or icy spots remain and the street will require additional plowing. Drivers should use caution and limit driving to essential trips.
- **Plowed:** Snow has been pushed to the sides of the street, leaving one or two inches of snow, or cleared down to blacktop with running water

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City Council Votes to Temporarily Reduce Parking Meter Rates

On November 13, Alexandria City Council adopted a temporary reduction of parking meter rates in the Old Town Alexandria business area. The measure will lower rates from \$1.75 per hour to \$1.25 per hour in areas where single-space, coin operated meters are located, until new multi-space parking meters (which provide options for payment) are installed. In areas where the new meters have already been installed, the rates will remain at \$1.75.

Currently, in much of the Old Town business area, metered parking spaces are controlled by individual, single-space meters, which only accept dimes and

quarters for payment. The higher parking meter rates, which went into effect July 1, 2010, presented challenges to Old Town businesses, residents and visitors, who had difficulty in obtaining the amount of coins needed to pay the meters. The temporary parking rate reduction will ease these challenges until the new meters can be installed. Because it will take some time for staff to manually transition all of the parking meters to the lower rate, the City estimates that meters will be fully converted by early December. For more information, visit alexandriava.gov/Parking or call 703.746.4139.

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA | CITY HALL, 301 KING ST. | ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

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A Big Win for More Energy Efficient Building Codes

In October, government officials from across the nation, including a delegation from the City of Alexandria, voted to support historic gains in the energy efficiency of building energy codes at the Final Action Hearings for the 2012 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC). As a result, the energy efficiency of America's 2012 model energy code for new homes and commercial buildings is expected to achieve the 30 percent boost sought by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the National Association of State Energy Officials, the Energy Efficient Codes Coalition, and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. Adoption of the code also fulfills the Eco-City Alexandria Environmental Action Plan 2030 goal of increasing energy efficiency in the building codes.

A study by U.S. DOE's National Renewable Energy Laboratory found that an average home that is 30 percent more energy-efficient returns \$511 a year in energy savings to homeowners after the consideration of the capitalized cost of the efficiency improvements (the average homeowner spends approximately \$2,000 a year on energy bills). In addition, because new buildings last for decades and are costly to retrofit, many of the efficiency improvements made today will benefit current, and future, home and building owners. The next step for states and localities is to adopt and implement the 2012 IECC. The Commonwealth of Virginia will begin reviewing the 2012 international codes for adoption in late 2012.

Winter Weather Plan

Continued from page 1

visible. Streets are also treated with salt. Drivers should continue to use caution and expect icy spots and/or snow.

- **Snow Emergency Route:** Any road where stopping and parking are not permitted in order to maintain the flow of traffic for public safety purposes and to permit snow plows unimpeded access to the roadway.

City crews treat and plow primary roads (including snow emergency routes), followed by secondary routes (including hills). Once these priorities are addressed, crews will begin plowing residential streets. To check on the plowing priority and status of your street and submit a concern during a snow event, use the City's SnowReport tracking system online, or call the Snow Hotline at 703.746.4488.

City crews coordinate road clearing and sidewalk work depending on the severity of the storm. Accessible curb ramps, sidewalks and pathways that abut publicly-owned property are cleared by crews from City departments or Alexandria City Public Schools personnel.



The City will maintain its **snow emergency hotline (703.746.4488)** before, during and after potential snow emergency events. Once a snow emergency is declared by the City, pay special attention to news broadcasts, the City's website, **eNews** alerts, **Facebook**, and **Twitter** for announcements that a snow emergency plan is in effect. Be prepared for winter weather by maintaining an adequate supply of shovels, salt or sand for your sidewalks and driveways. Clear ice, snow and leaves from around fire hydrants and storm drains, and avoid shoveling snow into the street. Following these tips will help the City return to normal operations as soon as possible.

For more information on the City's Winter Weather Plan, visit alexandriava.gov/Snow.

City Seeks Community Input on Transportation Funding

Addressing transportation challenges is crucial to the City of Alexandria's future economic development and sustainability, and the quality of life for all residents. Funds to pay for priority transportation projects, however, are extremely limited because of declining federal and state transportation revenue available to finance these projects. Identifying transportation funding sources is one of the most difficult and unresolved issues the City faces.

In 2007, the Virginia General Assembly passed legislation that authorizes local governments to implement a commercial add-on tax that can only be used to pay for transportation projects. This tax is added onto the real estate tax rate for commercial properties only, and local governments establish this rate during the budget process each year. While several other northern Virginia jurisdictions, such as Arlington and Fairfax counties, have approved add-on taxes to fund transportation needs, the City has not chosen that option. As a result, Alexandria's



commercial property tax rate remains among the lowest in the region. To generate additional revenue for transportation projects in FY 2012, City Council may consider an add-on real estate tax rate on non-residential commercial and industrial property.

During the FY 2011 budget process, City Council requested that staff identify City transportation priorities and the costs associated with them. Over the past year, staff has worked with the City's Transportation Commission to create a prioritization process for needed transportation projects and services, and identify local, reliable funding mechanisms to support a fiscally constrained transportation plan. Over the next two months, the City's Department of Transportation and Environmental Services is conducting a series of community meetings to obtain input on the list of priority transportation projects.

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Bed Bugs are Back!

Nationwide, bed bugs are making a comeback. While they are unable to transmit diseases, they are a nuisance and a significant cause of stress and anxiety. Knowing how to prevent and properly treat an infestation is an important step in managing this problem.

How can I prevent an infestation?

- Be mindful when you travel. Check your hotel room for bed bugs and keep your luggage on a luggage rack. Vacuum your suitcase upon return; put all clothes (dirty and clean) through the dryer for at least 20 minutes.
- Avoid bed bug infested materials. Do not bring used furniture or mattresses into your home.
- Practice good sanitation. While bed bugs are not attracted or limited to messy spaces, having a lot of clutter will allow an infestation to go undetected for a longer time and make it much harder to treat. By reducing clutter and vacuuming around the baseboards, you may be able to prevent an infestation.

What should I do if I have an infestation?

- Contact your landlord or a pest control company immediately.



- Try to collect a sample of any bed bugs you find and give them to the pest control company for positive identification. The Alexandria Health Department is also available to identify samples.
- Try not to disturb the room too much before a pest control operator can conduct a proper inspection.
- Follow all pre-treatment instructions to maximize the chances of a successful treatment.
- Do not set off "bug bombs" (indoor foggers) to treat bed bugs! Bug bombs use a chemical that bed bugs have shown resistance to. This means that the bomb will not kill all of the bugs. Instead, it will instead cause them to scatter, making treatment very difficult and the infestation worse.

For more information, visit alexandriava.gov/Bedbugs or call 703.746.4973.

Farmers' Market Holiday Schedules

Take Note! The Old Town Farmers' Market will be open on Friday, December 24 from 5:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. Parking in the Market Square garage will be free during Farmers' Market hours. Both the Old Town

and Del Ray farmers' markets will be closed Saturday, December 25.

A Tree Story

This year's Holiday Tree for the City of Alexandria was donated by the Bob and Gail Scheller of Woodbridge. The tree, a majestic 40-foot Norway Spruce, was planted in 1983 by the previous owners of their home. The tree had grown too large for the Schellers' front yard and needed to be removed. The Schellers donated the tree to the City in the hope their beloved evergreen would "finish out its lifecycle in a special way." See the tree in all its holiday finery at



the City's Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony on November 26 (see page 4, Calendar Highlights, for more details).

Park Free, Shop Local on Black Friday, November 26

On one of the biggest shopping days of the year, the City of Alexandria is offering free parking in all City-owned garages on Friday, November 26. Commonly known as "Black Friday," the day after Thanksgiving marks the start of the holiday shopping season. The City is offering free parking as a special incentive for shoppers to visit Old Town Alexandria to make their holiday purchases. The following City garages will offer free parking:

- **Market Square Garage**
108 N. Fairfax St., 7 a.m. – 2:30 a.m.
- **Courthouse Square Garage**
111 S. Pitt St., 7 a.m. – 3 a.m.
- **Thompson's Alley Garage**
10 Thompson's Alley, 8:30 a.m. – 11 p.m.
- **North Union Street Garage**
220 N. Union St., 7 a.m. – 2:30 a.m.
- **South Henry Street Lot**
112 S. Henry St., 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
- **Cameron/St. Asaph Street Lot**
210 N. St. Asaph St., 7 a.m. – 9:30 p.m.

The free King Street Trolley will be operating its regularly scheduled service, and residents and visitors can start their holiday shopping early with holiday promotions at Alexandria's many boutiques and shops. Shop local! Learn more at www.visitalexandriava.com.

PETS IN THE CITY!



Simba, Lincolnia

Submit pictures of your fabulous furbabies and precious pets to fyi@alexandriava.gov, and perhaps your pet will be spotlighted for Pets in the City, a new video feature profiling the lives of pets in the City. Look for Pets in the City in upcoming issues of *FYI Alexandria!*



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301 KING ST. | ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

Watch Mayor Euille Today!

Mayor Euille speaks with T&ES Deputy Director Yon Lambert about the City's updated winter weather plan; and with Stephanie Brown, President and CEO of ACVA and Tina Leone, President and CEO of the ACC about all the exciting holiday events and special holiday shopping opportunities in Alexandria.

Tune in on Comcast Cable Channel 69 on Tuesdays (8:30 p.m.) and Thursdays (6:30 p.m.) or on the Web at alexandriava.gov/MayorEuilleToday.

WWW.ALEXANDRIAVA.GOV

CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

*Celebrate the Holidays
in Alexandria!*

Friday, November 26

2010 TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY
7 p.m. in Market Square, 301 King St.
www.alexandriava.gov/Recreation

Saturday, December 4

THE SCOTTISH CHRISTMAS WALK PARADE
11 a.m., beginning at Wilkes and South St.
Asaph Streets and ending at King and Royal
Streets in Old Town
www.scottishchristmaswalk.com

Friday, December 31

FIRST NIGHT ALEXANDRIA
7 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. in Old Town
www.firstnightalexandria.org

Evenings and Weekends November 27 – December 12

HOLIDAY CONCERTS IN OLD TOWN
ALEXANDRIA
Visit alexandriava.gov/Concerts or call
703.746.5592.

For more events and activities,
visit alexandriava.gov/Holidays.

Transportation Funding

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The public is encouraged to visit alexandriava.gov/TransportationAddOnTax to learn more about the process, and to leave comments online. The public is also invited to attend one of the following citywide community meetings:

- Wednesday, December 8, 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Beatley Library Community Room
5005 Duke St.
- Thursday, January 13, 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Mount Vernon Recreation Center
Community Room
2701 Commonwealth Ave.



*FYI takes a holiday hiatus during
the month of December. See you
in January—and have a safe and
happy holiday season!*

Happy Holidays!

Alexandria Mayor and City Council

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Messages for City Council can be left at the Office
of the City Clerk/City Council: 703.746.4550.
Dockets, video, and podcasts of the City Council
meetings are at alexandriava.gov/Webcasts.