



January 2020

3033 St. Croix Trail South
P.O. Box 219
Afton, MN 55001

Snow Removal

Winter began this season with early snow events, therefore, this is an apt time to provide a review of Afton's current snow removal policy and new pilot program. Afton has fifty miles of local roads managed by our Public Works department. Afton contracts with Tri-County Services which utilizes eight trucks for snow removal.



There are also three Washington County roads: Neal Avenue and County Roads 21 and 18; along with two State roads: Manning Avenue and Hudson Road; that are maintained by those jurisdictions.

During the past two winters the City has approved a pre-treatment process which involves spraying a brine solution on the steep road segments and intersections prior to snow events. When the plows clear the road they spread a 50/50 salt sand mix. This winter, the City will also be testing a process of spraying salt brine onto the salt sand mix as it is spread, to increase the effectiveness of the mix.

Primary roads, including 10th, 15th, 22nd, 30th and 50th streets along with Trading Post Trail, as well as steep hills and intersections, have a priority in plowing. Then the secondary roads including cul-de-sacs, dead ends and narrow roads are completed with the goal of all roads being plowed within 24 hours of the end of the snow event. This process involves Tri-County drivers returning to their shop to switch to equipment better suited to the secondary roads. Secondary roads are not plowed in snow events of one inch or less.

County roads are clear of all snow before Afton's roads because they use 100% salt; however, the Metropolitan Pollution Control Agency recommends limiting the use of salt to reduce pollution of our waterways. Using 100% salt is also more expensive than our current 50/50 mix and this year we were notified of a salt shortage further increasing the potential cost to taxpayers.

The City has approved a pilot program to allow the use of an icebreaker device on a limited basis. This large, rotating drum device has non-metallic "spikes" that pulverize the snow and/or ice pack on the roadway, making it easier to remove the packed snow. The major question is, will the use of this device damage the road surfaces? We will evaluate the results and further use will be decided before next winter.

Please contact City Hall at (651) 436-5090 if you have any questions, concerns or comments regarding our snow removal service or submit comments and/or service requests on-line at www.ci.afton.mn.us.

Stan Ross
Councilman, Ward 3
Public Works Department liaison

Lawns To Legumes

The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) earlier in December announced they are accepting grant applications to the Lawns to Legumes Program. This program aims to increase the residential habitat for Minnesota's at-risk pollinators. This program is designed to help all pollinators, but in particular the state bee, the Rusty patched bumblebee. More information is available thru Blue Thumb's website, and one can apply at: <https://bluethumb.org/apply-for-lawns-to-legumes-assistance/>.

The City Office is Closed

Wednesday, January 1

Monday, January 20

In observance of New Years Day & Martin Luther King Jr. Day

CITY MEETINGS

January 6, 2020

Planning Commission Meeting
7:00 P.M.

January 7, 2020

Natural Resources & Groundwater
5:30 P.M.

January 15, 2020

Heritage Preservation Commission
5:00 P.M.

January 21, 2020

City Council Meeting
7:00 P.M.

January 22, 2020

Parks Committee
6:00 P.M.

All meetings are held at City Hall unless otherwise noted.

CITY COUNCIL

Mayor: Bill Palmquist 651-308-0569

Ward 1: Annie Perkins 651-592-3007

Ward 2: Lucia Wroblewski 651-436-3982

Ward 3: Stan Ross 651-436-1346

Ward 4: Randy Nelson 651-436-2479

CITY HALL

Monday — Friday

9:00 a.m. — 4:00 p.m.

651-436-5090

CITY WEBSITE

www.ci.afton.mn.us

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Animal Control 715-220-1332

Building Inspector 651-436-6469

Burning Permits 651-248-5103

Environmental Center 651-275-7475

Highland Sanitation 651-458-0043

Otter Lake Animal Care 651-426-8871

Fire Dept 651-436-7033

Sheriff's Dept 651-439-9381

EMERGENCY 911

Notes from the Mayor

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had an enjoyable holiday season.

As we begin the new year, I want to let you know about an unfortunate incident that occurred in November in the hopes that we can all work together to ensure it does not happen again.

During the deer hunting season, a hunter using a shotgun with a rifled barrel fired a slug from land they had permission to hunt and that slug hit a neighbor's house. Thankfully no one was hurt, but the slug went through the metal siding, exterior wall, and through an interior wall into the bathroom used by the owners' small children. This was a scary event and everyone involved wants to prevent a similar incident in the future. If you allow hunters to hunt during the gun season, it is imperative they understand the land and the property lines. For some it could be their first time on your property. They need to know where neighboring houses are, understand safe shooting corridors, and pass on any shots that may leave the parcel. As larger parcels are subdivided, this issue will become more prevalent and we all must be diligent in safeguarding our friends and neighbors.

Our gun discharge ordinance prohibits any discharge reasonably expected to cross a property line without prior permission from that adjoining property owner. The city attorney is working with the county sheriff on this incident. This was an accident, and the hunter and property owner are cooperating. The ordinance also calls for a 500-foot minimum distance from any structures on adjoining parcels for discharging a firearm, again, unless prior permission is obtained. This distance requirement mirrors the current state guidelines. In this case, the hunter was more than 500 feet away, and therefore was in compliance. However, even using a slug at this distance and having a stand of trees between the hunter and the neighbor's house, the round still crossed the boundary and hit the house. This distance requirement is not a substitute for rigorous safety protocols.

We have a long tradition of hunting here in Afton. I encourage you to read and share the ordinance with anyone using firearms on your property. Your role in educating hunters will help us all have a safe fall hunting season.

On a brighter note, Afton's own Jessica Manor had her photograph selected for the 2020 Washington County Park Pass! Congratulations, Jessica!

I also want to thank Council Member Stan Ross for all his work securing grant funding for a fabric barrier and riprap which were added to our levee in December. It will greatly reduce long-term maintenance costs and increase the effectiveness of the levee. Thank you, Stan!

The grand opening ceremony for the new Valley Library is January 11 from 10:00 AM to 2 PM. Ribbon cutting is at 11:00 AM. I hope you can be there to support our local library.

-Bill

HOLIDAY RECYCLING GUIDE

Batteries can contain toxic metals and pose a threat if improperly disposed. All types of batteries, including rechargeable, button, and alkaline batteries, are accepted at the Environmental Center for safe handling and recycling.

Boxes, such as cardboard boxes and gift boxes, can be placed in your recycling cart. Boxes must be emptied and flattened. Boxes are also accepted at the Environmental Center for recycling.

Cards that have glitter or foil, or cards printed on photo paper, cannot be recycled. Any cards that make sounds or light up have a battery that should be removed and recycled – batteries are accepted at the Environmental Center.

Gift wrap does not belong in your recycling cart, unless it is plain (no glitter, foil, bows, or ribbon) and flattened. Get creative with alternatives to wrapping paper, such as gift bags, cloth wrapping, and reusable boxes.

String lights and cords do not belong in your recycling cart because they get tangled in the equipment at recycling sorting facilities. They are accepted for recycling at the Environmental Center.

ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER: 4039 Cottage Grove Drive
Woodbury, MN 55129
651-275-7475

HOURS: Tuesday: 11 a.m.-7 p.m.
Thursday: 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Friday: 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Saturday: 8 a.m.-2 p.m.

Closed on 4th of July, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day & New Year's Day.



December Meeting Highlights

December 2, 2019 Planning Commission Meeting

The Commission:

- Reviewed the draft Short Term Rentals Ordinance.
- Reviewed the draft Preservation and Land Conservation Development (PLCD) Ordinance Amendment.

December 17, 2019 City Council Meeting

The Council:

- Held a public hearing on the 2020 Budget and Tax Levy.
- Approved the 2020 Budget as proposed.
- Approved the 2020 Tax Levy as proposed.
- Approved the Draft PLCD ordinance amendment and requested the Planning Commission hold a public hearing.
- Approved WSB fee increase for 2020.
- Approved renewal of liquor licenses for 2020 for Afton House and Lumberyard Pub.
- Authorized Tri County to try new ice breaker equipment to break up compacted snow and ice on roads that are scheduled to be re-paved and also the hill on 30th St.
- Approved Afton Creek Preserve contingency plans for 2020 construction.
- Approved plan to allow Washington County to store excess snow in the Carver park area.

MEETING PACKETS, VIDEOS AND APPROVED MEETING MINUTES ARE AVAILABLE AT:

www.ci.afton.mn.us

Belwin Conservancy Upcoming Events

Friday, January 17th, 2020

Owl Prowl

4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Come to an Owl Prowl at Belwin Conservancy to learn about all of our Minnesota owls. Because owls seem to be more vocal at dusk, as they begin hunting, this year our popular program will run from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. We will spend some time in the Education Center and then head out to search for the sights and sounds of owls. Dress for the weather!

RSVP: If you would like to attend this event, you must pre-register by January 16, 2020. Free for members; \$10/family for non-members.

Saturday, January 18th, 2020

Education Center Third Saturday

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Explore the Belwin Education Center and its miles of rolling, wooded trails. Lynette Anderson, Belwin's Interpretive Naturalist, will be in the Education Center building to greet you, answer your questions, and suggest hikes.

Bring your own snowshoes or cross-country skis. Hot cocoa and tea available! Free to independently explore the Education Center and trails.

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Belwin Conservancy
1553 Stagecoach Trail South
Afton MN 55001
651-436-5189
www.belwin.org

Counting Every Minnesotan — Census Day is April 1, 2020

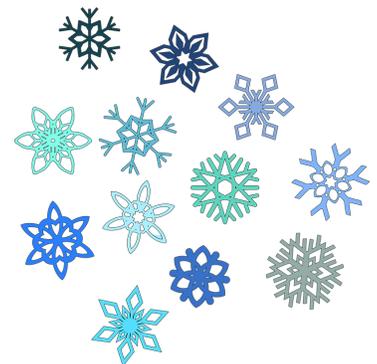
Hiring for the 2020 Census is underway! The US Census Bureau is seeking to hire **hundreds of people across the state** for a variety of census-related positions. This includes:

- census takers;
- recruiting assistants;
- office operations supervisors;
- clerks;
- census field supervisors; and management-level positions can be found at www.usajobs.gov

These temporary, part-time positions are **available in every county** and pay between **\$16 and \$27.50 per hour**.

For More Information

- Call 1-855-562-2020, and select option 3, to find out about jobs in your area
- Apply at <https://2020census.gov/en/jobs.html>
- As Census Day draws closer, the [State Demographic Center](https://mn.gov/admin/demography/) and local governments may be hiring for additional census positions around Minnesota. For more information visit <https://mn.gov/admin/demography/>





CITY OF AFTON
3033 ST CROIX TRAIL SO
P.O. BOX 219
AFTON, MN 55001



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Valley Library January 2020

Closed on Wednesday, Jan. 1 for New Year's Day and Monday, Jan. 20 for Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Valley Library Grand Opening Celebration

Saturday, Jan. 11 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Come celebrate Valley Library's new space in Lakeland Plaza! Join us during open hours, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., for tours of the new library, pop up storytimes, crafts with Street Corner Letterpress, and light refreshments. There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony at 11 a.m. No registration required.

Full Calendar of Events:
www.washcolib.org

Valley Branch Library
384 St. Croix Trail South
Lakeland, MN 55043
651-436-5882

**PATRON
AFTON, MN 55001**

You may view this newsletter
IN COLOR
on the city website.



*Please recycle this
newsletter after use.*

City of Afton
Find us on Facebook!



Washington County 2019-2020 Christmas Tree Drop-off Sites

When the holiday season is over, recycle Christmas trees by dropping them off at one of the available yard waste drop-off sites in Washington County. Tree stands, plastic bags, tinsel, wire, lights, and all other decorations must be removed before drop-off.

This year, residents may use the newly-opened county Northern Yard Waste site at 5527 170th St. N. in Hugo. It will be open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturdays through March. It is free to use for Washington and Ramsey county residents.

Private waste haulers may also accept Christmas trees. Residents should contact haulers directly for more information.

Sites accepting trees include:

Cottage Grove: Rumpca Companies, Inc., 9600 Glendenning Road - open to all residents, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Dec. 28 and Jan. 4. Cost is \$2 per tree, which will be waived if a canned good is brought for donation to the local food shelf. For more information, call Rumpca Companies at 651-459-1556.

Forest Lake: City of Forest Lake Public Works, 843 Fourth St. S.W. – open to Forest Lake residents only, 24-hour drop-off through Jan. 31. No charge. For more information, call Forest Lake Public Works at 651-464-3220.

Oakdale: City of Oakdale Public Works, 1900 Hadley Ave. N. – open to Oakdale residents only, 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday Dec. 26 through Jan. 31. Cost is \$3 per tree. For more information, call Oakdale Public Works at 651-730-2740.

Woodbury: Composting Concepts, 4600 Cottage Grove Drive - open to all residents, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Jan. 4 and Jan. 11. Cost is \$10 per tree, \$7 per wreath. For more information, call Composting Concepts at 651-769-0531.