

gwinnettcounty CONNECTION

a monthly publication of **gwinnettcounty** government

FEBRUARY 2015



Commission hosts Town Hall Meetings

The Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners wants to hear from you! Join them this spring for four Town Hall Meetings that will be held in locations around the county. Beginning at 6:15pm, representatives from County departments will hold an open house to answer your questions and talk about the different services they provide. At 7:00pm, the commissioners invite you to share your thoughts and ideas about County government services. The meetings will be held on the following dates:

Tuesday, March 10

Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center
2020 Clean Water Drive, Buford

Thursday, March 26

Dacula Park Activity Building
2735 Old Auburn Avenue, Dacula

Thursday, April 23

Pinckneyville Park Community Recreation Center
4650 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Berkeley Lake

Tuesday, May 12

Hudgens Center for the Arts
6400 Sugarloaf Parkway, Building 300, Duluth

Residents may come to any or all of the meetings, so please select the best date and location for you to attend.

Sign up for email newsletters
from your smartphone!



AROUND GWINNETT

Commissioners adopt annual budget

On January 6, the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners adopted a \$1.42 billion balanced budget for fiscal year 2015.

The operating budget for fiscal year 2015 totals \$1.05 billion and includes pay-for-performance increases for non-sworn employees and a step increase for public safety personnel. The budget also funds new staff in several departments. Roadside maintenance will be partially restored and the county will also bring back Saturday bus service for local routes and add two daily express service trips from the Indian Trail Park and Ride lot.

The \$371.04 million capital budget includes construction of two fire stations using SPLOST funds, Fire Station 31 near Georgia Gwinnett College and Fire Station 10, which will be relocated to the Mall of Georgia area.

For more information about the 2015 budget, please visit www.gwinnettbudget.com.

Tax Assessors Office to conduct onsite property field visits

The Gwinnett County Tax Assessors office will be conducting onsite property field visits throughout the county in the coming months. Field visits are a routine process completed by a county appraiser or a contracted appraiser from LMC or Tyler Technologies. Gwinnett County vehicles will be clearly marked with emblems and personnel will have photo IDs and business cards. Residential property field visits are exterior inspections only and do not require entry into buildings or assistance by the resident. In some instances, inspections of commercial property may require some assistance depending on the nature of the business. If you have any questions, contact the Tax Assessor's Office at 770.822.7200 or taxpayer.services@gwinnettcounty.com.

FOCUS ON: Support Services and the Green Government Initiative

FOCUS ON tells the story of how your county government employees provide high-quality services to you each and every day. February features the staff of the Support Services department, which spearheads the County's Green Government Initiative, an internal program that promotes environmental sustainability across all County functions. Read more at www.gwinnettcounty.com.

Pay your water bill with your smartphone

Visit www.gwinnetth2o.com using your smartphone to easily pay your water bill on the go. Just have your username or water account number and password ready. You can use this convenient service for nonrecurring, one-time only payments.

Gwinnett County Government hosts many events, classes, and workshops for its residents. See these and more at www.gwinnettcountyevents.com.

Luck o' the Irish Luncheon

March 17 • 11:00am to 1:00pm
Prime Timers Pointe at George Pierce Park
55 Buford Highway, Suwanee
678.277.0910

Job Readiness Workshop • FREE!

March 19 • 9:00am to noon
Norcross Human Services Center
5030 Georgia Belle Court, Norcross
678.225.5400

Bridal Expo

March 22 • Noon to 4:00pm
Environmental & Heritage Center
2020 Clean Water Drive, Buford
770.904.3500

Farmers Market Vendor Food Safety Training

March 23 • 8:30am to noon
Gwinnett Extension Conference Room
750 South Perry Street, Lawrenceville
678.377.4010

Underwater Egg Hunt & Bunny Bonanza

March 28 • 9:00am to 1:00pm
Bogan Park Aquatic Center
2723 North Bogan Road, Buford
678.277.0853 or 678.277.0850

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send questions or comments to
shaunieka.taste@gwinnettcounty.com

Gwinnett County Communications Division
75 Langley Drive • Lawrenceville, GA 30046
770.822.7180 • www.gwinnettcounty.com

Questions about your water bill? Call 678.376.6800.



gwinnettSPLOST.com

your pennies
for transportation

New schools, U.S. 78 to get road upgrades

Pedestrian and intersection improvements are coming to two new schools that will open in August and an intersection on U.S. 78. Commissioners approved construction contracts for the three SPLOST-funded projects in January.

The Graves Road intersection at McDonough Drive will get a traffic signal and an entrance to the new Graves Elementary School will be created. The existing signal will be modified and turn lanes and sidewalks will be installed at the entrance to the new Baggett Elementary School at Old Norcross Road and Oakland Road.

A third project will relocate the intersection of U.S. 78 and Old Highway 78 across from Walton Court to create a four-legged intersection. A separate project to follow will build a parallel access road along U.S. 78 between Britt Road and the new intersection.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Tips to help your kids use smartphones safely

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children notes that one in four teens own a smartphone. Safe Internet use is just as important on smartphones as your home computer, so parents are encouraged to implement safeguards to help your children use smartphones safely. Here are some tips:

- Encourage your child to be careful uploading photos and messages on social media sites and urge them to avoid sexting and cyberbullying. Once something is posted online or sent through a phone, it is permanent and spreads quickly to lots of people.
- Set up password protection to keep others from accessing personal information stored on the phone and make sure you know your child's password.
- Approve all applications on your child's phone before downloading them.

www.gwinnettsafety411.com



PROTECTING OUR RESOURCES

Report what you see and protect our environment

The stormwater transport system consists of storm drains, pipes, and any manmade or natural features such as ditches that prevent localized flooding during rain events by directing stormwater to the nearest body of water. Runoff draining through this system is usually not treated before it is released into our rivers, streams, and lakes, so we must take precautions to prevent any discharge of pollutants into the storm drains.

Discharges of any kind to the stormwater system, other than rainwater, are considered an illicit discharge and are in violation of the *Illicit Discharge and Illegal Connection Ordinance*. If you notice an illicit discharge, please report it to the Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources by calling 678.376.7193. A water quality investigator will contact the complainant, conduct a field investigation, and educate a violator or take additional actions to enforce the ordinance. The field investigation may include sampling for pH, conductivity, detergents, and/or bacteria, and may require dye tests of floor drains or other indoor plumbing.

A violation of the IDIC ordinance is often addressed with guidance and educational materials, although escalating enforcement measures are available to ensure cessation of an IDIC violation. Through the County's efforts and with your help, we can ensure that pollutants are prevented from reaching our waterways and endangering the health and safety of the public and our environment.

Don't forget to attend our free workshop!

TAX COMMISSIONER

Senior homestead exemptions available

There are three special homestead exemptions available for seniors to save money on their property tax bill in Gwinnett. Visit www.GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com to learn more about these exemptions and their requirements or contact our office at tax@gwinnettcountry.com or 770.822.8800. Apply online or request an application in person, by email, or by phone. All applications are due April 1.

CHECK IT OUT

Check out these math stories offered by TumbleBook Library, an online collection for kids. You can access these titles online at www.gwinnettpl.org with your library card.

Counting Coconuts, by Wendi Silvano

The Coin Counting Book, by Rozanne Lanczak Williams

Cut Down to Size at High Noon, by Scott Sundby

Equal Schmequal, by Virginia Kroll

Department of Water Resources • Free Workshop!

Fix a Leak

High water bills are often caused by leaks inside or outside the home. Learn how to perform a test that will tell you if your home has a leak. We'll explain how to track down the leak and demonstrate simple repairs you can do yourself.

A licensed plumber will be on hand to answer your questions and all attendees will receive a free low-flow home retrofit kit.

March 14, 2015 • 1:00pm

Collins Hill Public Library

455 Camp Perrin Road, Lawrenceville

March 16, 2015 • 7:00pm

Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center

Conference Room C

75 Langley Drive, Lawrenceville

Please pre-register by sending an email with your name and address to dwrconserve@gwinnettcountry.com or by calling 678.376.6722.