

gwinnettcounty CONNECTION

a monthly publication of **gwinnettcounty** government

APRIL 2017

20 **triple**
years of **AAA**
achievement

Bond rating agencies give Gwinnett County top grades for management, fiscal policies

For 20 years, Gwinnett County has held a AAA bond rating from all three bond-rating agencies—the highest possible for local governments—allowing the County to refinance bonds at favorable interest rates and pay off some debt early. The result: more than \$80 million in savings on future interest payments since 2011.

Gwinnett County is one of 49 counties in the nation to have a Triple-AAA bond rating. The latest rating came in December after the County's finances went through intense review by analysts from S&P Global, Moody's Investors Service, and Fitch Ratings.

The Triple-AAA bond rating means the County can borrow money at most-favorable interest rates at the time the bonds are issued and also refinance the bonds when interest rates drop. The credit rating is a reflection of the financial condition of the County, its management decisions and institutional practices.

"This Triple-AAA bond rating by independent analysts tells investors that Gwinnett County is well-managed, fiscally strong, and a solid investment," said Board of Commissioners Chairman **Charlotte Nash**. *"This is a very difficult rating to achieve. A Triple-AAA rating puts us in the top 2 percent of the 3,000-plus counties in America."*

County offices will be closed
May 29 for Memorial Day

AROUND GWINNETT

Chinese professors tour F. Wayne Hill plant for wastewater treatment ideas

A group of 11 Chinese environmental engineering professors visiting Georgia Tech recently toured Gwinnett County's state-of-the-art F. Wayne Hill Water Resources Center to gather ideas.

The facility, one of the most sophisticated treatment plants in the world, attracts visitors from across the globe. The professors were especially impressed by the high quality of the water Gwinnett County returns to Lake Lanier and by a process that turns nutrients from wastewater into fertilizer.



Gwinnett County Transit and Google Transit team up to provide online planning tool

Gwinnett County Transit and Google Transit have teamed up to offer a new online tool that makes planning trips easier for commuters. The Google Transit app allows Gwinnett County Transit schedule data to be accessed via Google Maps, providing riders with step-by-step trip planning from their desktop computers or smartphones. By inputting their starting and ending points, Google will identify routes and available modes of transit.

The drought's not over; water restrictions are still in place

Gwinnett County continues to be in a Level 2 Drought Response, and watering restrictions remain in effect. For planting, growing, managing, or maintaining ground cover, trees, or shrubs, watering with an irrigation or sprinkler system is allowed twice a week on certain days before 10:00am and after 4:00pm. For more information, visit www.gwinnettH2O.com.

County offices closed for Memorial Day

Please note that all offices, with the exception of those operations required for the comfort and safety of the citizens of Gwinnett County, will be closed **Monday, May 29**, in observance of the Memorial Day holiday. Trash and recycling is scheduled as normal in unincorporated Gwinnett County. A Magistrate Court judge will be available at the Gwinnett County Detention Center.

The public is invited to a **Memorial Day Ceremony** at the Gwinnett Fallen Heroes Memorial in Lawrenceville to honor and recognize those who gave what Abraham Lincoln called "the last full measure of devotion" in service to their country. The ceremony begins at **1:00pm**.

Explore Gwinnett is Gwinnett's official tourism agency and promotes Gwinnett as a place to meet, stay, and play. View the complete events calendar at www.exploreGwinnett.com.

Suwanee Arts in the Park

Saturday, May 13 • 10:00am – 5:00pm
Suwanee Town Center Park
330 Town Center Avenue, Suwanee

The Cup Show: The Hudgens 2nd National Juried & Invitational Cup Exhibition

May 16 – July 29
Tuesday – Saturday • 10:00am – 5:00pm
The Hudgens Center for Art & Learning
6400 Sugarloaf Parkway, Building 300, Duluth

Peachtree Corners Festival

June 9 – June 11
Friday • 7:00pm, Saturday • 10:00am – 6:00pm,
Sunday • noon – 5:00pm
The Corners Parkway and Woodhill Drive,
Peachtree Corners

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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.



Board of Commissioners approve three pedestrian improvements

Commissioners recently approved three projects that address pedestrian needs on Richland Parkway, Old Peachtree and Rock Springs roads, and Harbins and Dacula roads.

Using an estimated \$2 million in 2014 SPLOST funds the projects will improve pedestrian safety and fill gaps in the sidewalk network.

At Richland Parkway, the contractor will build a new 230-foot pedestrian bridge alongside the existing roadway bridge as well as new sidewalks from Shore Drive to Collins Port Cove. The Old Peachtree/Rock Springs project will include several sections of new sidewalks plus road and intersection improvements. The Harbins Road and Dacula Road project, in collaboration with the city of Dacula, adds about a mile of sidewalk.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Be wary of jury duty scams

Jury duty scams are on the rise again, so watch out for these fraudulent calls. Typically the scammer, claiming to be a Gwinnett Sheriff's deputy, calls to advise the victims that a warrant has been issued for their arrest because they didn't show up for jury duty and now owe a fine up to \$900. The issue can be resolved quickly, he says, by paying immediately over the phone with a prepaid debit card. In reality, Gwinnett County's law enforcement agencies do not call people to demand money.

Every year, thousands of potential jurors in Gwinnett are selected randomly by computer from a database of registered voters and licensed drivers and summoned by mail. The summons explains the one-day-or-one-trial system and gives instructions on when and where to report for duty. If you don't show up, they contact you again—also by mail.

If you've been scammed, call the Gwinnett County Sheriff's Office Investigative Services Division at 770.619.6655.

Learn more at gwinnettsafety411.com.

PROTECTING OUR RESOURCES



Only rain belongs in the drain

In Gwinnett County, only rainwater is allowed in the stormwater drainage system. Anything else that is dumped or discharged into the system is a violation of the *Illicit Discharge and Illegal Connection Ordinance*. That includes yard care products, paint, automotive fluids, and soaps.

Stormwater runoff refers to rain that falls on hard surfaces such as driveways or parking lots and is not soaked into the ground. The stormwater drainage system—which includes storm drains, gutters, and ditches—transports runoff directly to waterways, untreated. Although this process helps prevent localized flooding, stormwater runoff collects pollutants on the ground and carries them to nearby storm drains or ditches, which carries them directly to creeks and streams. Ultimately, the stormwater—and the pollutants it transfers—ends up in someone's drinking water.

Here are some tips you can use to help protect water quality:

- Never dump anything down storm drains
- Pick up after your pet
- Use fertilizers sparingly—sweep excess from sidewalks or driveways
- Check vehicles for leaks and repair them quickly
- Don't blow yard trimmings into the street or down the drain

If you see someone discharging anything into a storm drain, please call the Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources at 678.376.7000 so we can address the discharge and provide education on preventing stormwater pollution.

Remember, only rain belongs in the drain!

TAX COMMISSIONER

Senior Emission Exemption

You may be eligible for an emission inspection exemption if you are 65 or older; a registered owner of a vehicle 10 years old or more, and drive less than 5,000 miles a year. Apply at a Gwinnett tag office or online at www.CleanAirForce.com.

CHECK IT OUT

Check out these gardening books just in time for spring! These and other titles can be found at your nearby Gwinnett County Public Library branch, www.gwinnettpl.org.

The Indestructible Houseplant: 200 Beautiful Plants that Everyone Can Grow, by Tovah Martin

Groundbreaking Food Gardens: 73 Plans that Will Change the Way You Grow Your Garden, by Niki Jabbour

Epic Tomatoes: How to Select & Grow the Best Varieties of All Time, by Craig LeHoullier

Sustainable Gardening for the Southeast, by Susan Jezsik Varlamoff

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