

News for Neighborhoods

A newsletter for gwinnettcounty homeowners

December 22, 2011

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[Tax & Tag News](#)
[Waterwords](#)

Dear Homeowner:

As a resident of Gwinnett County, you know there is always a lot going on in the community. [Gwinnett County Government](#) would appreciate your help keeping your neighbors informed by sharing the following information through your homeowner association newsletter, website, and e-mails and by talking to your friends and family. Click on *forward this e-mail to a friend* below to share this newsletter!

Drop off your Christmas tree for recycling

Once the holidays are over, don't forget to recycle your Christmas tree! From December 26 until January 15, residents can drop off their live, undecorated trees at [various locations](#) in Gwinnett County. The trees will be chipped during Gwinnett Clean and Beautiful's *Bring One for the Chipper* event on January 21 from 9:00am to noon at Bethesda Park, 225 Bethesda Church Road in Lawrenceville. The mulch from the trees will be used for County parks and facilities.



Please note that unless you have a yard waste contract with your hauler, trees will not be collected curbside. Also be reminded that all Gwinnett County government offices, with the exception of those operations required for the comfort and safety of the citizens of the County, will be closed Friday, December 23, Monday, December 26, and Monday, January 2 for the Christmas and New Year's Day holidays. However, solid waste haulers will follow the normal schedule during the weeks of Christmas and New Year's Day.

Georgia issues new license plate design

Georgia will soon start producing new license plates with the recently-chosen design, shown on the right. The new plates will also have a digital design, meaning that they will not have raised numbers and letters.



Owners who have a registered vehicle with the current *Georgia...on my mind* plate, will receive the new plate during their renewal. If you would like the new tag, and it's not time to renew and/or your tag is less than five years old, you may turn in your old tag and purchase the new one for \$25. For more information, contact the [Tax Commissioner's Office](#).

Water and sewer rate increase

Effective January 2012, a rate increase for water and sewer service will be implemented and will remain in effect until December 2012. Visit www.gwinnetth2o.com for a complete listing of rates and charges.

Single Family Residential (per 1,000 gallons)
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Water	
Tier 1 (up to 8,000 gallons)	\$4.53
Tier 2 (8,000 - 12,000 gallons)	\$6.79
Tier 3 (over 12,000 gallons)	\$9.06
Sewer	\$6.47
Commercial/Multi Family Residential (per 1,000 gallons)	
Water	\$4.53
Sewer	\$6.47

All Irrigation and Builder accounts shall be billed at two times the tier-one volumetric rate for all water which passes through the water meter per billing period.

Monthly Availability Charges (no change from 2011)					
Meter Size	Meter Charges	Meter Size	Meter Charges	Meter Size	Meter Charges
5/8"	\$7.50	1 1/2"	\$27.00	4"	\$210.00
3/4"	\$7.50	2"	\$52.50	6"	\$400.00
1"	\$16.50	3"	\$144.00	8"	\$750.00

Chairman proposes 2012 budget

Gwinnett County Commission Chairman Charlotte Nash unveiled the proposed fiscal year 2012 budget to the Board of Commissioners on November 15. The proposed budget totals \$1.3 billion, compared to \$1.5 billion for 2011.



The proposed operating budget (daily operations) for fiscal year 2012 totals \$901 million, while the proposed capital budget is \$430 million. Operating expenses are expected to be lower in 2012 compared to 2011, and capital investments have been limited to those that do not require significant additional operating costs. The Board is expected to consider the 2012 budget for adoption during the first meeting of the year on January 3, 2012.

Commissioners held a public hearing on December 13 and invite the public to make [written comments about the budget](#) via the county's website through December 25. The Board of Commissioners is expected to consider the 2012 budget for adoption during the first meeting of the year on January 3, 2012.

View the [proposed 2012 budget resolution](#) and a [presentation on the budget highlights](#).

Holiday fire safety

The holiday season is here, and with it comes a greater risk of accidentally starting a fire in your home. Two of the biggest causes of residential fires at this time of year are Christmas trees and cooking accidents.

Holiday decorations

Across America every year, fire departments respond to

hundreds of structure fires that started with Christmas trees and decorations. They cause an average of 12 deaths, 24 injuries, and more than \$16 million in property damage annually. Consider the following tips while decorating this holiday:



- Keep your Christmas tree watered and don't leave it up too long
- Choose a tree with fresh green needles that don't fall off when touched
- Water your tree daily - a dry tree is a major fire hazard
- Place your well-watered tree at least three feet away from heat sources like a fireplace, lights, or heat vents, and make sure it's not blocking an exit
- Keep candles at least a foot away from anything that can burn and make sure they're on a sturdy, uncluttered surface
- Use flashlights and battery-powered lighting
- Don't connect more than three strings of mini lights end-to-end or more than 50 screw-in bulbs
- Don't use light strings with frayed cords or loose connections
- Always turn your tree off when no one is around and before you go to bed
- Use decorations that are flame retardant or flame resistant, and keep them away from candles, doors, and windows
- Hang outdoor lights with plastic clips, not metal nails or staples

Cooking safety

The holiday season is also a time when family and friends gather to share a meal. As preparations for the busy holidays get underway, firefighters want to encourage safe cooking practices. [Fire and Emergency Services](#) and the National Fire Protection Association are calling on all cooks to include the following fire safety tips in their recipes:

- If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, remember to check it regularly; use a timer to remind yourself that something is on the stove or in the oven
- Keep anything that could catch fire, such as oven mitts, wood utensils, food packaging, towels, or curtains away from your stovetop, oven, or any other heat producing appliance in the kitchen
- Never wear loose clothing or dangling sleeves while cooking; remember to stop, drop, and roll if your clothes catch on fire and cool a burn injury with water until the pain goes away
- Never attempt to cook if you are extremely tired or if you have consumed alcoholic beverages
- Keep children and pets at a safe distance away from the oven or stove when cooking
- Install and maintain smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors in your home

If you're planning to deep-fry your holiday bird, please remember to follow proper fire safety precautions. Be sure to read the instructions for your fryer and completely thaw your turkey or chicken before frying it.

To learn more about how to keep your home safe from fire this holiday, watch the latest episode of [On Scene with Gwinnett Fire](#).

Practice fireworks safety this New Year

Over the last few years, Georgia's laws regarding fireworks have changed and the following are now legal:

- Wire or wood sparklers using 100 grams or less of explosive chemicals
- Sparkling items, which are non-explosive and non-

aerial and contain 75 grams or less of explosive material or a total of 200 grams or less for multiple items

- Snake and glow worms
- Trick noise makers, which include paper streamers, party poppers, string poppers, snappers, and drop pops consisting of 0.25 grams or less of explosive mixture



Although these types of fireworks are legal in Georgia, citizens should use extreme caution to avoid injury during this year's New Year's Day holiday celebrations.

If you're going to celebrate with fireworks, [Gwinnett County Fire and Emergency Services](#) encourages you to follow these safety tips for using legal fireworks this holiday:

- Fireworks should only be used under adult supervision
- Always read and follow instructions printed on labels
- Only use fireworks outdoors
- Use fireworks in a clear, safe location away from homes and cars
- Be sure to have water handy
- Light one firework at a time
- Have a bucket of water and fire extinguisher nearby
- Submerge the spent fireworks in water for at least an hour before disposing them
- Never re-ignite malfunctioning fireworks
- Never attempt to make your own fireworks
- Remember to call 911 in an emergency

Please note that the sale and use of most types of fireworks, including firecrackers, skyrocket, and cherry bombs, are illegal in Georgia and punishable by a maximum fine of up to \$1,000 and up to one year in jail.

gwinnettcounty
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