News for Neighborhoods
A newsletter for gwinnett county homeowners

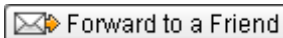**Dear Shaunieka,**

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 emails and by talking to your friends and family.

Forward to a Friend

Animal shelter's annual Adoption Explosion continues

The Gwinnett County Police Department's Animal Welfare and Enforcement Section has begun their second annual Adoption Explosion event, which will run through **Saturday, July 27**. During this event, the shelter will waive the adoption fees and reduce the veterinarian fees. The normal adoption fee of $90 will be reduced to $40 for dogs and puppies and $30 for cats and kittens. If you wish to adopt two cats or kittens, the fee will be reduced to $40 total for both. This fee includes the spay/neuter of each animal, a microchip, and the first round of shots.

The Adoption Explosion will end with a block party at the Animal Welfare and Enforcement Center on **Saturday, July 27**. The party will run from 10:00am to 3:00pm, with the shelter staying open until 4:00pm. Come out to enjoy a live DJ, the *Cars for Critters Mega Hot Road and Car Show*, inflatable jump houses and games for kids, a craft exhibit, and cookout. You can purchase hot dogs, hamburgers, chips, and non-alcoholic drinks during the party, and all proceeds from the cookout will benefit the Society of Humane Friends, the organization that is making this event possible.

For more information on the Animal Welfare and Enforcement Center and pets available for adoption, visit www.gwinnettanimalcontrol.com or call 770.339.3200.

Gwinnett County Commission approves 2013 millage rates

On Tuesday, the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners voted to approve millage rates for 2013. These funds will go to support the services Gwinnett County government provides to residents and businesses.

Property tax bills will look slightly different this year as a result of state-mandated service delivery agreements that were negotiated last year. Millage rates now vary based on the location of a property and which services are provided to it by the County. The bill will be broken out into service districts that include Fire and Emergency Medical Services, Police, Development/Code Enforcement, and Loganville EMS. In addition, each property will continue to be assessed a levy for general operations and voter-approved debt and recreation. This billing method will give homeowners the ability to see exactly what services they are paying for and receiving from the County.

In unincorporated areas of Gwinnett County, the millage rate will be 13.75, which is up .73 mills from

2012. For a typical $157,000 home, this will be an increase of $38, or 5.5 percent. Residents of cities in Gwinnett which operate their own police department will see a decrease of approximately 9 percent, while residents of cities that do not operate their own police department will see an increase of slightly less than 3 percent. Residents of Loganville, which operates its own police and fire departments, will see a larger decrease of about 33 percent.

The approval of the millage rates will allow the Tax Commissioner's Office to prepare property tax bills for mailing on schedule in early August. Property owners or their mortgage lenders will have two months to pay.

For more information about the newly created service districts and how it will affect your property tax bill, visit www.gwinnettservicedistricts.com. To view an estimate of your property taxes and see where your tax dollars go, view the *Where Your Property Taxes Go* tool, which can be found under *Your Money* at www.gwinnettcounty.com.

SR 20 widening breaks ground in Sugar Hill

Today Gwinnett County Commissioners and officials from the Georgia and Gwinnett DOT broke ground on the widening of State Route 20 in the Sugar Hill area from Peachtree Industrial Boulevard into Forsyth County.

The project completes the widening of SR 20 to four lanes throughout Gwinnett, all the way from Loganville and Walton County to Sugar Hill and across the Chattahoochee River to Forsyth County. Gwinnett County will manage the 4.5 miles leading up to the bridge, and the Georgia Department of Transportation will oversee construction of two new two-lane bridges over the Chattahoochee River into Forsyth. Gwinnett's SPLOST sales tax program provided approximately $7 million in funding for a portion of the engineering, right-of-way, and construction phases of work. State and federal governments are providing $85 million for the bridge and roadway projects. State funds came from GRTA and the Georgia DOT.

Construction is anticipated to be finished by mid-2016. For more information on this project, visit the *Georgia Department of Transportation's website*.

July is National Park and Recreation Month

National Park and Recreation Month continues in Gwinnett County for the remainder of July. Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation wants you to celebrate this month by exploring your local parks to discover their many benefits, including programs to inspire healthy lifestyles and activities that help visitors appreciate the natural environment.

Join them for Dog Day at the Park on July 20 at Lenora Park in Snellville from 10:00am - 2:00pm and the National Football League's Punt, Pass, & Kick competition, which will be held Saturday, July 27 starting at 9:00am at Rhodes Jordan Park in Lawrenceville.

For details about these events, or to find out more about parks in your community, visit www.gwinnettparks.com.
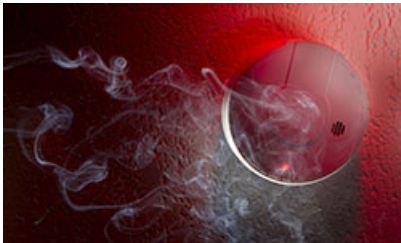
Get involved in Gwinnett

If you're looking for a way to make a difference in Gwinnett County, consider joining the Volunteer Gwinnett program. A wide variety of volunteer opportunities are available all around the county including one-time events as well as recurring projects. You can volunteer by yourself or with a group in any number of activities that may be interesting to you.

Volunteer Gwinnett is a unique way to share your time and talents while learning more about how local government impacts the community. Volunteers also have a great chance to make new friends and develop new skills. To find out more about the Volunteer Gwinnett program, search for volunteer events in your area, or share a new idea for a project, visit www.volunteergwinnett.net.

Gwinnett receives grant for smoke detectors

Gwinnett Fire and Emergency Services will be able to provide about 4,000 long-life smoke detectors to elderly and needy residents thanks to a $62,520 firefighter assistance grant that commissioners accepted earlier this month. The money comes from the Federal Emergency Management Agency through the Georgia Department of Homeland Security. The grant requires County matching funds of $15,630.

The grant will help support a Gwinnett fire safety initiative called Residential F.A.C.T. (firefighters and communities together). The smoke detectors will go to Gwinnett residents in 10 communities in high call volume areas based on incident reports and a needs assessment. With community partners and volunteers, fire safety educators will conduct door-to-door visits in targeted areas to raise awareness of fire hazards, install smoke alarms where needed, and follow up to make sure proper fire safety practices have been implemented. Some of the fire safety educators will be bilingual to help reach Spanish-speaking residents.

"These grants will help us proactively save lives and protect property in our community," said Gwinnett Fire Chief Casey Snyder. "We want residents to learn safety measures and interact with firefighters on a non-emergency basis."
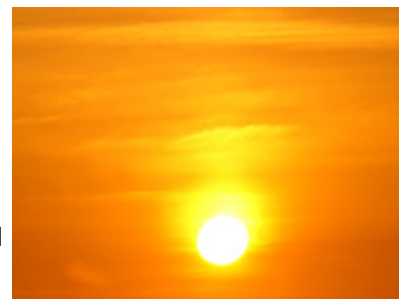
Gwinnett responds to an average of 640 residential fires a year and had 12 related deaths in the last two years. There have been eight fires recently in two manufactured home communities where 40 percent of the residents are fixed-income seniors and 98 percent of the homes have no working smoke detectors.

Snyder said working smoke alarms can increase the survivability of a home fire by giving occupants an early warning and added escape time.

6 tips to beat the summer heat

It's known throughout Georgia that extreme heat comes with summer. Temperatures during the season can easily reach 100 degrees and feel even hotter. High temperatures are not the only dangers associated with summer - too much sun exposure can be harmful to the body and very dangerous to senior citizens, children, and persons with asthma.

Some common heat-related emergencies are heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion include rapid, shallow breathing; cold, clammy skin; heavy perspiration; weakness; and muscle cramps. Heat exhaustion can quickly turn into a heat stroke, which is characterized by a rapid, strong pulse followed by rapid weak pulse; dry, hot skin; dilated pupils; and possibly loss of consciousness.

If heat exhaustion or stroke symptoms are present, take precautions by calling 911, getting the person indoors or into shade, fan or mist the person, and hydrate them with cold water, avoiding

alcoholic or sugary drinks.

Remember these six tips for staying safe from the heat this summer from Gwinnett County Fire and Emergency Services:

1. Stay hydrated during outdoor activities by drinking plenty of water
2. Take a cool shower after outdoor activities or long exposure to the sun
3. Wear lightweight, light-colored, and loose fitting clothes
4. Use plenty of sunscreen
5. Monitor weather conditions
6. Limit outdoor activities to early morning or late evening

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