



Support local business during holiday season

Oak Park is home to more than 1,000 businesses owned by neighbors and friends who care about their customers and are invested in the well-being of the community. Shopping at an Oak Park business during the holiday season helps strengthen the local economy and reduces the community's carbon footprint by reducing travel distances. Retail sales benefit not only local retailers, but the entire Village since 2% of every retail sale comes back to municipal coffers to fund vital public services. For many retailers, the holiday season is the most important time of the year.

Find local shopping options online... Get inspired and plan for your holiday shopping by visiting www.pickoakpark.com, an online directory that offers information on local licensed businesses by type and district. Pick Oak Park is a Village-wide campaign to support local businesses that call the Village home. Additionally, the website includes information about the more than 200 new businesses that have opened in the community in the past two years. Residents are also invited to follow Pick Oak Park on Facebook and Instagram to learn more about Oak Park's dynamic business community.

Shop local, park for free

Shopping local will be easier than ever beginning the Friday after Thanksgiving on Nov. 24 and continuing every Saturday through Dec. 23 when parking will be free in the three Village-operated public garages and for two hours at pay-by-plate parking spaces downtown and in the vicinity of south Oak Park Avenue. Parking is always free on Sunday throughout the year. Village officials say they hope this small gesture will benefit both customers and the businesses they patronize. For more information about parking in the Village, email parking@oak-park.us or visit www.oak-park.us/parking.

Share input via Engage Oak Park

Oak Parkers have a new online destination for providing feedback on matters related to municipal government on the Village's Engage Oak Park website at www.engageoakpark.com. Launched earlier this year, the site serves as a landing point for residents and other community stakeholders who wish to provide input, share ideas and influence policymaking related to various local issues. The site has attracted thousands of contributions on topics related to sustainability, traffic safety, equity and more. New projects are added regularly and visitors can browse completed projects. One-time registration is required to participate on the site in most cases. The registration requirement promotes accountability, encourages more thoughtful responses, ensures a broader set of backgrounds and perspectives are represented and allows participants to receive important updates on topics of their choosing.

Other ways to stay connected...

Residents can stay up to date on the latest news and information from Village Hall by signing up to receive news from the Village via email and by following the Village's social media channels. Residents are invited to sign up for weekly e-news alerts at oak-park.us/enews and follow the Village on Facebook (facebook.com/vopnews), X (twitter.com/vopnews), Instagram (instagram.com/oakparkil), YouTube (youtube.com/vopnews), and Threads ([@oakparkil](https://threads.net/@oakparkil)). Important information is also posted on the Village website at www.oak-park.us.

Winter energy-saving tips

The greenest energy is the energy you don't use. While cooler temperatures tend to bring higher utility bills, residents can cut down on costs and conserve energy by following these tips:

Weatherstrip doors and windows:

This will help keep your home warmer by keeping heated air from leaking out.

Furnace inspection: Have a certified heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) contractor inspect your furnace. If your furnace is 15 years or older, you may want to consider upgrading to a newer system.

New filters: A clean filter helps your HVAC system operate at its best and last longer. You should change your filter as often as every three weeks to as little as every six months. This depends on various factors, like how often you actually use your system and what kind of unit you have (room air conditioners, gas furnaces, etc.) If you have pets or allergies, you may need to clean and replace your filters more often.

Adjust your thermostat: According to Energy.gov, you should set your home to 68 degrees when you are home and awake. But when you're asleep or away, you can turn it lower. Setting your thermostat back about 10 degrees while sleeping or for at least eight hours a day can save you almost 10% on your bill over the course of a year. NEVER go below 55 degrees, because you could freeze your pipes. A programmable/smart thermostat is best. If your home is WiFi-enabled, a smart thermostat can help control your home's temperature and cut heating and cooling costs by up to 20%.

Outdoor faucets off: Running or leaky outside faucets can cause pipes to freeze and explode. Flushing outside faucets before winter is a great way to remove any excess water that could freeze up later. You may even want to consider purchasing an insulated cover for each outdoor faucet.

Turn down your water heater: Lower the temperature to the warm setting (120 degrees). You can also have hot water pipe insulation installed, or cover your hot water heater with an insulating blanket.

Check your attic insulation: A quick way to see if you need more insulation is to look across your attic floor. If the insulation is even with or below the attic floor joists, it's time to add more.

Install LED light bulbs: They use at least 75% less energy than incandescent bulbs. Swap out your holiday lights for LED versions for extra savings.

Unplug devices when not in use: Even when electronic devices are powered off, many are still using electricity if they are plugged in. This is called vampire power or phantom load, which can account for 25% of a product's electric usage on average. And remember: Leaving your smartphone plugged in to a charger overnight not only wastes electricity, but it also strains the batteries over time.

For more information about ways to reduce energy use and assistance programs for residents interested in energy-saving solutions, visit www.sustainoakpark.com or contact sustainability@oak-park.us.



Sidewalk shoveling required

Residents and businesses are urged to help improve walking conditions and public safety by removing snow and ice from sidewalks after a storm. Village ordinance requires snow and ice to be removed from the public sidewalk within 24 hours following any snow, sleet or freezing rain. If the snow or ice has become too hard to remove without damaging the sidewalk, sand, salt or other abrasive material may be used to make pedestrian travel reasonably safe. Being a good neighbor is important, too, so property owners are urged to help those who may need help clearing a sidewalk. Failure to clear a sidewalk fronting or abutting one's property could lead to a ticket and fine. For more information on the shoveling requirement or help finding resources, call 708.358.5700 or email publicworks@oak-park.us.

Walk with a nurse at the CRC

The Oak Park Public Health Department is partnering with the Park District of Oak Park and the Community Mental Health Board to offer a free, healthy, indoor activity for community members this winter. Join your neighbors for a walk around the indoor track at the Community Recreation Center at 229 Madison Street from 10 a.m. to noon on the dates below. The public health nurse and other Public Health Department staff will be on hand to walk and talk with you, as well as offer free blood pressure checks, diabetic risk assessments and answer any public health-related questions you have.

WALK WITH A NURSE AT THE CRC
10 a.m. to noon
on the following dates:

- Sat., Nov. 18
- Tues., Dec. 12
- Wed., Jan. 31
- Wed., Feb. 21
- Sat., March 16

Fall leaf collection continues

The Village's annual fall leaf collection program continues through the week of Dec. 4–7. Leaves should be raked into the street at least 18 inches from the curb the day before the scheduled pickup dates indicated on the map. Residents who miss a scheduled pickup date should keep leaves on the parkway until the night before the next scheduled pickup. Please inform landscape services of the leaf collection schedule. For more information call 708.358.5700, email publicworks@oak-park.us or visit www.oak-park.us/2023leafcollection.

NORTH AVE	
WEDNESDAY Nov. 8 Nov. 15 Nov. 22 Nov. 29 Dec. 6 • Last day to rake Dec. 5	THURSDAY Nov. 9 Nov. 16 Nov. 24 Nov. 30 Dec. 7 • Last day to rake Dec. 6
SOUTH BLVD	
TUESDAY Nov. 7 Nov. 14 Nov. 21 Nov. 28 Dec. 5 • Last day to rake Dec. 4	MONDAY Nov. 6 Nov. 13 Nov. 20 Nov. 27 Dec. 4 • Last day to rake Dec. 3
ROOSEVELT RD	

Consider leaving the leaves...As an alternative to placing leaves in the street, residents are encouraged to consider leaving the leaves to protect their soil. Raking leaves into garden beds or bagging and storing them for spring application can help support biodiversity in your yard and the community. More information about approaching fall clean-up in an eco-sensitive way is available from local non-profit West Cook Wild Ones at www.westcook.wildones.org/spring-and-fall-clean-up.

Community forums to focus on unhoused population

The Village is hosting a pair of community forums to discuss unhoused persons living within the community. The sessions will be held on Thurs., Nov. 30 and Thurs., Dec. 18, with both taking place from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Oak Park Public Library Veterans Room, 834 Lake St. The first forum on Nov. 30 will focus on community education and ways to best interact with, and provide support to, Oak Park's unhoused population. A group of panelists will discuss challenges and potential solutions, speak on advocacy and policy and partake in a question-and-answer session. The event on Dec. 7 will center around affordable housing and the role of private landlords. Subject-matter experts will aim to help attendees better understand the unhoused crisis, while looking at the roles of landlords and agencies such as Housing Forward and the Oak Park Homelessness Coalition in identifying solutions. The group will highlight success stories and review support services that are available to tenants.

Resources available...The Village and its partners offer resources to individuals and businesses in the community, including resource cards that can be distributed and provided to individuals in need of support. Resources include assistance for crisis, utilities, food, legal aid, shelter, children and family support, employment, and mental health and substance use supports. For more information on how to utilize this information or technical assistance, visit www.oak-park.us/unhoused or contact the Village at 708.358.5416.

Health Department news

Opioid overdose training opportunities...The Oak Park Public Health Department is expanding its opioid overdose response and Naloxone (commonly known as Narcan) training opportunities. Starting in January, the Health Department will offer monthly training sessions for anyone who wants to learn more about harm reduction, how Narcan works, when and how to administer it and where to find it for free in Oak Park. Clinical and health education staff will provide hands-on instruction. In addition, the Health Department will offer trainings for Oak Park businesses and organizations who would like their staff trained on opioid overdose prevention. Visit www.oak-park.us/naloxone to see scheduling details and register for these free training opportunities.

New monthly e-newsletter...Starting in 2024, the Oak Park Public Health Department will send out a monthly email newsletter, spotlighting local health issues and initiatives, Public Health Department programming updates, volunteer opportunities and more. If you want to receive the latest health news each month, call 708.358.5480 or email health@oak-park.us to have your contact information added to the email list.

Yard waste collection ends

Regular yard waste collection ends the week of Nov. 20–25 for bundled brush and containers of yard waste with a green sticker attached. Yard waste is picked up by appointment only during the winter months. To arrange a special yard waste pick-up call LRS, the Village's waste-hauling contractor, at 844.633.3577 or email Service@LRSrecycles.com.

Bi-weekly compost collection...Compost collection also switches to a bi-weekly schedule at a discounted rate during the winter months. Visit www.oak-park.us/compost to see the winter collection schedule and for more information about the Village's food scrap composting program.

Police Department offers seasonal crime prevention tips

With the holidays approaching, the Oak Park Police Department is working to raise public awareness of some common crimes of the season by offering the following tips to help reduce the chances of becoming a victim:

- **Package theft...**Residents ordering online and expecting deliveries should make arrangements with friends, family or neighbors so that packages will not be left out where thieves can get them. Sign up for delivery notification or request a signature upon delivery if you are working from home. Check with your online retailer as some offer options to deliver your packages to a business or secure location, such as a locker.
- **Pickpockets and thieves...**If you are out shopping or dining, take care to protect purses, bags and wallets when in public. Thieves like bags and purses hanging on chair backs, left in shopping carts, sitting unattended or simply set down while the owner answers a telephone or is otherwise distracted.
- **Auto burglaries...**Packages and valuables left visible in an automobile — even if it is locked — are an invitation to thieves who may be willing to damage your vehicle to get them. And if you have to make multiple trips from your car to your home to unload, be alert — especially if the car is left unattended.
- **Robberies...**Don't be distracted with cell phones while walking or waiting for public transportation. Pay attention to your environment and what's around you. If you think someone acting suspiciously is approaching you or following you, cross to the other side of the street and head for the nearest public place. Obey an offender's instructions — property can be replaced, you cannot.
- **Motor vehicle theft...**Many autos are reported stolen during colder months after being left unattended to warm up, unlocked and running with the keys in the ignition. This can happen on the street, in a garage, while making a quick stop at a store for a carryout order or at a gas station. Leaving a running vehicle unattended not only increases its risk of being stolen, it also is a violation of state law.

Residents are urged to report any suspicious activity to the Police non-emergency number, 708.386.3800. And if you see a crime taking place, or about to take place, always call 911. More information about the Police Department is available at www.oak-park.us/police.

Protect against respiratory viruses

Late fall and winter are seasons typically marked by high rates of respiratory viruses. Public health officials remind community members that the most effective way to protect yourself from the worst outcomes of respiratory viruses is to get fall immunizations. For the first time ever, vaccines and other preventive antibodies are available for all three major fall and winter respiratory viruses: flu, COVID-19 and RSV. A new COVID shot for 2023-2024 is available and recommended for anyone 6 months and older, regardless of prior COVID vaccination history. Check with your health care provider or local pharmacy to find and receive your vaccines. In addition, everyday actions like covering coughs and sneezes, frequent proper handwashing, wearing masks, improving indoor air quality and staying home if you are sick can reduce the spread of respiratory viruses in Oak Park. For more information or for assistance finding a vaccine, contact the Oak Park Public Health Department at health@oak-park.us or 708.358.5480.

Fire Department seeks help keeping the wreath green

Family gatherings, colorful decorations and elaborate meals are the hallmarks of the holiday season, but the tidings of the season also can pose a risk when it comes to fire safety. That's why the Oak Park Fire Department is launching its Keep the Wreath Green holiday safety campaign. From Nov. 24 until Jan. 1, a wreath hanging at the Central Fire Station will be adorned with green lights. For every holiday related fire in Oak Park, a bulb will be changed from green to red as a reminder of the risks. By following these simple rules, you can help the Fire Department keep the wreath green this year:

- Water your Christmas tree daily
- Check holiday lights for frayed ends
- Keep your tree at least 3 feet away from heat sources
- Never leave a lit candle unattended
- Keep close watch on your stove or oven when cooking
- Test your smoke detectors throughout your home regularly

For more information on the Oak Park Fire Department, visit www.oak-park.us/fire or email fireprevention@oak-park.us.

Immunizations for migrants and asylum seekers

The Oak Park Public Health Department is able to provide recommended childhood vaccines, including those required for school attendance, to children of migrant families and asylum seekers new to the Oak Park community. If you are a recent migrant or assisting members of this population who are living or attending school in Oak Park, please reach out the Public Health Department at 708.358.5480 or health@oak-park.us to learn more about available vaccines.

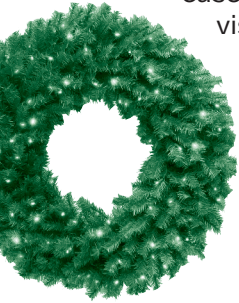
News you can use

Overnight, on-street parking eased for holidays... Overnight, on-street parking restrictions are eased to accommodate visitors and guests during major holidays, including Thanksgiving and Christmas. Restrictions will be lifted from 2:30 a.m., Wed., Nov. 22 until 2:30 a.m., Mon. Nov. 27, and from 2:30 a.m., Sat., Dec. 16 until 2:30 a.m. Wed., Jan. 3. However, parking restrictions will remain in effect during these times in overnight permit parking zones where residents have purchased quarterly passes. Other parking regulations, such as posted daytime, safety and snow restrictions, also will remain in effect.

Holiday hours... Village Hall will be closed all day Thursday and Friday, Nov. 23 and 24 for Thanksgiving, starting at noon, Fri., Dec. 22 through Mon., Dec. 25 for Christmas, and on Mon., Jan. 1 for New Year's. Regular Village Hall hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. More information is posted at www.oak-park.us/villagehall.

Heat required... Landlords must furnish heat to all Oak Park rental dwelling units from Sept. 15 through May 15. An average minimum temperature of 68 degrees Fahrenheit must be maintained from 6:30 a.m. to 11 p.m., and 65 degrees Fahrenheit from 11 p.m. to 6:30 a.m. Complaints may be made by calling 708.358.5430 or email to housing@oak-park.us. More information is posted at www.oak-park.us/housing.

Pet responsibilities... Dog owners are required to pick up and dispose of dog waste. Owners walking their dogs must carry a bag or other suitable means to pick up dog waste. Call 708.358.5680 to register a complaint about an animal, such as noise, excrement, cruelty or off leash.



Climate action starts at home

Village officials and community groups are working together to share ways all Oak Parkers can make a difference in combating climate change. The actions and choices made by individual citizens can move the community closer to the goals outlined in Climate Ready Oak Park, the comprehensive and long-range plan adopted by the Village in response to the global climate crisis. Whether you are a homeowner or renter, there are a number of actions you can take to help reduce the community's carbon footprint:

TOP 5 ACTIONS FOR RENTERS:

- 1. Switch your electricity to Community Solar.** Find information about investing in clean energy without solar panels at www.citizensutilityboard.org/solar-in-the-community.
- 2. If appliances break, ask your landlord to replace them with electric ones.** When your lease is up, seek an apartment with electric appliances and heat.
- 3. Travel clean.** Use public transit and walk or ride your bike as much as you can. Or use an e-bike or electric vehicle.
- 4. Adapt green laundry habits.** Wash clothes in cold water. Air out jeans and sweaters rather than washing after each wear. Use clothes drying racks instead of the dryer.
- 5. Optimize your grocery budget.** Plan meals and grocery shopping to reduce food waste. Purchase a kitchen compost pail for \$10 at Village Hall and drop off your food scraps at one of five Oak Park composting locations. More information is at www.oak-park.us/compostable.

TOP 5 ACTIONS FOR HOMEOWNERS:

- 1. Weatherize and electrify your home.** Learn about ways to reduce your energy load and save money at www.sustainoakpark.com/weatherization. When appliances break, replace them with electric ones.
- 2. Switch to solar.** Learn about Investing in clean energy without the panels via Community Solar at www.citizensutilityboard.org/solar-in-the-community. Or visit sunroof.withgoogle.com to see if your home is a good candidate for rooftop solar.
- 3. Convert your lawn to native plants and veggies.** Support biodiversity by following natural lawn care practices. Consider a rain garden to reduce runoff from your property or a vegetable garden to grow your own food.
- 4. Travel clean.** Use public transit and walk or ride your bike as much as you can. Or use an e-bike or electric vehicle.
- 5. Compost.** Join the Village's curbside compost program. Share with a neighbor to reduce costs. Homeowners in large multi-family buildings can purchase a kitchen compost pail for \$10 at Village Hall and drop off your food scraps at one of four Oak Park composting locations. More information is at www.oak-park.us/compostable.

View with a smartphone camera.



Village of Oak Park

Village Hall

123 Madison Street

Oak Park, Illinois 60302-4272

OP/FM

Village President Vicki Scaman

Trustees

Susan Buchanan Lucia Robinson

Chibuike Enyia Brian D. Straw

Ravi Parakkat Cory J. Wesley

Village Clerk Christina M. Waters

Village Manager Kevin J. Jackson

Residential Customer Local
Oak Park, Illinois

Postal Carrier
Pre-Sort

Permit No. 26
Oak Park, IL
PAID
U.S. Postage
Standard
Presort

Safe storage of firearms required

Firearm storage practices play a vital role in reducing the risk of gun violence, including the prevention of unintentional shootings, gun suicides and gun theft. Best practices for safe storage include storing guns unloaded, locked and separate from ammunition. This year, the Village passed an ordinance addressing the safe storage of firearms that states:

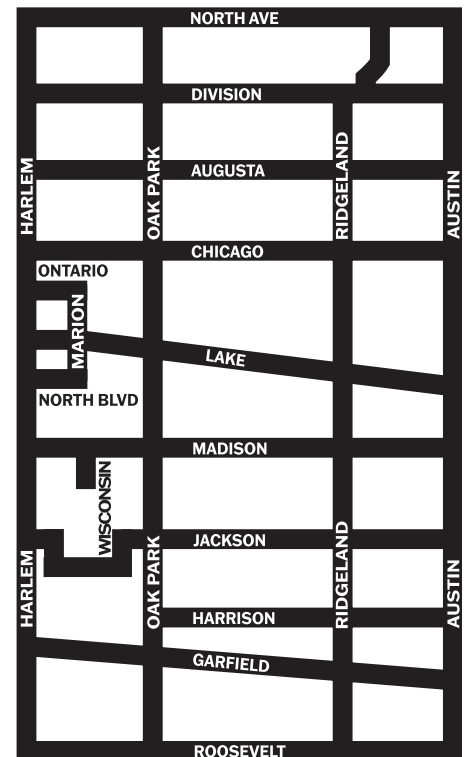
- All firearms within the Village of Oak Park must be secured by a locking device.
- Only the person authorized to carry or control the firearm may know the combination or the location of the key of the locking device.
- A firearm unattended in a vehicle within plain view is not considered secure.

The Oak Park Public Health Department has free gun locks available at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. Gun locks are also available at the Oak Park Township, 105 S. Oak Park Ave. and the Community Mental Health Board office located in the Park District's Community Recreation Center, 229 Madison St. For more information, contact the Public Health Department at 708.358.5480 or health@oak-park.us.

Snowfall may trigger parking restrictions

After a two-inch snowfall, the Emergency Snow Removal Parking Plan goes into effect and the following parking rules are enforced seven days a week, including holidays:

- Main streets posted as snow routes must be cleared of all parked cars. These include Augusta Street, Austin Boulevard, Chicago Avenue, Division Street, Garfield Street, Harlem Avenue, Harrison Street, Jackson Boulevard, Lake Street, Madison Street, North Avenue, Oak Park Avenue, Ridgeland Avenue, Roosevelt Road and Wisconsin Avenue from Madison Street to the emergency entrance of Rush Oak Park Hospital.
- Non-snow route streets allow parking between 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. on the side of the street with even numbered addresses on even days and the side of the street with odd numbered addresses on odd days.
- Designated commercial parking areas as posted follow the odd/even rule from midnight to 8 a.m. Snow parking rules do not override other parking regulations, such as time limitations and prohibitions.
- Vehicles parked in violation of the snow restrictions are subject to ticketing and towing.



SNOW ROUTE MAP

The purpose of the plan is to ensure access by emergency vehicles, improve traffic movement and allow snow removal equipment to operate quickly and efficiently. Residents are urged to monitor local forecasts and plan accordingly. Residents also can sign up to receive alerts when snow-related parking restrictions go into effect at www.oak-park.us/notifyme. Efforts also are made to post timely information to the Village's social media sites, www.facebook.com/vopnews and www.twitter.com/vopnews. The snow emergency parking rules and a list of frequently asked questions also are posted at www.oak-park.us/snow.