

# Inside Burlington



VOLUME 3 / Winter 2008

## *What's Inside*

*Your Help is Needed*  
Page 2

*Aldermanic Elections*  
Page 2

*Property Tax*  
*Payments* Page 3

*Snow Removal*  
*Policies* Page 4

*City Parking Changes*  
Page 6

*Library News*  
Page 7

*Calendar of Events*  
Page 8

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# The Mayor's Corner

The Holidays are upon us and it is the time of the year when we start thinking about families and friends and the time that will be

spent with them over the next few weeks. The Thanksgiving dinner, football games, Christmas parties and exchanging of gifts, are all rushing into our thoughts.

Most of us are worried just how the economy might affect us and what the future will hold for us. However, the times have already caught up to a growing segment of our neighbors. Love Inc. has reported that the requests for help have increased by 20 percent over last year, and St. Vincent's is up almost 50 percent. The area food banks do not have enough on the shelves to keep up with the growing demand for help.

As we are shopping for our holiday

meals and buying the gifts for family members remember our friends and neighbors that are having a tough time this holiday season.



The cost to make someone else's holiday a happy one is so small. Love, Inc. feeds a family of 5 a complete Thanksgiving Day dinner for \$29. When you are grocery shopping, pick up a few extra food items and drop them in the collection baskets at the store. Those extra food items will help in stocking the shelves at the food

banks. Both Love, Inc. and St. Vincent's will also accept frozen food items, however these will need to be dropped off at the food banks. Love, Inc. has an adopt a family program for Christmas and St. Vincent's needs help with donations for their Christmas food baskets.

As the Holidays draw near and we become busy with our own preparations, please remember those who are in need of a helping hand.

I wish all a safe and happy Thanksgiving and a very Merry Christmas.

**Visit with the Mayor!**

**The Mayor will hold open office hours for the public the first Saturday of each month from 9 a.m. - 11 a.m.**

**No appointment is necessary.**

***For other times, please call (262) 342-1161 to schedule an appointment.***

## Aldermanic Openings for the 2009 Spring Election

The Spring Election scheduled for Tuesday, April 7, 2009 will include one alderman from each of the four districts in the City of Burlington. The following aldermanic positions are up for election: First District Alderman Robert Prailes, Second District Alderman Peter Hintz, Third District Alderman Steve Rauch and Fourth District Alderman Katie Simenson. If you are interested in seeking office, nomination papers are available at City Hall, 300 N. Pine Street, during

the hours of 8 a.m. To 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Nomination papers may be circulated beginning December 1, 2008 with completed papers to be returned no later than 5 p.m. January 6, 2009.

Absentee ballots are always available at City Hall beginning several weeks prior to each election. If you are someone that due to age or illness has difficulty getting to the polls, there is the option of being placed on a permanent list in which a ballot will be sent to you for every election. Please call the City Clerk at (262) 342-1161 to request to be placed on this list.

We are always encouraging citizens to consider becoming an Election Inspector for our elections. We provide the training necessary and you

may choose to work the whole day or only part of the day.

Please notify the City Clerk if you are interested in becoming an Election Inspector (poll worker).



**Campaign Signs**

If you choose to display a campaign sign in your yard for the spring election, please keep in mind per city ordinance no sign may be placed in the street right-of-way. Typically, the right-of-way begins at the edge of the street and runs to approximately one foot from the sidewalk (yard side).

Please call the Zoning Administrator for specific questions at (262) 342-1161.

# REAL ESTATE & PERSONAL PROPERTY TAXES FOR 2008

This year the City of Burlington will be bringing something new to the table for its residents in hope of making the process of paying Real Estate and Personal Property taxes more convenient.

In effort to give you more opportunities to pay your Real Estate Taxes, Associated Bank, Fox River State Bank and M & I Bank (local branches only) will be collecting taxes on behalf of the City so that you can take advantage of their extended business hours, weekend hours and various other services.

This service will only be applicable for the first installment due by January 31, 2009. Due to the deadline date falling on a Saturday, payments can be made until Monday, February 2, 2009 and will be receipted as received by January 31. The second installment will still be paid to the Racine County Treasurer by July 31, 2009. The City will still accept

payments at City Hall, by mail to P.O. Box 477, Burlington, WI 53105 or payments may be made by credit card at [www.officialpayments.com](http://www.officialpayments.com), however, the City nor the banks will be issuing cash refunds. A refund check will be mailed to your home within two weeks.

Please note that there will not be any tax payments accepted via the drive thru at the banks.

Be sure to read your tax insert or visit one of the following links for up to date information and bank hours.



**City of Burlington**  
300 N. Pine St.  
(262) 342-1161  
[www.burlington-wi.gov](http://www.burlington-wi.gov)

**M & I Bank**  
200 S. Pine St.  
(262) 763-9141  
[www.mibank.com](http://www.mibank.com)

**Associated Bank**  
1050 S. Milwaukee Ave.  
(262) 763-9955  
[www.associatedbank.com](http://www.associatedbank.com)

**Fox River State Bank**  
241 E. Jefferson St.  
(262) 767-8600  
[www.foxriverstatebank.com](http://www.foxriverstatebank.com)

**Official Payments**  
[www.officialpayments.com](http://www.officialpayments.com)

## City Portion of Tax Rate to Remain Unchanged

The City of Burlington 2009 Budget was approved on November 18 after several weeks of deliberations by the Common Council. The city portion of the tax rate will remain unchanged at



\$7.52 per \$1000 of valuations and continue to fund critical needs of the City. The budget attempts to address the rising demand for services, while responding to the slow growth in property values, flat shared revenues, and increasing costs for utilities, fuel, and raw materials.

The estimated total equalized value is \$926.9 million, an increase of \$20 million over the 2007 equalized value. Residential property values comprise approximately 61.9 percent of total property values for 2008, while commercial and manufacturing property comprises approximately 29.9

and 4.1 percent of total equalized property values, respectively. The anticipated revenue and an overall conservative approach to this year's budget allows for the tax rate to remain unchanged, while providing funding for needed equipment purchases, funding the contractually obligated salary increases, increasing support for the Burlington Library, and maintaining an aggressive capital improvements program. In summary, a fiscally sound proposed General Fund Budget for 2009 addresses the pressing needs of the City, maintains the current level of services and is projected to not increase the tax rate.

# City Snow Removal Policies

The winter weather will soon be upon us, and along with this weather also comes snow. Keeping the sidewalks clear of snow and ice is something that is not only a courtesy to other people in your neighborhood for walking, but also required by City Ordinance.

## Sidewalks

As the owner, occupant or person in charge of a residence(s) in the City, you are responsible for the removal of any snow and ice that has accumulated on the sidewalk in the front of the residence(s) within 18 hours of the snowfall.

Any ice that has formed on the sidewalk must be treated to prevent the area from being dangerous. Failure to maintain the sidewalk within this 18-hour timeframe may result in the Street Dept. cleaning your sidewalk in which case the City will bill the owner(s).

(Per City Code the amount charged for snow removal will be at the City's full cost. In all likelihood the City will have to contract this service out since our crews will be busy cleaning up the streets.)

## Streets

City crews make every effort possible to safely remove snow from all streets in a timely manner as soon as possible after a snowfall. State highways are the first streets to be plowed, followed by the main

(arterial) streets, side streets, and then parking lots and alleys.

Please remember that snow removal in front of a mailbox is the property owner's responsibility. City crews will make every effort to plow as close to the mailbox as possible.

Concerns/Questions regarding snow removal should be made to the Street Department at 763-2060.

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## Snow Removal From City Hydrants



The City of Burlington Water Utility is asking residents and community businesses to adopt their neighborhood fire hydrants during the winter season. You can do this by clearing accumulated snow around hydrants near their homes and places of employment.

Snow removal around fire hydrants is the responsibility of utility employees, however, during heavy winter storms, hydrants may become buried for some time before utility crews reach of all hydrants in the City. By keeping the snow removed from around the

hydrants, precious time is saved for the Fire Department in case of a fire. The house you save might just be your own!

The City of Burlington thanks all the residents in the past that have "adopted" the fire hydrant in their neighborhood and helped to keep the fire hydrant clear and visible. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

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## Christmas Tree Collection



The City of Burlington will be picking up Christmas trees beginning January 5, 2009 through January 9, 2009. It is not necessary to call for a pick up. Trees should be placed in the parkway. Trees may also be dropped off at anytime at the City's compost area located on Maryland Avenue. Whether for pick-up or drop-off, all materials such as lights, garland, ornaments or any metal objects should be removed from trees. Any questions regarding tree disposal should be directed to the Department of Public Works.

## Holiday Trash and Recycling Pick-Up



Garbage and recycling pick-up service will not run on Thursday, December 25 and Thursday, January 1 due to the holidays. Pick-up will be delayed one day where Friday customers will have their garbage picked up on Saturday, December 26 and Saturday, January 2, respectively.



## Preventing Water Service Line Freeze-Ups

During sub-zero cold weather we receive inquiries about frozen water service lines, which also cause water meters inside the home to freeze. The water meter is the property owner's responsibility and if frozen and nonfunctional, the Water Utility will bill the customer for the cost of the water meter replacement.

Your water service line may be subject to freezing due to unprotected interior water piping running along exterior walls, especially by windows and in unheated areas such as basements. Methods of preventing water pipe freeze-ups include closing any exterior fresh air vents, caulking cracks, insulating pipes or installing electrical heat tape where needed. Other measures include opening cabinet doors that hide plumbing, keeping the thermostat at 55 degrees+ or keeping a trickle of water running continuously with a stream about the size of a lead pencil. Begin running water when the outside temperature gets down to zero and remains there for any length of time. Keep this water running until the temperature is above freezing for several days. The frost line must come up before it is safe.

By observing these safeguards, you may prevent the inconvenience and costly expense of a frozen water line!

## Tips to Stay Safe and Warm This Winter

As the temperature outside drop, Burlington families take to the indoors to keep safe and warm. What they may not realize is that turning up the heat can increase the risk of home heating fires.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), nearly half of all home-heating fires occur during the winter months. The latest NFPA research shows that heating equipment was involved in 62,200 reported U.S. home structure fires in 2005.

"While these numbers are frightening, nearly all of these fires are preventable," said John R. Niederer Fire Inspector "We can reduce the number of home heating fires in our community by taking some simple precautions and using heating equipment properly." NFPA and Burlington recommend some simple home heating safety tips, so residents can help keep our community safe and warm this winter.

- Space heaters need space. Keep all things that can burn, such as paper, bedding or furniture, at least 3 feet away from heating equipment.
- Turn portable heaters off when you go to bed or leave the room.

- Plug power cords only into outlets with sufficient capacity and never into an extension cord.

- Inspect for cracked, frayed or broken plugs or loose connections. Replace before using.
- Have your chimney inspected each year and cleaned if necessary.

- Use a sturdy fireplace screen.

- Allow ashes to cool before disposing. Dispose of ashes in a metal container.

- Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. For the best protection interconnect all smoke alarms throughout the home. Test smoke alarms at least once a month.

- Install and maintain a carbon monoxide alarm in a central location outside each sleeping area.

- Never use an oven to heat your home.

For fuel assistance, contact the National Fuel Funds Network at 1-202-824-0660.



## WINTER DRIVING TIPS



Winter can also be a very dangerous time of the year for driving. If you plan on traveling during the winter there are several tips, and it pays to be prepared for the worst.

Following a few simple driving habits like planning ahead, driving at a safe and legal speed, driving alert and sober and buckling up could insure you make it to your destination safely.

### Safe winter driving tips:

#### Clear snow and ice from all windows, lights, the hood and roof before driving:

People often think the heater will defrost the windows as they drive and have poor visibility. They leave their homes with only a small portion of the windshield cleared and most accidents occur within two miles of one's residence.

**Pay attention:** Don't try to drive faster than conditions allow. If you drive safe and slow you will get to your destination, it sure beats waiting for a rescue squad and tow truck. Remember posted limits are for dry pavement.

**Leave plenty of room for stopping:** You never know who is driving in front of you, and what their driving habits are like. Road conditions can change at any time.

**Know the current road conditions:** Call 1-(800)-ROADWIS or log onto [www.dot.state.wi.us/travel/road/winter-roads](http://www.dot.state.wi.us/travel/road/winter-roads).

**Watch for slippery bridge decks:** Even when the rest of the pavement is in good condition. Bridge decks will ice up sooner.

**Don't get over-confident in a 4X4 or Sport Utility Vehicle:** Four-wheel drive vehicles will help you get going quicker but will not help you stop quicker. In fact they are heavier than passenger vehicles and may cause you to need more room to stop.

**Do not pump anti-lock brakes:** If your car is equipped with anti-lock brakes, do not pump the brake pedal in attempting to stop. The right way is to "stomp and steer". If you have questions on how these brakes function call your local service center.

**Look further ahead in traffic than you normally do:** Actions by other drivers will alert you sooner to problems ahead.

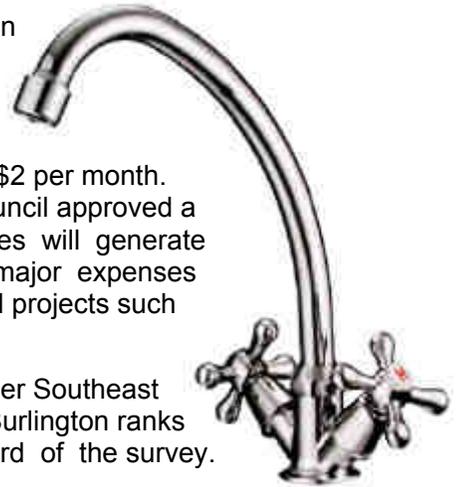
**Drive slowly! Remember:** Wisconsin snowplows plow the snow wide off the road and can make ditch lines invisible.

# Water & Sewer Rate Increase

Effective with the 2009, First Quarter water and sewer billing, residents will see an increase of 3 percent on their water rates, and a 7 percent increase on the sewer rates. The increase is necessary to keep pace with the rising cost of energy, Equipment replacement cost, negotiated labor increases, and health care costs.

The water and sewer bill for a typical residential customer will increase approximately \$2 per month. The City's last water rate increase was in 2006. In late 2007, the City's Common Council approved a two-tiered sewer rate increase for January 2008 and January 2009. The increases will generate approximately \$240,000 in capital funds annually. These funds will be used to cover major expenses such as water main breaks, sewer plant modifications and additions, as well as capital projects such as replacing aging water and sewer pipes.

As part of the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin's Water Rate Study, 30 other Southeast Wisconsin water providers were compared to Burlington's rate. This study found Burlington ranks 25<sup>th</sup> lowest in use charges. Even with the rate hike, the City will remain in the lower third of the survey.



## Citywide All-Night Parking Changes

The City of Burlington has made a significant change to overnight parking regulations. Citizens and visitors may overnight park between the hours of 2 A.M. and 5 A.M. on authorized city streets utilizing the alternate side parking system. Vehicles must be parked on the odd or even address corresponding with the calendar date of the enforcement period 2A.M. to 5A.M.

It is important for everyone to realize on-street parking is a privilege. It is crucial for our streets to remain as open as possible at night. This helps rescue, fire, and police respond in an emergency. At certain times our Street Department works during

these early morning hours. Citizens who have adequate off street parking are expected to use it. This is especially important near apartment complexes.



Those living in the downtown area are still required to purchase a monthly (DTR) Downtown Resident Parking Permit from the police department to park overnight in city lots. Parking is not allowed in "no parking" areas and snow emergency parking regulations apply to all city streets.

Beginning November 24, 2008 the Police Department will begin issuing written notices to violators. On December 1, 2008 we will begin to issue citations. If you have any questions regarding this matter please contact Chief Scot Eisenhauer (262) 342-1100.

## City of Burlington Low Cost Pet Licensing



State and municipal law dictates that all dogs and cats 5 months and older be licensed with the city by March 31 of each year. City of Burlington tags will be available January 1 for 2009. If you are licensing your pet for the first time or you have recently vaccinated your pet, a rabies certificate must be presented at the time of licensing. The City of Burlington is proud to offer low cost fees for licensing as follows:

Altered (fixed) dogs and cats	\$4.00
Unaltered dogs and cats	\$8.00

After March 31 a \$5.00 late fee is added to the cost of the tag. Residents that move to the city or have a pet that reaches 5 months of age after the deadline date will not be charged the late fee. A move within the city does not qualify for this exception. Not only is it a requirement of the city to license your pet, the tag numbers are listed with the Burlington Police Department. If your pet were to stray, the tag is a valuable resource to bring them back home quickly.

# Meet the new Youth Services Director!



The Burlington Public Library announces the arrival of a new Youth Services Director, Joy Schnupp. Schnupp, who comes to Burlington from Barrett Memorial Library in Williams Bay, joined the library staff Oct. 27<sup>th</sup>. She is currently pursuing a master's degree in Library and Information Studies at UW-Milwaukee.

"I'm pleased to have the opportunity to work in a library that has such loyal patrons," Schnupp says. "Children and parents can continue to expect big things from the Youth Services Department." She adds that she and Elena Spiegelhoff, Youth Services/School Services Librarian, are in the planning stages of new programming. "In just these few weeks I've had a lot of fun meeting some of the children and young adults who attend the Wii Gaming on Thursday afternoons as well as Ms. Elena's monthly book clubs."

Mother to three sons, ages 16, 11, and 10, who attend school in the Big Foot School District, Schnupp is looking forward to including her husband John, a chef, in some of the future programs at Burlington Public Library. "I like to get ideas from my family," she says, "and food is one proven method of getting kids' attention! We may tie a cooking demonstration to a book release or showing a movie at the library in the near future."

## Adult Book Discussion Group

The Burlington Public Library Adult Book Discussion Group will gear up Monday, January 26 at 7 p.m.

Our first book of 2009 will be **LOVING FRANK** by Nancy Horan. This highly



acclaimed novel is about the relationship of Frank Lloyd Wright and Mamah Borthwick Cheney, who embark in a clandestine affair after he is

commissioned to design a house for her husband.

This kicks off a year of books which explore parts of Wisconsin through fiction and non-fiction. We explore Utah through Mormon eyes, and the racial tensions after World War II through the eyes of a young American Indian. Our list hasn't been finalized yet but stop in at the library for an updated list in December.

As always, you do not need to register for these discussions. Books and questions are available on the new Fiction shelf at the library.

For information, please call the Public Library at (262) 342-1130 or visit our website at [www.burlingtonlibrary.com](http://www.burlingtonlibrary.com)

## Children's Holiday Workshop!

*Keep one eye open for Santa...*



*...and the other for an upcoming holiday workshop!*

A holiday card-making workshop will be held in mid-December (date TBA) for children of all ages. Ms. Joy and the Youth Services Department will demonstrate at least five different types of crafty cards to create. Kids, take your cards home to give to grandparents, friends, or family!



Watch for the date and time to be announced on the library website, [www.burlingtonlibrary.com](http://www.burlingtonlibrary.com) or call (262) 342-1130 for more information.



# Winter Announcements



- \* The 27<sup>th</sup> annual **Christmas Parade** will be held on Friday, December 5 starting at 6:30 p.m.
- \* **Santa's Chalet** will be open December 6, 7, 13, 14, 20 and 21 (Saturday and Sunday) from 2 - 4 p.m., as well as December 12 and 19 (Friday) from 6-8 p.m.
- \* 2008 **Real Estate and Personal Property Tax** bills will be mailed mid-December. First installment payments are due by January 31, 2009. If you want to claim a deduction on your income taxes, you must pay by December 31, 2008.
- \* Children can call the **Ho-Ho Hotline** (763-7111) and talk to Santa or Mrs. Claus between the hours of 4-6 p.m. December 15 - 19.
- \* City offices will be closed December 24 and 25 for the **Christmas** Holiday and January 1 for **New Years Day**.
- \* **Garbage and Recycling** pick-up for the week of Christmas (December 21-27) and New Years (December 28-January 3) will be delayed one day due to the holidays. There will be pick up on Saturday (December 27 and January 3) for those who typically have Friday service.
- \* Due to the **Spring Election** on Tuesday, April 7, the Common Council meeting will be rescheduled for Wednesday, April 8.

## December Meetings

- 12/2 5:30 p.m.- Community Development Authority
- 12/2 6:30 p.m. - Common Council
- 12/3 6:30 p.m. - Police & Fire Commission
- 12/9 6:30 p.m. - Plan Commission
- 12/16 6:30 p.m. - Common Council
- 12/18 6:00 p.m. - Park Board
- 12/18 6:30 p.m. - Historic Preservation Committee
- TBA 4:00 p.m. - Library Board

## January Meetings

- 1/6 5:30 p.m.- Community Development Authority
- 1/6 6:30 p.m. - Common Council
- 1/7 6:30 p.m. - Police & Fire Commission
- 1/13 6:30 p.m. - Plan Commission
- 1/15 6:00 p.m. - Park Board
- 1/20 6:30 p.m. - Common Council
- 1/22 6:00 p.m. - Airport Committee
- 1/22 6:30 p.m. - Historic Preservation Committee
- 1/27 4:00 p.m. - Library Board

## February Meetings

- 2/3 5:30 p.m.- Community Development Authority
- 2/3 6:30 p.m. - Common Council
- 2/4 6:30 p.m. - Police & Fire Commission
- 2/10 6:30 p.m. - Plan Commission
- 2/17 6:30 p.m. - Common Council
- 2/19 6:00 p.m. - Park Board
- 2/24 4:00 p.m. - Library Board
- 2/26 6:00 p.m. - Airport Committee
- 2/26 6:30 p.m. - Historic Preservation Committee

## March Meetings

- 3/3 5:30 p.m.- Community Development Authority
- 3/3 6:30 p.m. - Common Council
- 3/4 6:30 p.m. - Police & Fire Commission
- 3/10 6:30 p.m. - Plan Commission
- 3/17 6:30 p.m. - Common Council
- 3/19 6:00 p.m. - Park Board
- 3/24 4:00 p.m. - Library Board
- 3/26 6:00 p.m. - Airport Committee
- 3/26 6:30 p.m. - Historic Preservation Committee

## City of Burlington 2008 Common Council

**Robert Miller, Mayor**  
(262) 342-1161

**First District Aldermen**  
**Bob Prailes, 763-5194**  
**Ed Johnson, 763-8321**

**Second District Aldermen**  
**Peter Hintz, 763-7063**  
**Jim Prailes, 763-7322**



**Third District Aldermen**  
**Tom Vos, Council President, 763-2213**  
**Steve Rauch, 767-1910**

**Fourth District Aldermen**  
**Katie Simenson, 767-0409**  
**Jeff Fischer, 763-3841**