

# LIFE IN THE PRAIRIE

## Local kids gear up for the 4th of July Kiddie Parade



Photo Credit: Robert Lawton

AUGUST 2009

## Protecting the Investment

Maintenance Ensures Safety and Longevity of City Streets

Much like the thousands of vehicles driving over them each day, the streets of Eden Prairie also require regular maintenance to ensure their safety and longevity. The City of Eden Prairie takes street maintenance seriously in order to protect the taxpayer investment in City streets.

According to **Gene Dietz**, the City's director of public works, Eden Prairie's street maintenance program involves **overlaying and sealcoating** more than 30 miles of City streets each year.

"Our street maintenance program is designed to preserve and protect the pavement with a goal of reaching a 40- to 50-year life expectancy before a street requires complete reconstruction," said Dietz.

### Overlaying

Every 20 years or so, streets are milled and then overlaid with a new 2-inch layer of asphalt, which reshapes the street itself and eliminates any settling or flaws that may have developed over the years. The overlay project also includes concrete curb and gutter repair, as well as storm sewer catch basin and manhole repairs, and street patching.

In 2009, the City will overlay approximately 14 miles of streets. These projects are expected to be complete by the end of July.

### Sealcoating

Every seven or eight years, streets are sealcoated. This is one of the most common methods of preventative street maintenance and consists of a surface treatment that seals and protects the existing pavement.

After filling any cracks in the street, Eden Prairie uses a single-surface sealcoat treatment. A single application of liquid asphalt is sprayed on the existing surface, followed immediately by a single layer of aggregate rock, which is swept off the street 3-5 days later. This type of treatment is excellent for waterproofing and improves skid resistance.

In 2009, the City will sealcoat approximately 20 miles of streets and 4.5 miles of trails. These projects are expected to be complete by the end of August.

For maps and additional information about the 2009 street maintenance projects, visit [edenprairie.org](http://edenprairie.org).

# When Lightning Strikes

## Severe Weather Safety Includes Lightning Awareness

According to the **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)**, lightning is one of the leading weather-related causes of death and injury in the United States. The odds for humans being struck by lightning in a lifetime are 1 in 3,000; however, to date, 21 people have been killed by lightning in 2009.

To avoid being struck by lightning, the National Weather Service recommends that you:

- Get into a fully enclosed building or hardtop vehicle at the first rumble of thunder
- Stay indoors for 30 minutes after the last thunder clap
- Monitor the weather forecast when you're planning to be outdoors
- Have a plan for getting to safety in case a thunderstorm moves in
- Do not use a corded phone during a thunderstorm unless it's an emergency; cell phones are safe to use
- Keep away from plumbing, electrical equipment and wiring during a thunderstorm

Lightning also causes significant damage to personal property each year. In fact, at least two major house fires in Eden Prairie last year were the direct result of lightning strikes.

To protect your personal property, the National Weather Service recommends that you:

- Unplug any appliances or electronic equipment from all conductors **well before** a thunderstorm threatens — do not unplug equipment during a thunderstorm as there is a risk you could be struck
- Consider the safety of your family pets during thunderstorms — dog houses are not lightning-safe and dogs that are chained to trees or wire runners can easily fall victim to a lightning strike
- Be sure the smoke detectors in your home are in proper working condition, and have a battery backup for protection during a power outage — if you hear a very loud crash in conjunction with a flash of lightning, check throughout your home and attic for fire resulting from a lightning strike

As always, the Eden Prairie **Police and Fire Departments** remind you to call 911 immediately if you suspect a lightning strike or in any other weather-related emergency.

For more information about lightning safety from the National Weather Service, visit [lightningsafety.noaa.gov](http://lightningsafety.noaa.gov).

# Spotlight on City Staff

When the United States government repealed prohibition in 1933, the responsibility and authority to regulate liquor sales was given to individual states. At that time, the Minnesota legislature gave cities the option of issuing liquor licenses to private individuals or providing municipal alcohol dispensing services. Eden Prairie, along with more than 300 other cities, chose to operate municipal liquor stores. This choice not only allows for greater control over liquor being sold and consumed in the City, but also further diversifies the City's revenue sources.

The City of Eden Prairie has been in the municipal liquor store business for more than three decades and currently operates three Eden Prairie Liquor locations, generating nearly \$11-million in revenue each year. Profits from these operations contribute to the City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) fund, which is used for projects such as playgrounds and street repairs, reducing the cost to taxpayers for these projects.



Eden Prairie Liquor Store Managers (L to R): Tammy Wanchena, Mitch Dean, Tana Wold, Holly Smith.

## Meet the Eden Prairie Liquor Store Managers!

### Mitch Dean

**Year you joined the City:** 1981

**Current position:** Operations Manager, Eden Prairie Liquor

**Brief description of what you do:** I oversee the City's \$11-million liquor store operation. All three liquor store managers report to me and it is my job to maintain a profit for the City while taking care of our customers' needs; however, our first priority is always to keep alcohol out of the hands of those who are not yet 21 years old.

**What is your work/educational background?** I started as a part-time employee at Eden Prairie Liquor 30 years ago. First I took an assistant manager position, then store manager and now I am the manager of operations.

**What is your favorite place in Eden Prairie, and why?** Any of the City parks, they all offer something different: a place to overlook a body of water, a place to bring a child to play on park equipment, a place to swing a bat or kick a ball with your buddies, a place to sit and watch aircraft take off and land, or a path to walk and hold your better half's hand.

**What is something interesting, unique or little-known about you?** I coached my daughter's softball team from her kindergarten days through the start of her high school season. She has since graduated and I now umpire for that same organization.

### Holly Smith

**Year you joined the City:** 2001

**Current position:** Store Manager, Eden Prairie Liquor (8018 Den Road, across from Cub)

**What do you like best about working for the City?** The City really believes in educating and supporting its staff.

**What is your favorite place in Eden Prairie, and why?** Probably Round Lake since it's close to home and I can ride my bike around, walk my dogs and play softball there.

**Why do you think Eden Prairie is a great place to live, work and dream?** What I like about Eden Prairie is the scenery and the easy access to shopping and eating establishments. It's cool to see wild turkeys or pheasants walking across the path in front of you on a walk or while driving home from work!

### Tana Wold

**Year you joined the City:** 2005

**Current position:** Manager, Eden Prairie Liquor (950 Prairie Center Drive, near Rainbow Foods)

**What is your work/educational background?** I attended Anoka-Ramsey Community College and Bemidji State University, and I have worked in the retail liquor business for 13 years. I have worked in the private and municipal sectors of the liquor business and Eden Prairie is by far the best city I have worked for. There is a sense of community that no other city can compare to and I am proud to tell others that I am a City of Eden Prairie employee.

**What is your favorite place in Eden Prairie, and why?** My favorite place in Eden Prairie is The Garden Room in the City Center. What a beautiful gathering place for the entire community. We have held numerous events in this room and always hear compliments of what a beautiful venue it is. The Garden Room is truly a gem in the community that I think gets overlooked by most people.

**What is something interesting, unique or little-known about you?** It really isn't a secret but I am a golf junkie. If I could play golf all day, every day I would!

### Tammy Wanchena

**Year you joined the City:** 1999

**Current position:** Manager, Eden Prairie Liquor (16508 W. 78<sup>th</sup> Street, near Kowalski's Market)

**What would you like residents to know?** How truly lucky they are to live in a city with successful municipal liquor operations; what a great way to give back to the community! We are very proud to be one of the top municipal liquor operations in the state of Minnesota!

**What is something interesting, unique or little-known about you?** My husband and I are avid motorcyclists and run a local newspaper, *Minnesota Motorcycle Monthly*, which we have been a part of for 12 fun years.

**Why do you think Eden Prairie is a great place to live, work and dream?** The sense of pride I see in Eden Prairie residents and employees is positively contagious! Every time I am at the City Center, I love all the smiles and happy people who seem to truly enjoy and appreciate their jobs. Eden Prairie is a beautiful, clean city with some amazing people looking out for it.



## Eden Prairie Night to Unite



Each year, neighborhoods across the country dedicate one summer evening to celebrate and strengthen the commitment to a safe community. This year's **Eden Prairie Night to Unite** event will take place **Tuesday, Aug. 4**.

As residents of Eden Prairie, this is your opportunity to put together a neighborhood celebration! A chance to turn on the front porch lights, gather with neighbors and friends, get to know one another, catch up on things, play some games with the kids, enjoy a few hot-off-the-grill favorites and build a sense of community with those who live around you.

Representatives from the Eden Prairie **Police and Fire Departments**, as well as several City officials, will visit many of the local celebrations that evening. Be sure to register your event with the City and you just might receive a surprise visit from some familiar faces!

While you're celebrating, please remember those in



your community who may be in need this summer. The City will once again collect donations for **PROP** (People Reaching Out to Other People) during the Eden Prairie Night to Unite festivities. Food shelf items are typically

low in the summer months and the City of Eden Prairie encourages residents to incorporate food drives with the neighborhood events.

City of Eden Prairie representatives will begin visiting parties at 7 p.m. to collect PROP donations, and the neighborhood with the largest volume donation overall will receive an ice cream social hosted by the Police and Fire Departments.

Visit [edenprairie.org](http://edenprairie.org) to register your Eden Prairie Night to Unite celebration. **The deadline for registration is July 20.**

## YOUR ELECTED CITY OFFICIALS



### MAYOR

Phil Young  
952-426-1931

### COUNCIL MEMBERS

Brad Aho  
952-949-8300

Ron Case  
952-949-0915

Jon Duckstad  
952-903-0274

Kathy Nelson  
952-941-6613

## LIFE IN THE PRAIRIE

LIFE IN THE PRAIRIE IS PUBLISHED BY:

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Communications Division  
8080 Mitchell Road  
Eden Prairie, MN  
55344-4485

952-949-8434  
[edenprairie.org](http://edenprairie.org)

# Live Well Eden Prairie!

## Free Family Fun in Eden Prairie

There's nothing quite like a warm summer day and the chance to spend some time together with family and creating long-lasting memories. For maximum fun at minimum cost, check out the **Free Family Fun** events right here in Eden Prairie and continue on your quest to Live Well this summer.

The Eden Prairie **International Festival** is a perfect *Free Family Fun* opportunity to celebrate culture, art and food in the outdoor accommodations of Staring Lake Park.

This year's event is **Sunday, Aug. 9** from **3 to 8:30 p.m.** and features music, dance, arts, exhibits, activities and more, including a performance by Cyril Paul and the Calypso Monarchs at 7 p.m.

For some fresh air and music, attend one of the *Free Family Fun* concerts at the newly renovated Staring Lake Amphitheatre. The **Starring at Staring** series features a variety of performances for the whole family, **Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays** (through Aug. 15) at **7 p.m.** Especially for the little ones, **KidStock** features children's performers from throughout the Twin Cities, **Tuesdays** (through Aug. 11) at **10:30 a.m.**

Grab a blanket, make some popcorn and enjoy the last of those warm summer nights with a *Free Family Fun* movie under the stars. The **Park-in Movie** events at Staring Lake Amphitheatre take place **Aug. 14 and 15** at **8:30 p.m.** *The Chronicles of Narnia – The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (Aug. 14) and *Field of Dreams* (Aug. 15) are sure to be hits with the whole family.

Summer's days might be numbered, but the opportunities to get out and Live Well are endless. So be sure to take some time, savor the season and enjoy some *Free Family Fun* right here in Eden Prairie.



**FREE  
Family  
FUN**

## Our Environment Indoor Water Conservation



According to the **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency**, Americans use large quantities of water inside their homes. In fact, the average family of four can use 400 gallons of water every day and approximately 70 percent of that water is used indoors.

The bathroom is the largest consumer of indoor water. The toilet alone can use 27 percent of household water. Almost every activity or daily routine that happens in the home bathroom uses a large quantity of water. For example:

- Older toilets use between 3.5 and 7 gallons of water per flush; however, most newer, more efficient toilets require 75- to 80-percent less water.
- A leaky toilet can waste about 200 gallons of water every day.
- A bathroom faucet generally runs at 2 gallons of water per minute. By turning off the tap while brushing your teeth or shaving, a person can save more than 200 gallons of water per month.



Outside the bathroom, there are many opportunities to save water. Here are some common water efficiency measures, along with a few solutions to those problems, you may not have known existed:

- High-efficiency washing machines can conserve large amounts of water. Traditional models use between 27 and 54 gallons of water per load, but new, energy- and water-conserving models (front-loading or top-loading, non-agitator types) use less than 27 gallons per load.
- Washing the dishes with an open tap can use up to 20 gallons of water, but filling the sink or a bowl and closing the tap saves 10 of those gallons.
- Keeping a pitcher of water in the refrigerator saves time and water instead of running the tap until it gets cold.
- Not rinsing dishes prior to loading the dishwasher could save up to 10 gallons per load.

**WaterSense**, a partnership program sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, seeks to help families and businesses realize that they can reduce water use by 20 to 30 percent by doing just a few simple things, such as upgrading to higher quality, more efficient products. For more information, visit [epa.gov/watersense](http://epa.gov/watersense).

## Around Eden Prairie

### A Page from the Blog of City Manager Scott Neal

Last week I did an interview in the *Eden Prairie NEWS* with Leah Shaffer about the City's upcoming budget process for 2010-2011. It's not going to be pretty. My goal is to hold our quality services together while flattening our tax levy for the next two years. That's going to be tough. It'll require sacrifices by City employees and residents alike.

I think we can do it, but it's a short run approach. We can't get into the "something for nothing" cycle here where people begin to expect that the City can provide more and better services for less and less taxes. Not possible. You can look at our national and state government budgets to see that. But, as I said, I think we can do it in the short run, and we're going to give it a run for next year.

Here's that interview from last week's *Eden Prairie NEWS*.\*

### City looking to keep levy flat for next two years

For the city of Eden Prairie, the rainy day has arrived. That means this fall, as staff and council members gear up for the next two-year budget cycle, it may be the time when the city taps into its rainy day fund.

City Manager Scott Neal said that the goal is to keep the tax levy flat into 2010 and 2011. To make that feasible, the city would keep employee wages flat in 2010 and tap into its reserve - more formally known as the budget stabilization fund, which currently has approximately \$5 million in it.

Neal said both of those actions are appropriate given the purpose of the reserves, which was to cover the city in downturns and also given the fact that employee wages are flattening throughout the private sector economy so it's not unreasonable for them to be flattened in the public sector economy.

The city typically operates under a two-year budget planning cycle, which starts up again this fall. Last year, in light of the economic downturn, the council took the step of amending the 2009 levy to keep city taxes flat from 2008. A wrinkle in that plan came about this spring when it became apparent that the city faced an unprecedented lag in revenue that typically comes through building development.

To fill the projected shortfall, the city tapped \$500,000 from the budget stabilization fund, \$200,000 saved in the operations budget and \$300,000 in personnel reductions, which eliminated 10 employee positions. Four of the positions were unfilled, while six full-time city employees were let go. Neal noted that since cutting the six employees, one was rehired to another position.

Neal said that the city reduced the number of employees in areas where the workload was decreasing, primarily related to building development. Another position was cut because it was a case where the city could redistribute the work from that position among existing staff members.

Unless the economy changes drastically, Neal does not plan on proposing additional layoffs for this year, or into 2010-11. If the economy takes another downturn, all bets are off, he noted, but "right now we're not projecting additional decreases in staffing levels."

\*This is an abridged version of the article by Leah Shaffer which ran in the June 25 issue of the *Eden Prairie NEWS*, to read the article in its entirety visit [edenprairienews.com](http://edenprairienews.com).

See more of **Scott Neal's** blog entries by visiting [edenprairie.org](http://edenprairie.org).

## Did You Know?

Did you know there is a greener way to pay your City of Eden Prairie utility bill?

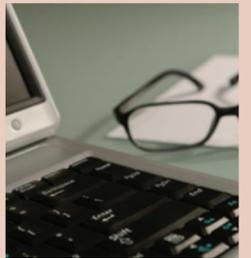
The City recently introduced **eUtilityBilling**, an online system which allows for electronic handling of utility bills.

#### This new system allows you to:

- Make payments 24/7
- View billing and payment history online
- View water consumption history online
- Receive electronic billing statements

In addition, eUtilityBilling saves time, money and resources!

For every 100 utility bill customers who convert to electronic processing, the City will conserve approximately 400 envelopes, 400 sheets of paper and \$176 in postage each year, making eUtilityBilling an environmentally and fiscally responsible option.



Register today! Go to [edenprairie.org](http://edenprairie.org) and click on "eUtilityBilling" to get started.

# Mark Your Calendar

#### 2009 Concert Series: *Starring at Staring*

Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays  
Through Aug. 15  
7 p.m.

Staring Lake Amphitheatre

Pack a picnic basket, a blanket or lawn chair, sit back, relax and enjoy some free outdoor entertainment.

#### KidStock

Tuesdays  
Through Aug. 11  
10:30-11:30 a.m.

Staring Lake Amphitheatre

Enjoy the sounds, actions, stories and fun at these free performances by children's entertainers from around the Twin Cities.

#### Riley-Jacques Barn Twilight Special

Saturday, July 18  
7:30 p.m.



Bring the whole gang to the historic Riley-Jacques Barn for a concert featuring local bluegrass band DitchLillies. Tickets available at the door: \$5 for adults, \$3 for children, students and seniors.

#### City Council Meeting\*

Tuesday, July 21

\*Meetings begin at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the City Center.

#### Light Rail Station Area Planning Meeting and Open House

Wednesday, July 22  
6-8 p.m.

Find out more and share your input on the light rail station area planning in Eden Prairie.

#### Barrier-Free Play Area Grand Opening

Monday, Aug. 3  
6-8 p.m.

Miller Park

Be there for the grand opening and see how the play area fosters confidence in youth of all abilities, plus enjoy a special performance by the Teddy Bear Band at 7:15 p.m.

#### Eden Prairie Players Summer Children's Theater Presents: *Snow White*

Aug. 7, 8; 7 p.m.

Aug. 8, 9; 2 p.m.

Take in a live performance of this Brothers Grim classic at the Riley-Jacques Barn. Tickets available at the door only: \$5 for adults, \$3 for children, students and seniors.

#### 18th Annual Senior Golf Classic

Wednesday, Aug. 12  
7:30 a.m. (Registration)  
8 a.m. (Shot-gun start)

Dahlgrens Golf Club - Chaska

Join Eden Prairie seniors for a round of golf! Call the Senior Center at 952-279-8050 by Aug. 5 to register; cost includes golf, cart and lunch.

#### Park-In Movie

Aug. 14 – *The Chronicles of Narnia – The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

Aug. 15 – *Field of Dreams*

8:30 p.m.

Bring a blanket and enjoy a movie under the stars at the Staring Lake Amphitheatre.