



7900 South Westnedge Avenue
Portage, Michigan 49002
www.portagemi.gov
(269) 329-4400

Warmer, Drier Winter Ahead? Be Prepared for Winter Weather Just in Case

While the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) predicts a 40% warmer and drier winter than normal for southern Michigan, it doesn't mean we won't have snow, ice or cold weather in Portage. It is *Michigan* after all, where the weather is known to turn on a dime. Portage residents are reminded to prepare for winter, before it arrives. Coats, hats, mittens and boots will all be necessary this winter. Dig out your snow shovels and tune up that snowblower. And don't forget to review the following City of Portage ordinances pertaining to wintertime.

Winter Overnight On-Street Parking Restrictions

The City of Portage has a winter parking ordinance that is in effect from November 1 through April 15 of each year. The ordinance states that it is unlawful for any person to park, allow to be parked or allow to remain standing, any motor vehicle within five feet of the main traveled portion of the roadway between the hours of 2 a.m. and 6 a.m. local time. This restriction is in effect whether or not there is snow present. The City of Portage recommends that in times outside those restrictions when snow is present, residents make an effort to not park on



the street if at all possible. This ensures that city snow removal equipment can complete the snow clearing process as rapidly and effectively as possible.

Assist Your Fellow Portager – Clear Snow and Ice from Sidewalks, Fire Hydrants and Bus Stops

Assistance from businesses, residents and property owners is appreciated to keep key public areas free of snow and ice accumulation during the coming months.

Sidewalks

Public sidewalks adjacent to all types of property (residential, commercial, etc.) provide safe routes to schools, bus stops and other important destinations. City Code requires all sidewalks to be cleared of snow and ice throughout the winter season. To ensure sidewalks are accessible, a minimum clearance width of three feet is recommended. Special attention to sidewalks adjacent to street corners is requested to ensure snow banks do not obstruct access to and from the sidewalk.



Fire Hydrants

The Portage Fire Division requests property owners to clear snow away from any fire hydrants on or adjacent to their property. Should there be a fire nearby, it is

Snow Plowing in Portage

In order to maximize the benefit to all Portage citizens, streets are prioritized for snowplowing operations in the following order:

PRIORITY I: All major streets (examples include South Westnedge Avenue, Oakland Drive, Milham Avenue, Kilgore Road, Shaver Road, Lovers Lane, etc.)

PRIORITY II: All primary "feeder" streets leading into various residential neighborhoods, including access streets to all schools.

PRIORITY III: All interior neighborhood streets, including cul-de-sacs.

PRIORITY IV: Dead end streets and cleanup of cul-de-sacs.

Look for a comprehensive snow-plowing article in the December *Portager*.

imperative that firefighters have clear access to fire hydrants so that fire hoses can be immediately attached and used to fight the fire.

Bus Stops

Property owners are also requested to help with keeping bus stops clear of snow and ice. Assistance in these areas helps public transit and school bus stop users safely enter and exit busses.

We know that it can be challenging to keep up with winter maintenance, however, good property stewardship is appreciated by the City of Portage and your fellow neighbors as well. If you become aware of a neighbor who might need assistance with property maintenance this winter, lend a hand if you are able.

How to Help Portage Citizens in Need, Crisis or Conflict

Do you know a Portage resident or other citizen that is struggling with meeting basic human needs or someone in crisis or conflict? The City of Portage has provided grants for more 20 years to human service agencies that provide housing, food and other assistance to Portage citizens in need. The City of Portage Human Services Board also developed a *Human Services Information & Referral Resources* brochure to help organizations within the

Portage Community Center Helps Portage Families in Need During the Holiday Season

For families who live in the City of Portage or who have children in Portage Public Schools, holiday assistance is offered by the Portage Community Center.

- ◆ Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday food baskets
- ◆ Children's Holiday Party
- ◆ Shop With A Hero
- ◆ Christmas Family Adoptions

To donate or receive assistance from these programs, call 323-1942 or visit www.portagecommunitycenter.org.

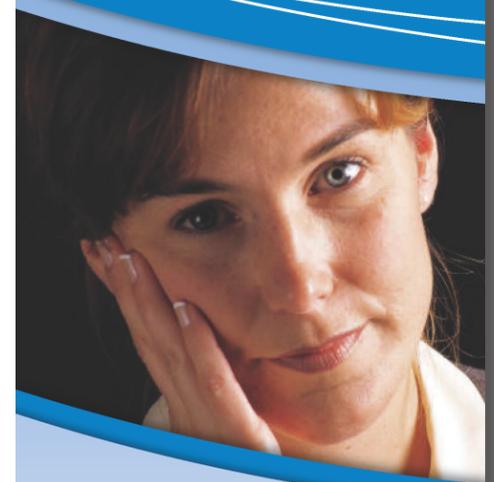
community direct Portage citizens to the services that can best meet their needs. The brochure also guides Portage citizens seeking assistance to "portals" or mainstream human service providers where information or direct assistance can be obtained.

The brochure is available at several locations including City Hall, the Portage Senior Center, the Portage District Library and the Portage Community Center and can also be viewed online at www.portagemi.gov > Boards & Commissions > Human Services Board. If you find yourself in a position to help someone in need, but are unsure where to direct him or her, this brochure should be of assistance to you or your organization.

Citizens are also encouraged to dial 2-1-1 to reach Gryphon Place, which serves as the primary access point or "portal" to information regarding a wide range of human services available in the community. In addition, the city has had a long-standing partnership with the Portage Community Center as the primary human service agency located within the city. Call 323-1942 or visit the Portage Community Center at 325 East Centre Avenue, centrally located in the City Centre Area.

For additional information, contact the Department of Community Development at 329-4477.

Human Services Information & Referral Resources



City of Portage

7900 South Westnedge Avenue • Portage, Michigan 49002
www.portagemi.gov

Lead In Drinking Water – Can It Happen In Portage?

Recent events concerning the Flint, Michigan public water system may have you asking if that scenario can happen here in Portage. In Flint, water samples were found to have abnormally high levels of lead. The lead was not a by-product of the surface water source, the Flint water, but rather the result of corrosive source water leaching lead out of the water service lines.

The water source for the Portage water utility is groundwater from the Kalamazoo-Portage and Schoolcraft aquifers, water bearing formations beneath the surface of the earth that consist of sand and gravel deposited by glacial activity. The city water system uses 20 groundwater wells with pumping capacities ranging from 330 to 3,700 gallons per minute. The water is treated with chlorine, fluoride and phosphate and is closely monitored by the city to ensure that a high level of quality and safety is maintained.

The chemical composition of surface water and ground water differ greatly. Unlike surface water, ground water is free from pathogenic organisms, such as salmonella and malaria, and contains more minerals. Surface water contains different contaminants like pesticides, animal wastes, insecticides, algae, industrial wastes and other organic materials.

Lead in drinking water is primarily derived from materials and components associated with service lines and plumbing. Unlike in Flint, the City of Portage water system is not comprised of any lead water service lines; however, materials used in plumbing components within private homes may contain lead. If you believe



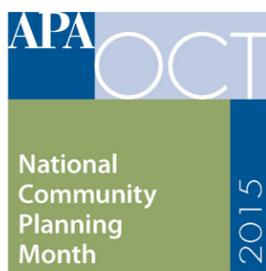
you have lead pipes or components, flush the tap for 30 seconds to two minutes before using the water for drinking or cooking to minimize the potential for lead exposure.

United Water (operator of the city sewer & water utilities) routinely monitors for constituents/substances in the drinking water according to Federal and State laws. The results of monitoring efforts can be viewed in the Annual Drinking Water report at www.portagemi.gov/FilesCustom/html/editor/files/transportation/15wqr.pdf.

Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods and steps to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800-426-4791 or online at www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.

Community Planning Highlights

During October each year, communities and planners throughout the country celebrate National Community Planning Month. During the fall of 2015, the City of Portage had several initiatives:



- ◆ Capital Improvement Program Open House
- ◆ Portage 2025 – Visioning Renewal Event
- ◆ City Council proclamation in support of National Community Planning Month

These are just a few examples of how community planners in Portage have sought to engage citizens and chart the course for the future of Portage.

What is community planning and how does it impact you?

Planning helps guide how a community grows, develops and re-develops. Well-prepared and comprehensive planning efforts consider the needs of all citizens of a community in the context of the physical, social and economic environment. For example, community planners evaluate:

- ◆ Where residents live, housing options available and neighborhood quality of life.
- ◆ Where people work and employment opportunities within the community and the larger region.
- ◆ How people travel to school, work and other destinations and whether the transportation system has the capacity to meet demand and serves all uses – vehicles, transit, bicyclists and pedestrians.
- ◆ Where people play – where they go and what they do for recreation and cultural activities.
- ◆ How to support development with proper infrastructure – water, sewer and storm water drainage.

◆ And...how all of the above is accomplished while protecting the environment, ensuring safe drinking water quality, preventing flood damage and preserving and protecting open space and habitat.

Planning tools that city planners use include:

- ◆ A Comprehensive Plan, which guides the overall community growth and development. In 2014, the City of Portage Planning Commission adopted a new Comprehensive Plan.
- ◆ A Zoning Ordinance and Land Development regulations. A Zoning Ordinance classifies areas of the community in various zoning districts, which specify permitted land uses and development patterns. Land Development regulations provide additional standards for developments such as subdivision plats and condominiums and include design standards for public infrastructure.
- ◆ A Capital Improvement Program – a 10-year financing plan that identifies short and long-range physical development projects and other capital investments, such as:
 - ~ major and local streets, including non-motorized transportation;
 - ~ municipal water, sanitary sewer and storm drainage facilities;
 - ~ parks, bikeways and multi-use trails;
 - ~ public facilities such as City Hall, Senior Center, Public Services and technology; and
 - ~ public safety facilities, vehicles and equipment.

For more information on community planning in Portage or to review the documents listed above, please visit the Department of Community Development on the city website at www.portagemi.gov.

Home Buyer Assistance Available

If you, or someone you know is looking to purchase a home in the City of Portage, assistance is available!



Qualified applicants purchasing homes in specified neighborhoods may receive a 0% interest, deferred loan up to \$3,000 to cover up to 50% of the required down payment plus eligible closing costs. Up to \$5,000 may be available for the purchase of bank-owned foreclosed properties or vacant properties that were previously renter-occupied homes.

Eligibility for the program includes household income requirements established annually by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and mortgage pre-approval from a lending institution.

Household Size	Maximum Annual Income	Minimum Annual Income
1 Person	\$33,750	\$16,880
2 Person	\$38,550	\$19,280
3 Person	\$43,350	\$22,880
4 Person	\$48,150	\$24,080
5 Person	\$52,050	\$26,040
6 Person	\$55,900	\$27,920
7 Person	\$59,750	\$29,880
8 Person	\$63,600	\$31,800



For more detailed information, a map of eligible neighborhoods, or for an application package, please call the City of Portage Community Development Department 329-4477.

Winter is coming... time to clean out the old before the holidays!

WE ACCEPT & RECYCLE...
 Batteries • Cell Phones • Computers
 Cleaners • Fluorescent Bulbs • Gasoline
 Mercury • Oil-based Paints • Yard Chemicals
 Stereos • Used Motor Oil • Televisions

BUSINESS WASTE for a FEE
NOT ACCEPTED – LATEX PAINT

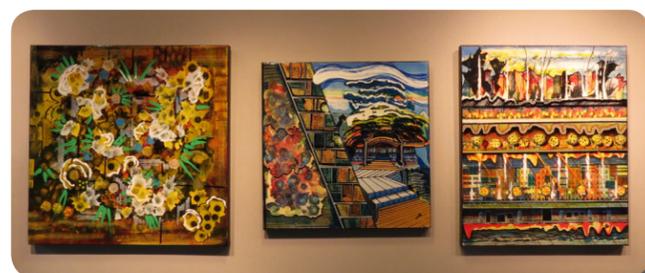
household hazardous WASTE

HHW Center
 1301 Lamont Avenue
 (269) 373-5211

Tuesday & Friday 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. | 2nd Sat. 8 a.m. - 12 noon
Wednesday 12 noon - 6 p.m. | Open Year Round

Local Artwork on Display at City Hall

Calling all artists! The Portage City Hall rotating artwork display has openings for interested artists to display their works. The City Hall lobby regularly features artwork produced by local artists or art collections on loan from local art patrons on a bi-monthly basis. Information about the creator is available with each exhibit and many works featured are for sale. Display openings start in January 2016 extending throughout the year. Artists or collectors with a Portage connection interested in displaying their works can contact the Office of the City Manager at 329-4400. Certain restrictions apply.



Traditional Holiday and Tree Lighting Celebration

Set your sights on holiday lights, caroling and holiday treats! Please join in an evening night of fun at the City of Portage annual Traditional Holiday and Tree Lighting Celebration. The fun kicks off at the City Centre, near the Portage District Library on



Saturday, December 5 at 7 p.m. Thousands of lights will be illuminated in celebration of the holiday season. Then follow a horse-drawn wagon, complete with jingle bells and Christmas carolers, on a short walk down the Portage Creek Bicentennial Trail to the Celery Flats Historical Area, where the holiday celebration will take place.

Festive music will be provided by Proclamation Brass, a local brass ensemble group, as well as local carolers. Santa and Mrs. Claus will greet visitors at the historic schoolhouse and refreshments will be available at the Hayloft Theatre.

Hot cider and hot cocoa coffee will be available for a \$1 donation per cup – proceeds from the sales will benefit area charities. Admission is free, however, donations of



food, toys and outerwear will be accepted for the Portage Community Center to help those in need. Business and Corporate sponsors are always welcome. For additional details, please call the Parks & Recreation Division at 329-4522.

Create a Holiday Card for Display at Celery Flats



Now is the time for area groups, clubs, families, businesses and organizations to begin preparing for the annual "Holiday Card Walk" along the Bicentennial Trail in the Celery Flats Historical Area on Garden Lane in Portage. Plywood holiday cards created by various individuals and civic groups, along with lights and decorations provided by the City of Portage, will create a memorable display this winter holiday season.

Holiday cards must be a 4-foot x 8-foot sheet of plywood a minimum of 1/2 inch thick and be able to withstand outdoor weather conditions. The backside of the card should be painted white. Holiday cards should convey words and images appropriate for a public venue, with inclusionary messages of seasonal joy, peace and goodwill, for example. The cards will be installed at Celery Flats by the City of Portage in an upright position.

Completed holiday cards can be delivered to the Portage Department of Public Services building (7719 South Westnedge Avenue) by November 13, 2015 for installation beginning on November 20. Cards will be available for pick up after January 8, 2016. Any cards remaining after January 22, 2016 will be disposed of by the city.

Interested individuals or groups may contact the Parks, Recreation and Senior Citizen Services Department at 329-4522 to reserve a location for the Holiday Card Walk or to obtain card construction information. Help Portage create a festive viewing opportunity for residents and visitors by participating in this year's holiday activities!

The Ice Rink at Millennium Park

Opening for its 16th season on December 10, 2015, weather permitting, this large outdoor refrigerated rink features skate rental, skate sharpening, snack concessions, restrooms, warming house, lockers and an excellent skating surface!

December 10 - December 18 & January 3 - March 6 (ice resurfacing occurs 3:30-4:30 p.m. on weekends)

Sunday 12 – 9 p.m.
 Monday – Wednesday Closed
 Thursday 3 – 9 p.m.
 Friday 3 – 10 p.m.
 Saturday 11 a.m. – 10 p.m.

December 19 - January 2 (ice resurfacing daily 3:30-4:30 p.m. except holidays)

Daily 11 a.m. – 10 p.m.
 December 24, 31, January 1 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.
 Christmas Day Closed

Winter School Holidays

January 29 & February 26 2 – 10 p.m.

Open Skating \$4
Skate Rental \$3
Skate Sharpening \$3
Skate Card \$25 for 10 punch card (each punch good for one option above)

Valentine's Skate Date

Sunday, February 14 4:30 p.m.

Private skate, live music and dinner on the ice!! \$16 per person (due by February 11 at rink).

Twilight Skate

Thursday, February 25 8 – 11 p.m.

Colorful lighting, upbeat music and skating under the stars! \$5 skate and rental package.



Kid Vote! Playground Design

Kids, we need your input! The Portage Parks and Recreation department would like to invite all kids in the community, and those who visit Lakeview Park and Schrier Park, to cast a vote for their favorite playground design!

Both playgrounds will be removed this November, re-purposed by a volunteer team from Kids Alive International and rebuilt at an orphanage and school for needy children in the Dominican Republic. These playgrounds provide safe play opportunities for many children who have never had a playground experience. New Portage playgrounds will be installed early spring of 2016.

Two sample designs are shown here but several additional designs can be viewed at the following voting locations:

- ◆ Vote online at www.portagemi.gov
- ◆ Vote at the Portage Parks & Recreation office at 7719 South Westnedge Avenue
- ◆ Vote at the Traditional Holiday event on December 5. (See article above.)

Voting will end December 6, 2015 so please tell your neighbor friends to vote too!



Neighborhood Fall Leaf Pickup Reminders

Leaf collection will occur three times in each neighborhood zone until prohibited by weather. Residents are asked to please place leaves at the curb by 7 a.m. on each of the three collection dates for your neighborhood. Program details along with the full collection map and schedule are available on the city website at www.portagemi.gov – click on the fall leaf pickup icon.



- ◆ ONLY loose leaves or leaves bagged in biodegradable paper yard waste bags will be collected. Leaves in plastic bags (including biodegradable plastic bags) will not be collected.
- ◆ For the safety of the public, please do not put leaves in the street more than three days prior to your scheduled collection.
- ◆ Leaves should be raked off the grass and into the street or bagged in biodegradable paper yard waste bags and placed next to the curb as close to the street edge as possible so as to not obstruct traffic. Equipment may damage lawns if leaves are left in grass areas or ditches.
- ◆ Streets will be swept following each neighborhood collection, weather permitting.
- ◆ If weather prohibits raking of leaves, the city offers a spring bagged leaf pickup in April 2016, along with the scheduled brush pickup.

- ◆ The Fall Leaf Pickup Program is not performed for commercial establishments, churches or schools or on private streets (unless every property owner on a private street has signed an indemnification form. Please contact the Department of Public Services at 329-4444 with any questions).
- ◆ The Portage Code of Ordinances (Chapter 66, Article 1, Section 66-2) prohibits residents from having basketball stands in the city right-of-way. Likewise, during trash and recycling removal days, citizens are requested to keep their containers on the curb versus on the actual roadway. These items impede safe leaf collection operations and can result in damage to city equipment and personal property.

Additional details regarding the Fall Leaf Pickup Program can be directed to the Department of Public Services at 329-4444.

PORTAGEALERT

Have You Signed Up Yet?

PORTAGEALERT allows the city to send urgent voice and/or text messages to home phones, businesses, local agencies and mobile phones in just minutes during emergencies or other urgent situations. PORTAGEALERT is also a great way for the city to remind you of upcoming service dates in your neighborhood, like leaf pickup or brush collection.



Visit www.portagemi.gov or scan the QR Code to register your contact information. Those without internet access are encouraged to call 329-4405 to provide current contact information.

Having Trouble Signing Up?

The Portage Senior Center will host a PORTAGEALERT sign-up event on Thursday, November 12 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 300 Library Lane in Portage. Visit the sign-up booth where staff will register you to receive PORTAGEALERT emergency notifications, outreach messages, Senior Center news and other important city information. Please call 329-4405 with any questions about PORTAGEALERT.

Senior Center Evening Meals!



Join the Portage Senior Center for the monthly evening meal on Tuesday, November 17 from 5 to 6:30 p.m. The November meal will be Roast Pork at a cost of \$10, which includes the entrée, sides, dessert and a beverage. This event is open to public. Meals can be requested "to go." Reservations are requested no later than one day prior to the meal. Call the Portage Senior Center at 329-4555.



7900 South Westnedge Avenue
Portage, Michigan 49002-5160

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City Closings

Non-emergency city offices will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

Thanksgiving

Thursday, November 26
Friday, November 27

The next edition of the *Portager* will be published in December 2015.

Portage City Council

Portage City Council meetings are held on Tuesday evenings at Portage City Hall (7900 South Westnedge Avenue) in Council Chambers at 7:30 p.m. and are always open to the public.

The City Manager is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the city. Citizens are encouraged to contact the City Administration with concerns or complaints about city services by calling Complaint Resolution at (269) 329-4404 or by visiting www.portagemi.gov > Report It!



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Laurence Shaffer, City Manager
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Televised City Meetings

All City of Portage City Council, Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals meetings can be viewed live on channel 190 and via live streaming at <http://www.publicmedianet.org/watch-live>. AT&T U-Verse customers can access the City of Portage government meetings on channel 99 and then follow the prompts to access the various meetings.



November

- 3 7:30 p.m. City Council Meeting
- 5 7:00 p.m. Planning Commission Meeting
- 9 7:00 p.m. Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting
- 17 7:00 p.m. City Council Meeting
- 19 7:30 p.m. Planning Commission Meeting

Portager Editor: Mary Beth Block – blockm@portagemi.gov