



(847) 251-2700
Facsimile (847) 853-7700
TDD (847) 853-7634

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Village of Wilmette Commitment to Environmental Sustainability Grows in 2019 From Curbside Composting to Paperless Utility Billing: Opportunities Abound for Wilmette Residents to Increase Sustainable Practices

WILMETTE, IL. – (March 14, 2019) – The Village of Wilmette is delivering on its commitment to promote and create a more sustainable environment with the advancement of several initiatives, including energy efficient infrastructure upgrades and residential programs like composting and eco-friendly landscaping.

For example, new LED streetlights are being installed throughout the community. The Village has replaced 40% of its vintage decorative streetlights with LEDs and has partnered with ComEd to replace 128 high-intensity discharge streetlights with energy efficient LEDs that provide significant energy efficiencies and cost savings. The Village intends to complete conversion of all 2,550 streetlights in Wilmette to LEDs over the next several years.

“It’s clear Wilmette residents value sustainability and it’s also a priority for the Village. From replacing our streetlight lamps with energy- efficient LED lights to using LED lights on the holiday Christmas tree, the Village is taking both small and big steps to be more sustainable,” said Chris Dunn, Chair of the Village’s Environmental and Energy Commission.

Another way the Village is promoting sustainability is through the RainReady Wilmette program, which provides grant funding to residents for sustainability landscaping. Residents must apply through the Village by March 29 and grants will pay for up to half the cost of the eco-friendly products, such as a rain garden, cistern, or permeable pavement.

Residents can also do their own part to be more sustainable by taking advantage of the new curbside composting program. Starting on April 1, residents can save their food scraps and place them in their yard waste cart on collection day. The Village Board of Trustees added this service in its contract with Advanced Disposal in order to further help the environment as composting reduces greenhouse gas emissions from rotting food in landfills and conserves landfill space.

Other Village Board actions to improve sustainability in 2018 included: endorsing the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus’ Greenest Region Compact (GRC); initiating the Village’s first sustainability plan; authorizing President Bielinski to join “Climate Mayors” – a

bipartisan, peer-to-peer network of mayors that work together to demonstrate leadership on climate change; and establishing a permanent electronics recycling site at Wilmette Public Works.

The Village also recently launched online utility payments to save time and reduce paper use. Residents can sign up for the Village's paperless billing program at wilmette.com/finance/online-bill-pay/. In the coming months, the Village anticipates finalizing certification as a SolSmart community to support and encourage solar installations

Beyond the new programs, the Village encourages resident to take advantage of ongoing sustainable resources like the annual environmental fair Going Green Matters, periodic "Green Tips" in the Village's email newsletter, and information on Wilmette.com/green-initiatives.

Village of Wilmette: Contact Wilmette Assistant Village Manager Michael Braiman, 847-853-7506, braimanm@wilmette.com.