

# CITY OF WHEATON — NEWSLETTER

December 2024

## CITY NOTES

### Holiday Garbage Collection Schedule & City Office Closures



There will be no garbage collection on Wednesday, Dec. 25 or Wednesday, Jan. 1. Pickup will be delayed by one day for Wednesday through Friday pickup days during those weeks. Additionally,

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## Register for Light Up Wheaton Holiday Decorating Contest

**L**et's get festive! The City of Wheaton and Wheaton Park District are proud to present the 5th annual Light Up Wheaton decorating contest.

[Registration is open now through Thursday, Dec. 12.](#) All registered participants must submit a photo of their entry (along with address) by noon on Thursday, Dec. 12 to be considered for awards. Photos and addresses will be shared on the City of Wheaton and Wheaton Park District Facebook pages for residents looking to drive by and enjoy the decorations in person.

All Wheaton residents, businesses, houses of worship and community organizations are invited to participate in this free, friendly competition — all themes and holidays welcome! Showcase your fun, creative, out-of-the-box decorating ideas in what has quickly become one of Wheaton's favorite holiday traditions. Awards will be given in three categories: Most Creative, People's Choice, and Mayor's Choice.

Judging will take place from Dec. 13-19. For Most Creative and Mayor's Choice categories, judges will

observe houses from 6-9 p.m. daily during this time. Photos of entries shared on the City of Wheaton and Wheaton Park District Facebook pages will be voted on by the public for the People's Choice award.

Winners will be announced Friday, Dec. 20 via social media and email. All winners will receive a commemorative prize and \$100 in local gift cards.

To be eligible, participants must be located within Wheaton city limits and/or Wheaton Park District boundaries as well as decorate their homes/businesses themselves (homes/businesses that are professionally decorated can be registered but will not be eligible to win). To recognize the efforts of new participants, winners from 2023 are not eligible to receive awards in 2024, but they are still encouraged to participate!

For more information about the contest, visit [wheatonparkdistrict.com/LightUpWheaton](https://wheatonparkdistrict.com/LightUpWheaton). Please email [cali@wheatonparks.org](mailto:cali@wheatonparks.org) for any questions.

## CONTACT THE CITY

**Police/Fire Emergency:** 9-1-1  
**General Information:** 630-260-2000  
**Wheaton City Hall:** 303 W. Wesley Street  
8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday

Follow us on Facebook, X (Twitter) and Instagram by searching for "City of Wheaton."  
Send feedback to [communications@wheaton.il.us](mailto:communications@wheaton.il.us)



## CITY NOTES

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non-emergency City offices will be closed on Wednesday, Dec. 25 and Wednesday, Jan. 1.

### Yard Waste Pickup Ends Week of Dec. 9



During the week of Dec. 9, on your regular pickup day, LRS will make its final collection of yard waste, food scraps, and organic materials for the season.

### Employment Opportunities

The City of Wheaton has the following employment opportunities available:

- Accounting Manager
- Part-time Community Service Officer
- Police Services Representative

To apply, visit [wheaton.il.us/jobs](http://wheaton.il.us/jobs).

## Holiday Light Recycling Program Returns to Wheaton



**K**ee your old holiday lights out of landfills by bringing them to Wheaton's holiday light recycling drop-off site at the Public Works Storage Facility (820 W. Liberty Drive) between 7 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. weekdays now through Friday, Jan. 17.

Bring strands of incandescent or LED lights in any condition. Look for signs directing you to the holiday light recycling area just inside the gate. This program is for light strings only. Please do not drop off lawn ornaments or other decorations, and

do not put lights in a bag or box.

Elgin Recycling, [elginrecycling.com](http://elginrecycling.com), will collect the lights, which will then be stripped and recycled for their copper and plastic parts. No materials will be shipped overseas.

In addition to residents, the City also welcomes businesses, schools, and other organizations wanting to dispose of holiday lights to participate in the program. There is no limit as to how many lights you can drop off for recycling.

## Decorate Safely: Help the Wheaton Fire Department Keep the Wreath Red



**T**his December, the Wheaton Fire Department will decorate Wheaton's three fire stations with wreaths that have a special significance. The wreaths are part of

the Keep the Wreath Red fire safety campaign, a statewide program that reminds you to practice fire safety during the holiday season. The wreaths feature red lights, and for each Wheaton fire caused by holiday decorations, the Fire Department will replace one red bulb with a white bulb. Help the Wheaton Fire Department Keep the Wreath Red by unplugging holiday lights before leaving home or sleeping; being careful with candles; using non-flammable decorations; ensuring lights are in good condition and Underwriters Laboratories (UL) listed; and keeping trees watered.



# Thank You for Celebrating the Beginning of Wheaton's 2024 Holiday Season

**T**hank you to the Downtown Wheaton Association, our incredible parade participants, our wonderful residents, and the entire Wheaton community for coming together to create such an unforgettable evening at the Adams Park Lighting Ceremony, Christmas Parade, and Christmas Tree Lighting on Friday, Nov. 29!

From the festive lights to the cheerful smiles, the holiday spirit shared by everyone truly made it a magical night to remember. As we reflect on the joy of these special events, we wish you and your loved ones a season filled with warmth, togetherness, and happiness. Happy holidays from the City of Wheaton!



## *City of Wheaton Snow Parking Reminders*



**W**inter is here, and snow is on the way. As a reminder, after 2 inches of accumulated snowfall, parking is prohibited on any street for a period of 24 hours or until the streets have been cleared of snow. Parking is also prohibited in the Central Business District between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. or until the streets have been cleared.



## MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

# Happy Holidays and Welcoming 2025



**Mayor Suess**

**A**s the holiday season unfolds and we look toward the New Year, I am filled with gratitude for the incredible community we have here in Wheaton. This is a city rooted in community and caring — qualities that shine even brighter during this special time of year.

This season is brought

to life thanks to our many community partners. Last month, the DWA and the City kicked off the holidays with the Adams Park Lighting Ceremony, Christmas Parade, and Christmas Tree Lighting — events that have become beloved community traditions. You can visit Adams Park's Nights of Lights and enjoy the downtown Christmas tree through Jan. 5, 2025. Don't forget to stop by the "W" tent on Main Street Dec. 7, 14, and 21, where Santa and Mrs. Claus will be greeting visitors. For more information on these and other seasonal events, please visit [the DWA's website](#).

The City and Wheaton Park District continue the festivities with the return of the

[Light Up Wheaton](#) home decorating contest, a friendly competition open to residents, businesses, and community organizations that has quickly become one of Wheaton's favorite holiday traditions. With so many beautifully decorated homes and businesses, we can all enjoy this display of holiday spirit throughout our city. You can also visit the [Festival of Lights](#) at Cosley Zoo, where thousands of sparkling lights and seasonal treats create a winter wonderland. Discover more winter festivities by visiting [the Wheaton Park District's website](#).

At the Wheaton Public Library, the holiday spirit is in full swing with festive programs,

including the Winter Open House on Dec. 8, featuring a gingerbread house competition, holiday carols by The Festive Singers, and more. Check out [the library's website](#) for additional events to brighten your season.

Looking ahead to 2025, there is much to be excited about. The New Year is sure to hold endless opportunities to celebrate with one another and be thankful for the people and places that make Wheaton an outstanding community. I wish you and your loved ones a joyful holiday season and a prosperous New Year. Thank you for making Wheaton such a special place to call home.

## *Practice Safe Online Shopping this Season*



**T**he holidays are here, and the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) wants to help you celebrate safely all season long

and into the new year. If you're shopping online for the perfect gifts, be sure to keep your information secure. With scams on the rise, it's important to

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shop smart and protect yourself while checking off your holiday list.

Here are some helpful tips to keep in mind this season:

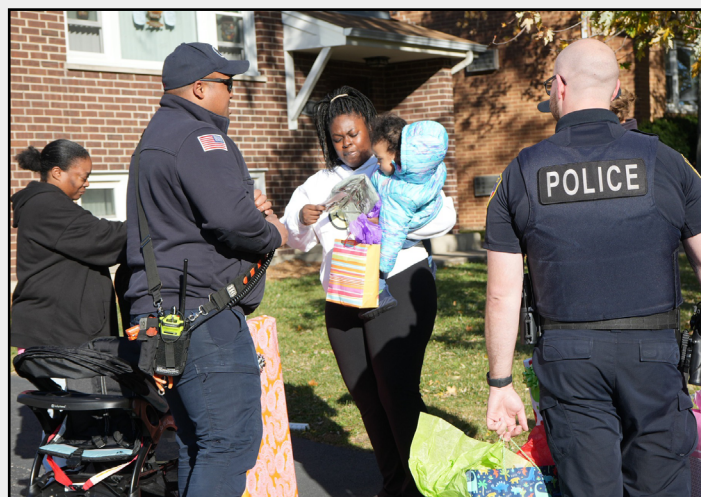
- Cyber thieves will set up fake e-commerce sites. Prior to making a purchase, read reviews to hear what others say about the merchant. In addition, look for a physical location and any customer service information.
- Using a credit card is often recommended

over a debit card, as there are more consumer protections for credit cards.

- Be alert to the kinds of information being collected to complete your transaction. If the merchant is requesting more data than you feel comfortable sharing, cancel the transaction.
- Be sure to continuously check your bank accounts for any unauthorized activity.

For more information, visit the [Illinois Emergency Management Agency's website](#).

## Wheaton Fire Department Participates in Project Fire Buddies



Members of the Wheaton Fire Department recently met their newest Fire Buddy, Kaiden, through Project Fire Buddies, an organization in which firefighters provide support and create relationships with children battling critical illnesses. Kaiden's family had requested a fire extinguisher to help keep Kaiden safe, and Wheaton firefighters and members of the Wheaton

Police Department not only brought a home fire extinguisher but also several more gifts for Kaiden and his twin sister Kalani.

Kaiden and family were overwhelmed at the support from both Wheaton Fire and Wheaton Police. The Wheaton Fire Department looks forward to continuing to connect with Kaiden and his family.



# Upcoming Events

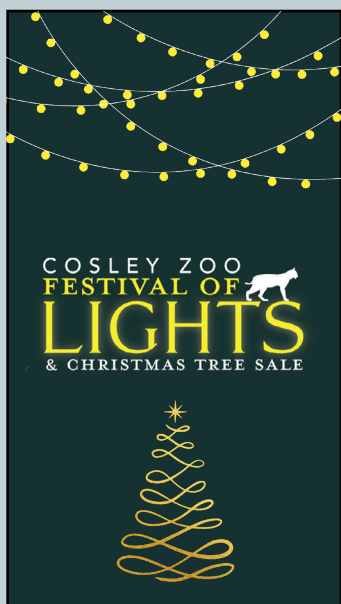
## Festival of Lights & Christmas Tree Sale

**Dates:** Now through Monday, Dec. 30

**Time:** 9 a.m.-9 p.m.\*  
(Lights turn on at 3 p.m.)

\*Note holiday hours of 9 a.m.-noon Dec. 24 & 31; closed Dec. 25

**Location:** Cosley Zoo, 1356 N. Gary Ave.



Cosley Zoo is transformed into a winter wonderland with thousands of twinkling lights, and Christmas trees, wreaths and greenery, hot chocolate and more. For more information, visit [Cosley Zoo's website](http://CosleyZoo's website).

## Santa's Craft Corner

**Dates:** Dec. 7, 14

**Time:** 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

**Location:** Cosley Zoo, 1356 N. Gary Ave.

Visit Santa at the zoo! While you are there, make a craft or two and tour the zoo before you go. Admission includes crafts, refreshments and, of course, a visit with the man in red himself. Be sure to bring your camera to capture those holiday memories. Santa's Craft Corner is held in the Kiebler

Room, located on the second floor of the large barn, accessible by stairs. For more information, visit [Cosley Zoo's website](http://CosleyZoo's website).

## Santa & Mrs. Claus at the "W" Tent

**Date & Times:**

- Saturday, Dec. 7, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
- Saturday, Dec. 14, 2-4 p.m.
- Saturday, Dec. 21, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

**Location:** "W" Tent in downtown Wheaton, on Front Street west of Main Street

Ho, Ho, Ho! Santa and Mrs. Claus visit downtown Wheaton this holiday season, and they want to see you! This is the perfect time to take a picture with Santa and even check if you made the nice list

this year.

For more information, visit [the Downtown Wheaton Association's website](http://the Downtown Wheaton Association's website).

## Electronic Recycling

**Date:** Saturday, Dec. 14

**Time:** 9 a.m.-Noon

**Location:** Public Works Storage Yard, 820 W. Liberty Drive

Bring unwanted electronics to the monthly electronic recycling collection. This is a drive-through event where volunteers will help unload items from your car. Please note that there is a charge for all TVs and monitors at this event.

For more information, visit [the City's website](http://the City's website).

## LIBRARY EVENTS

Register for these events at [wheatonlibrary.org/calendar](http://wheatonlibrary.org/calendar).

*Note: In-person events take place at the Wheaton Public Library, 225 N. Cross St.*

## Winter Open House

**Date:** Sunday, Dec. 8

**Time:** 2-4 p.m.

**Location:** In-person

Join us on the library's main floor as we celebrate the upcoming winter season! Submit a Gingerbread House creation and vote on your favorite as you enjoy the Festive Singers perform classic holiday carols from

2-3 p.m. Also featuring a model train display and a special Student Craft Holiday Sale! *No registration required.*

## Cooking: Iced Holiday Sugar Cookies

**Date:** Wednesday, Dec. 11

**Time:** 6:30 p.m.

**Location:** Virtual  
Kristyn Slick of Mealtime Memories

will cover how to bake the perfect sugar cookie, followed by detailed, step-by-step guidance to use royal icing in decorating. These holiday-themed cookies will dazzle your loved ones! *Registration required.*

## Decked Out for the Holidays

**Date:** Thursday, Dec. 12

**Time:** 7 p.m.

**Location:** Virtual

Visit magnificently decorated conservatories, mansions and beautifully lit gardens during the holiday season with Jana Milbocker of Enchanted Gardens. This armchair tour includes Longwood Gardens, Winterthur,

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Blithewold, Newport Mansions and more. *Registration required.*

**A Christmas Carol: Behind the Story**

**Date:** Wednesday, Dec. 18

**Time:** 7 p.m.

**Location:** Virtual

Learn the fascinating history and amazing

achievements behind Charles Dickens' beloved masterpiece. Movie expert Steven Frenzel will also highlight how filmmakers have brought Scrooge and his ghostly companions to the silver screen. *Registration is required to attend.*

**Mad Fore Plaid**

**Date:** Friday, Jan. 17

**Time:** 6:30 p.m.

**Location:** In-person

This 21+ ticketed event includes 18 holes of mini golf, cash bar (one drink included with registration), appetizers, live entertainment and awards. All event proceeds benefit the

Wheaton Public Library Endowment Fund of the DuPage Foundation and the DuPage County Historical Museum Foundation.

Additional information and tickets are available at [wheatonlibrary.org/minigolf](https://wheatonlibrary.org/minigolf).

## Gary Avenue Improvement Project Update



Improvements to Gary Avenue between Harrison Avenue and Jewell Road continue moving forward, with utility relocation work scheduled for completion by the end of 2024.

The City will keep this roadway open to traffic throughout the winter. Weather permitting, roadway work is anticipated to begin in March 2025. This project will include the following improvements:

- complete roadway reconstruction
- widening the road at the intersection of Gary & Prairie Avenue to add a left turn lane at Prairie Avenue for northbound traffic

- installing a traffic signal at Gary Avenue & Prairie Avenue
- adding a striped crosswalk with pedestrian signals
- installing an off-street shared-use path
- extending the Winfield Creek culvert, and
- installing storm sewers.

Roadway work is scheduled to be completed in fall 2025. The City is working with the project contractor to minimize disruption to this area. We will continue to provide updates throughout this project. We appreciate your patience during these important infrastructure improvements.



# More Customer Parking Available for Holidays at Wheaton Place Garage



To ensure residents and visitors can enjoy holiday shopping, dining and more in the downtown, customer parking is available on all levels of the Wheaton Place Garage (232 W. Wesley St.) now through Monday, Dec. 30.

Other available customer parking includes:

- Ground floor of the Willow Avenue Garage, located at Willow and Cross Street (just south

of the railroad tracks)

- Lot 2, on the south side of Wesley between Main and Hale Street
- On-street customer parking spots throughout the downtown

On nights and weekends, the City Hall parking lot at 303 W. Wesley St. is also available for customer parking.

## *Update to City Zoom Meeting Format*



The City recently updated the format for attending City Council meetings remotely to increase the online security of its meetings. If you'd like to attend the meeting using a computer, smartphone or other device, you will now find a registration link to the meeting you'd like to attend on the meeting agenda. Upon registering for the meeting, you will automatically receive a confirmation email from Zoom containing a link to attend the meeting. Please note that it may take several minutes for your email service to deliver this automatically generated email. Participants who wish to attend by phone will continue to find the number to call along with the meeting ID and passcode to attend on the meeting agenda.



# Water Rate Changes Approved to Support Necessary Infrastructure Projects



The Wheaton City Council has approved changes to the City's water rates to address aging water infrastructure, significant increases in the amount the City pays to purchase water, and rising expenses to operate the City's water system. These changes implement the recommendations of the [Wheaton Water Rate Study](#), which includes the first adjustments to the City's water rates in 9 years, and annual adjustments to the rate that directly reflect how

much the City pays to purchase water from the DuPage Water Commission. These changes will begin with water customers' January 2025 utility bill. The impact on a customer's monthly water bill will vary based on their water meter size and consumption levels, however the average water customer is expected to see a monthly increase of approximately \$6.82 in 2025. More information is available on [the City's website](#).

## CITY CALENDAR



City Council Meetings and Planning Sessions are held in the Council Chambers at Wheaton City Hall, 303 W. Wesley St. Coffee with Council takes place in the Gamon Room. Visit [www.wheaton.il.us](http://www.wheaton.il.us) for a complete list of meetings and events.

### December 2024

- 2** City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.
- 7** Coffee with Council, 10 a.m.
- 9** Budget Public Hearing & City Council Planning Session, 7 p.m.
- 16** City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.
- 25** City Offices Closed; No Garbage Pickup