



June 2009

City Happenings

An eNewsletter from the City of Lexington, Nebraska



Skate Park ramped up with major upgrade

Arbor Park (Plum Creek Parkway and Maple Street)

On June 11, 2009, workers installed the largest feature to date at Lexington's Skate Park.

The half-pipe ramp sits on the northwest corner of the 90-foot-square concrete slab. It is 20 feet wide, 30 feet long, and varies in height from three to four feet.

Although rain ensued off and on for a couple of days following the installation, Lexington's skating youth were eager to get rolling whenever the weather dried up enough to accommodate them.



At the same time the City added a Skate Table, which looks like a picnic table but is made of the same durable material as skate ramps.

Funding for the skate park additions come from the Lexington Community Foundation and the City of Lexington.



Water Conservation Tips

As we begin the high water usage season, here are some household tips for conserving water:

1. Don't leave the sink running while you brush your teeth.
2. Fully load the dishwasher and clothes washer before running them.
3. Consider landscapes that use native or drought-resistant plants that do not require much water.
4. Repair dripping faucets and leaky toilets. Dripping faucets can waste up to 2,000 gallons of water each year in the average home. Leaky toilets can waste as much as 200 gallons per day.



6. Don't over-water your lawn, and water early in the morning or at night to avoid excess evaporation.
7. When the driveway or sidewalk needs cleaning, consider a broom instead of a hose. It can save up to 80 gallons of water.
8. If you have a swimming pool, use a cover. You will cut the loss of water by evaporation by 90 percent.
9. Help preserve the quality of the available water supply by not overusing pesticides and fertilizers, avoiding flushing medications down the toilet or sink, and disposing of hazardous materials properly.
10. Place rain barrels beneath your downspouts. The rainwater can be used for outdoor plants and trees or to wash a car.



Remember, you're not just washing your car



Practice good car care

Did you know . . . 4 quarts of oil can form an 8 acre oil slick if dumped or spilled down a storm drain?

That's because storm drains found in our streets and yards lead directly to our lakes and streams. So, oil and dirty water from washing our car that goes into storm drains pollutes our water.

What can you do? Simple.

- Take your car to the carwash where the dirty water is treated before it gets to our water.
- Wash your car on your lawn or direct the dirty water towards the lawn and away from the storm drain.
- Keep your car properly tuned.
- Recycle used fluids and never dump them down the storm drain.

Help keep the oil where it belongs . . . in your car.



Find out more at www.cityoflex.com

Support provided by NDEQ



City unveils new website look

The City of Lexington invites you to visit our website (www.cityoflex.com) and browse the new look and information recently added.

Among the new features on the home page is a News & Announcements section, Calendar, Quick Links and a lot more links to pages within the site. As you explore deeper, you'll find more pages, information, contacts, photos and links.

In particular we suggest spending some time in the new Home Energy Suite™ (under several menus, titled "Online Home Energy Usage Tool"). This useful section can escort you through a virtual home where you'll see ways energy is used or wasted. It's not limited to electricity: gas, water, windows and insulation are also examined. Along the way, you can ask the program for suggestions to save energy and money.

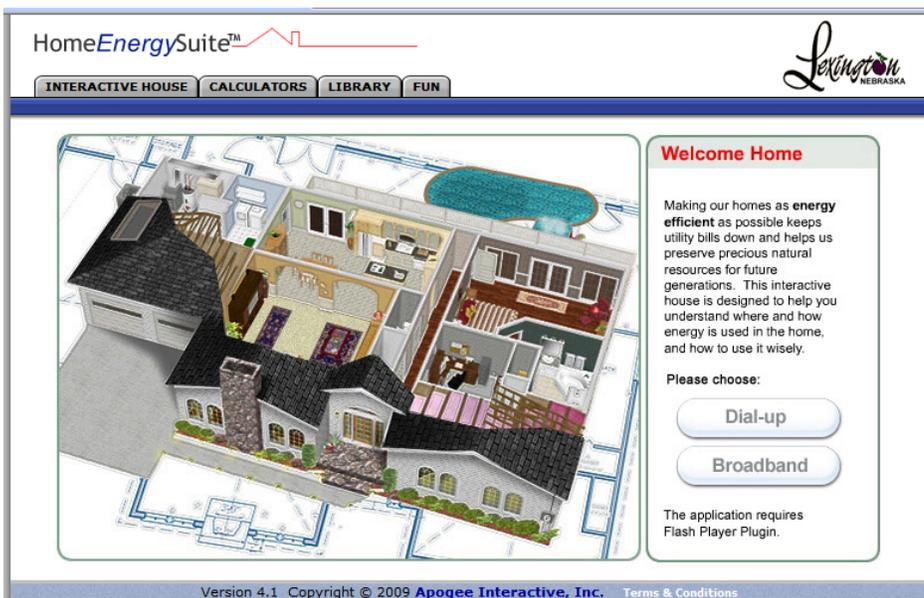
The Suite can help you create a database of your home and appliances that will fairly accurately estimate your energy use and costs. You can then

change a factor—for example, switching from gas to a high efficiency electric heat pump— and see the savings.

There is a separate module that shows cost savings from switching from incandescent light bulbs

to compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs). There is even a tool that lets you enter the number of drips per minute counted from a leaky faucet, which then tells you how many gallons a day is wasted (be prepared to be shocked!).

There is more to explore, please check it out. We know we need to fine-tune some parts so, if you find any issues, please contact Dennis Burnside with your comments, dburnside@cityoflex.com.



EnergyWise Tip: operate appliances when energy demand is low



How and when you use electric energy can make a difference.

Nebraska's electric system must be flexible to supply reliable power to homes, businesses, and industries under a wide variety of conditions.

This takes a complex system of power plants, substations, transmission and distribution lines to get energy to where it needs to go. As an energy consumer, there are many things you can do to reduce energy usage, particularly during hot days in the summer months when demand for electricity is typically at its highest.

These EnergyWiseSM tips include:

- ★ When temperatures top 90° F, find ways to reduce your energy usage from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. when energy usage is typically at its highest
- ★ Raise your thermostat to a higher setting and turn on fans
- ★ Close drapes on windows that face the sun
- ★ Grill supper outdoors. Use your microwave instead of the stove top or oven
- ★ Delay dishwashing and laundry until after 8 p.m.
- ★ Unplug appliances and shut off lights that are not in use
- ★ Do any baking early in the morning before it gets hot outside
- ★ Shower early in the morning or later in the evening

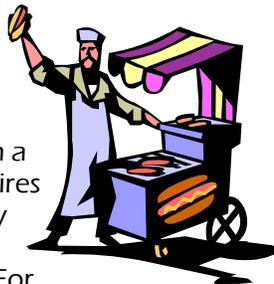
Lexington Utilities System wants you to get the most value for your money, each and every time you turn on a switch. It costs far less to save a kilowatt-hour than it does to build a new power plant to generate one.

For more information, contact Lexington Utilities System, 308-324-2343.



Street vendor season

The warm weather ushers in the annual emergence of merchants hoping to sell their wares by vehicle or foot. With few exceptions, everyone selling from a cart, trailer, or door-to-door, requires a City Street Vendor permit. They also should wear or display their 4" x 3" Street Vendor ID Badge. For more information contact the City at 308-324-2341.



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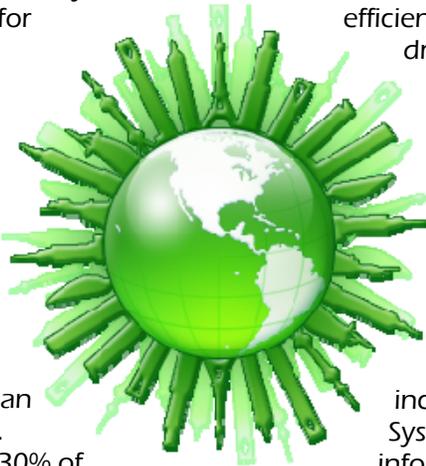
To subscribe to Lexington City Happenings, fill out the form at www.ci.lexington.ne.us/aboutus.asp. If you have comments or suggestions, contact Dennis Burnside, dburnside@cityoflex.com, 308-324-2341. You are encouraged to forward this to others you think may be interested. Archives available online.



The time is now to save money and energy

Homeowners can lower their energy costs and save up to \$500 on 2009 federal income taxes by making specified energy efficiency upgrades to their homes. The home must be the taxpayer's primary residence. Credits may be earned for upgrading heating, cooling and insulation.

The tax credits are part of a national financial rescue package enacted in 2008. Improvements must be installed in 2009; improvements made in 2008 are not eligible. Tax credits that were first enacted in 2005 (but had expired in 2007) have been extended. Taxpayers who did not use the full \$500 credit in 2006-7 can use the remaining portion in 2009. There is also a new credit of up to 30% of the cost of an EnergyStar qualified geothermal heat pump, up to \$2,000, effective 2009 – 2016.



Commercial, Industrial, Agricultural, and how to apply

For commercial and industrial customers, NPPD has additional incentives for upgrading to more energy efficient lighting, motors and variable speed drives. There are even incentives to upgrade to more efficient irrigation systems for agricultural customers.

The City of Lexington and NPPD also offer incentives for improving energy efficiency. Added to the federal tax credits, it looks like 2009 is a very good year to upgrade! The chart on this page outlines just a few of the incentives. For more details and information on the Lexington and NPPD incentives, contact Lexington Utilities System, (308) 324-2343. For more information on making energy efficiency improvements and even more federal tax credits, visit www.energystar.gov, and www.neo.ne.gov/ARRA/recoveryact.htm.

Finally, if you have a second refrigerator or freezer to get rid of, you can have it removed and maybe even get up to \$35 for it, through October. For more information or to schedule a pickup, call toll-free, 866-444-9160.

Improvement	Lexington Rebate	NPPD Rebate	Federal Tax Credit
14 SEER heat pump*	\$700	\$200	up to \$300
15 SEER heat pump*	\$800	\$250	up to \$300
16 SEER heat pump*	\$900	\$300	up to \$300
Any EER water or ground source heat pump*	\$1,400	\$400	30%
High efficiency electric water heater	\$125		up to \$300
Low Interest Loan for high efficiency heat pump ***		2.5%	
Upgrade to EnergyStar window air conditioner		\$30	
Cooling system tune-up		\$30	
Low flow shower heads		\$10	
High-efficiency gas, oil or propane furnace			up to \$150
High-efficiency fans for heat/cool system			up to \$50
Insulation added to walls, ceilings, etc.			up to \$500
Install EnergyStar® windows**			up to \$200
Upgrade to some EnergyStar® roof**			up to \$500
Plug-in hybrid electric vehicle			\$2,500-\$7,500

* upgrade from gas to electric only ** materials only, not installation costs
 *** consumer may opt for loan or rebate, but not both

Arbor Day 2009 a tree-mendous success!

The City of Lexington celebrated Arbor Day April 24 with four tree-planting ceremonies, and recognition of the winner of a third-grade Arbor Day poster contest sponsored by the Lexington Tree Board.

The "main event" was at Morton Elementary School. Yesenia Salas, a pupil in Mrs. Sharp's third grade class, created the 2009 winning poster. She was recognized with a ceremony and tree planting for her school. The tree was accompanied with an in-ground plaque, and Yesenia was presented with her winning poster framed for posterity.

Other trees were planted at the Lexington Public Library, contributed by the City of Lexington employees; and in Pioneer Park (15th & Madison), contributed by Daughters of the American Revolution.

Tree Board members are Glenn Hawks, Dave Stenberg, Marty Smith, Tony Sigler and Gordon Sellin. The trees came from Lien Lawn Service and Landscaping, which also installed the trees.

On April 14 Mayor John Fagot signed a proclamation declaring April 24 Arbor Day in Lexington. Arbor Day was originated in Nebraska and has become a national day that celebrates trees.



ABOVE: Morton Elementary School's Yesenia Salas won the Arbor Day Third Grade Poster Contest. She is flanked by teacher Audrey Racek, holding Yesenia's framed drawing, and Principal Barry McFarland. Wielding the shovel is tree man Kevin Lien.

BELOW: Yesenia's winning drawing.



CLIP AND SAVE

TORNADO

Now that tornado season is here, Emergency Management Warning Sirens will sound to alert residents of an impending tornado in our area.

TORNADO NATURAL DISASTER TECHNICAL HAZARD

3 MINUTE STEADY SIGNAL



This signal indicates that a tornado, natural disaster, or technical hazard is pending. Persons should take cover or move to a place of safety

and listen to the local radio or TV station for information on further instructions. This siren may sound more than once if deemed necessary by Emergency Management.

Do not call the police or radio station to ask for information.

People SIGHTING a tornado or funnel in this area are urged to notify the Dawson County Emergency Center at 911.

ALL-CLEAR

An all-clear bulletin will be issued by the Local Radio and TV Stations in cooperation with the National Weather Service.

Local Emergency Management will not issue an all-clear statement.

During unusual threatening weather or emergency conditions listen to the Local Radio or TV Stations for further information.

SAFETY GUIDELINES

The following are general safety guidelines for seeking shelter:

- Move to a lower level or basement.
- If no lower level is available, move to an interior room or hallway on the lowest floor and get under a sturdy piece of furniture. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside.
- Stay away from windows.
- Flying debris from tornadoes causes most deaths and injuries. Cover your head and make yourself the smallest target possible.
- Do not try to outrun a tornado in your car; instead, get out of the vehicle and seek safe shelter in a nearby building.
- If you are outside and there is no shelter immediately available, avoid trees and vehicles. Do not get under an overpass or bridge. You are safer in a low, flat location. Lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands.



Emergency warning system tests of one minute in duration are conducted the first Thursday of each month at 9:00 a.m. Sirens are designed for outdoors warning only. For optimal safety, citizens are encouraged to get weather radios using the NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) and/or SAME (Specific Area Message Encoding) standards.

CLIP AND SAVE



Scrap Tire Collection
September 25, 2009
8:00 - 5:00
Dawson County Fairgrounds
1000 Plum Creek Parkway
(Hayfields north
of fairgrounds)



- ⓪ Tire disposal only
- ⓪ No rims allowed
- ⓪ No dumping before or after September 26, 2008
- ⓪ The City reserves the right to reject deliveries
- ⓪ May close early if tonnage limit is exceeded
- ⓪ Please arrive with a count of your tires
- ⓪ No Dealers

A brief sign-in form must be completed before tires can be left at the site (available at the site).

If you have questions or need more details, contact the City office, 324-2341, or City Service Building at 324-5995.

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The Nebraska
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Environmental Quality