

City Happenings

December 2011

An eNewsletter from the City of Lexington, Nebraska



Opportunity Center Phase 3 open house



Tenants of the Dawson County Opportunity Center will hold a Christmas Open House on Thursday, December 15, 2011. It will be very simple with coffee, cider, cookies and meat & cheese. Stop by for a snack & tour of the new facilities. The host organizations include: Central Community College; Lexington Area Chamber of Commerce; Dawson Area Development; Nebraska Workforce Development; and Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services.



Stop out to see them at your convenience between 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. The Opportunity Center is located at 1501 Plum Creek Parkway (Highway 283), across the road from Tyson Fresh Meats.



EnergyWise Tip: **Engine block heaters**

Nothing can be more aggravating in the winter than jumping into your vehicle and turning the key in the ignition, only to find the engine will not start. And it is bitterly cold outside! Unfortunately, three things have happened under your hood as a result of the bone-chilling weather.

First, your gasoline will not evaporate as quickly when it is cold. Vaporization is necessary for combustion to properly occur. Second, oil becomes much thicker in cold weather. Thicker fluids take more effort to pump. Finally, batteries have problems with the cold, too. Chemical reactions inside a battery produce the electrons needed to power the engine's starter. Since these reactions are occurring more slowly, there are fewer electrons flowing to the starter. Fortunately, Andrew Freeman of Grand Forks, North Dakota came up with a remedy for these problems in the 1940s: the electric engine block heater.



But remember! If you do not pay attention to how you use this nifty device, it could end up costing you each winter more than twice its initial purchase price. You may be tempted to "plug" it in when you get home every day so your vehicle will start easily the next morning. If you are using a 500-watt heater for 12 hours per day from November through February, you can expect to pay around \$100 for this convenience. Here are a few tips for managing that cost.

Unless it is going to be colder than 10° or 15°F outside, it is usually not necessary to plug in your vehicle. The electronic fuel and ignition systems in today's vehicles automatically adjust to compensate for cold temperatures. At this point, the best way to warm your engine is to drive gently for the first couple of minutes. Do not rev your engine! That is the worst thing you can do, because you are putting a lot of strain on the

engine at the very time it is least prepared to handle it. Not to mention, it wastes fuel and releases more emissions due to inefficient combustion.

Similar concern can be expressed for starting your vehicle and allowing it to idle for five to 10 minutes before driving. You may think you are doing your car and yourself a favor by "heating" things up before you go, but that is not necessarily true. The greatest amount of wear and tear on an engine occurs when it is first started. Idling wastes gas and creates more air pollution.

Consider using a timer on your heater to reduce unnecessary usage. Research done by the Agricultural Engineering Department of the University of Saskatchewan has shown that operating a block heater for longer than four hours prior to starting a vehicle is a waste of energy. It was found that engine coolant temperature

increased by about 36°F during a four-hour period. However, continued use of the heater for an additional one to two hours only achieved an additional 3° to 5°F increase.

You may also want to consider an engine heater with reduced wattage. Finally, electric battery blankets typically draw less power than block heaters and still condition the battery to provide ample electrons that will get the engine started when it is bitter out.

Having peace-of-mind that your car will start on the coldest days should not have to cost you an arm-and-a-leg. By making some EnergyWiseSM choices this winter, you can be assured you will get to your destination and be energy efficient at the same time.



Where to take items for recycling

	aluminum	paper, newspaper, phone books	magazines, catalogs, slick paper	corrugated cardboard	plastic	plastic bags	batteries (inc. rechargeable)	antifreeze	appliances, furniture	tires	electronics	used oil	old cell phones	license plates	reusable clothes, toys, housewares, etc.	yard waste, tree limbs
High School 705 W 13th Street	■	■	■		■											
Morton Elementary 505 S Lincoln St.		■	■		■											
Pershing Elementary 1104 N Tyler St.	■	■	■		■											
Sandoz Elementary 1711 N Erie St.		■	■	■	■											
City Containers 5th & Grant Streets		■	■		■											
Walmart 200 N Frontier						■										
Goodwill 2401 Plum Creek Pkwy						■										
Community Service Bldg. 801 W Vine St.	■	■	■	■	■	■	small fee	small fee	small fee	small fee			■		■	
City Compost Site E of Hwy 283 on Walnut																■
LASWA (landfill) 9 miles N of Lexington	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■					
All Points Cooperative 305 E 3rd Street							■				■					
Barmore Drug 600 N Washington St.						■										
Parent-Child Center 1001 N Washington St.						■							■			
Dept. of Motor Vehicles 700 N Washington St.													■			

STUDENTS!
NOW is the time
to apply for summer
City jobs: concessions, lifeguards, & lawn mowing.

Go to www.cityoflex.com/index.aspx?page=40
for more information and to download a blank application form.
Send completed application to address below
or email to dburnside@cityoflex.com.

**Don't delay —
do it today!**





Library News

Lexington Public Library
907 North Washington St.
by Kathy Thomsen
Library Director



Help us celebrate the holiday season. Stop by the library and enjoy coffee, cider, or hot chocolate and cookies anytime between December 12 and December 23. While you're at the library during this time, be sure to look at the Nearly New Book Sale. The library has a wonderful



would just like to add to your own collection, stop by the library from December 12 to December 23 and browse the Nearly New Book Sale.

Check your closets, look under the bed, in the car and in those out of the way places. If you have lost or overdue books that you need to return to the library, now is the time to return them,



because the library is offering a fine-free period for the holidays. Call or stop by the library for details.

You are invited to join the Lexington Public Library at a Lexington Chamber of Commerce Appreciation Coffee on January 18 at 10:00 am. We will be celebrating the opening of our new Computer Lab, which will allow the



library to offer training for many levels of computer users. We also will be celebrating the replacement of thirteen public access computers with new computers. These computers can be used free of charge by the public to send e-mail, search for jobs, find health information, or access e-government forms. Lexington Public Library received twenty new computers through the Library Broadband Builds Nebraska Communities Project and four computers through the Gates Online Hardware Grant. Circle January 18 on your

calendar and come to the grand opening celebration; then tour the library during the day and watch demonstrations on the new computers.

The first program for 2012 offered by the Lexington Community Foundation and the Lexington Library



Memorial Fund will be **Suzi Whaples**, who will be telling stories on January 19 at 7:00 pm. Suzi, who has been telling stories for 30 years, tells stories that are poignant, encouraging and flat-out hilarious. An advocate of literacy, her stories often reflect a love of reading. Suzi is presenting at the Lexington Public Library as part of the Kearney Storytelling Festival.



Nebraska Among the Best

5th America's ten most business-friendly states (Pollina Corporate Real Estate, Inc., a national leader in corporate site selection based in Chicago 2011)

9th Top 10 States for Growth & Innovation (U.S. Chamber of Commerce Report 2011)

10th America's Top States for Business (CNBC 2011)

84th Columbus –Best Places to Live (CNN Money List of America's best small towns 2011)

Beatrice, Plattsmouth, and Wayne designated accredited National Main Street Programs. (Heritage Nebraska Main Street is an accredited state coordinating program of the National Trust Main Street Center.)

Nebraska Winery & Vineyards The Nebraska Winery and Grape Growers Association announced that 7 of its members placed in national competitions, receiving a combined 9 gold medals, 25 silver medals, and 18 bronze medals.

Source: Nebraska Department of Economic Development

Remember, it's not just
toxic to you



Find out more at www.cityoflex.com

Remember, it's not just toxic to you

Carefully store and dispose of household cleaners, chemicals and oil

Did you know that many household products are dangerous to our kids, pets, and the environment? These materials pollute our waterways if washed or dumped into storm drains or roadside ditches that lead directly to our lakes and rivers. Household cleaners, pesticides, gasoline, antifreeze, used motor oil, and other hazardous products need to be labeled, stored, and disposed of properly.

What can you do? Simple:

- Be aware of household products that can harm children, pets and the environment. Pay attention to words such as "warning" or "caution" on product labels.
- Reduce waste & save money by purchasing only materials you need.
- Keep unused products in their original containers with labels.
- Never dump hazardous products down storm drains, roadside ditches, sinks, or on the ground - take them to your local community's hazardous waste collection day.

Help keep our homes and the environment safe!



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Lexington snow and ice removal

Winter will soon be here once again. Before the first winter storm of the season, the City would like to remind citizens of the following points related to snow removal. There is also an Emergency Snow Route map on the next page, and is also found on the Maps link at the City's website.

Property owners are required to remove snow and ice from sidewalks abutting their property, within 48 hours of the snowfall. Removal of snow and ice from sidewalks not only ensures safe passage for pedestrians (including school children), but also limits liability. Someone who sustains injuries from slipping on ice might claim their injuries resulted from property owner neglect.

Please remember that snow and ice removed from your property is not to be placed into the street, instead move it to non-paved areas.

The City needs the cooperation of all citizens as we work to remove snow and ice from the streets.

Citizens are encouraged to listen to local radio stations or read the local newspaper for announcements of possible Snow Emergency situations where substantial snowfall is experienced or anticipated.



In times of a declared Snow Emergency, parking along streets in the designated Snow Emergency Route is prohibited. Commercial Areas may also be

included (see Snow Route map).

Citizens living along these routes are encouraged to comply with the prohibition and move their vehicles from the street.

In addition, during a Snow Emergency, parking in the Downtown area is prohibited.

In non-emergency times, citizens are still encouraged to move their parked vehicles off of the street in a reasonable period of time after snowfall to allow City crews access to remove the snow and ice. Information regarding the removal of snow in your area of the City can be obtained by contacting Glenn Hawks, Community Services Director, at 308-324-5995.

The City of Lexington would like to reiterate that snow and ice removal is important for vehicular traffic as well as pedestrian traffic.

Please take the time to do your part to keep our streets and sidewalks safe.



Good idea: "ICE" your cell phone

Got a second? Enter a new contact in your cell phone's address book under "ICE" - it may save your life one day.

Paramedics and emergency responders are promoting adding an **In Case of Emergency (ICE)** number in your cell phone so they may quickly be able to contact loved ones in an emergency.

Many times, emergency responders come across an injured victim and have to fumble through a cell phone to find someone to notify through a cell phone to find someone to notify and to gain health-related information about the victim. The "ICE" contact makes the process easy and quick — which could save a life.



