



# VILLAGE NEWS

March/April 2018

## Internet Purchase Exchange Location

The Olympia Fields Police Department would like to remind Residents that Olympia Fields has joined the nationwide trend of offering an "Internet Purchase Exchange Location" where online buyers and sellers can carry out their transactions. With numerous nationally published reports of Craigslist and eBay type transactions going tragically bad, safety and security has become an issue for all involved.

Often the biggest concern for online buyers and sellers is where to meet and their personal safety. The Police Department is opening up its lobby and parking lot located at 20040 Governors Highway as an "Internet Purchase Exchange Location" for buyers and sellers to safely meet and carry out their transactions. The key benefit of this project is that an ill intended buyer or seller is less likely to victimize someone at a police station.

Olympia Fields Police Department Officers are not involved in facilitating the transactions but the Department hopes to offer an "Internet Purchase Exchange Location" where users will have the

peace of mind that if needed, officers are not far away. Prior to setting up the exchange, we recommend you consider doing the following:

- Clarify all details of the transaction and get a description of who will be at the transaction and what type of vehicle they will be in.
- Bring a family or family member to the transaction.
- Conduct the transaction during daylight hours.
- If they hesitate at all about meeting at a police department, that is a strong indicator to end the deal.
- Do not reveal your home address.
- Keep a safe distance from the other person and never get in their vehicle.
- Visualize an escape route in the event you need to get out of a bad situation.
- If you feel uncomfortable about any aspect of the transaction, trust your instincts and move on.



This community service offers our residents an extra layer of security and gives our residents increased confidence that their transactions can be carried out in a safe environment.

If you have any questions regarding this program, feel free to contact the Olympia Fields Police Department at 708-503-8100.

## Be Courteous: Village Parks and Common Areas are for Everyone

The Village of Olympia Fields has some of the most beautiful and pristine parks and common areas in the entire Southland.

So when walking your dog, please be courteous and remove any deposits made by your dog. Our parks are used by residents both young and old ... we don't want to leave anyone in a poopie situation.

Working together we create a GREAT COMMUNITY!

## Delinquent Property Taxes

Each year, thousands of Cook County property owners pay their real estate property taxes late or neglect to pay them at all. We want to make you aware that the Village has been notified by Cook County Treasurer Maria Pappas, that there are 47 properties in Olympia Fields that have past due property taxes for the 2016 tax year.

There are dozens of reasons why property owners have not paid their taxes, but what we have found is that some property owners may not know that they are behind in their taxes. In some cases property owners are delinquent due to not updating their mailing address with the Cook County Treasurers Office. The next Annual Tax Sale will be held in May of 2018. If you have any questions or need assistance with paying your property taxes contact the Cook County Treasurers Office at 312-603-6202.

# Spring Weather Safety Hazards

Spring Weather Safety Hazards include tornadoes, thunderstorms, lighting and flooding.

**Thunderstorms** can produce tornadoes, strong winds, large hail and lightning.

- Practice a severe weather plan for home and work.
- Seek shelter in a sturdy structure away from windows on the lowest floor.
- If you are unable to reach a building, being inside a vehicle is safer than being outside.
- Create and practice a communications plan so you can contact loved ones.

## Tornadoes

- Winds from tornadoes can exceed 200 miles per hour.
- Flying debris is most dangerous.
- Seek a sturdy shelter in an interior room away from windows on the lowest floor and cover your head.
- Tornado Warning – tornado expected – seek shelter immediately.
- Tornado Watch – tornado possible – be prepared to take action.
- SouthCom's tornado siren warning system is connected in series with all SouthCom municipalities. If a siren is activated in Olympia Fields, the sirens for Matteson, Richton Park and Park Forest will also be activated to alert everyone in the area!



## Flooding

- Flooding can be caused by rapid snow melt, ice jams and heavy spring rains.
- More than half of all flood related deaths are vehicle related – NEVER drive into flooded roadways or around barricades.
- It only takes 12 inches of rushing water to carry away a small car!

Remember to enroll in the Village's **CodeRed** emergency alert system!

## Buckthorn – A Weed By Another Name

### Part 1 of 2

The importance of trees is to imagine our world without them. These hard-working plants clean our air and water, reduce flooding, improve property values, and better our residents' health. Unfortunately not all trees are the same; what we grow and where we grow matters.

The invasive buckthorn is the most abundant tree in the Chicago region, covering 30 percent of the area. Under the Illinois Exotic Weed Act, buckthorn cannot be sold or bought in Illinois. Buckthorn is a widespread weed throughout Olympia Fields. It may be found in natural areas – forest preserves & woodlands, in the bases of shrubs and along lot lines.



Homeowners may be reluctant to remove the invasive buckthorn because it provides screening between properties, privacy from the road and/or blocks undesirable views. However, the dense thicket it tends to form, crowd out other desirable trees, shrubs and perennials.

Buckthorn is a large shrub (more than 8 feet) or small tree (15 to 25 feet), with glossy oval leaves, easily recognized in fall, because it remains green after most other leaves have fallen.



### Why is buckthorn such a problem?

- Out-competes native plants for nutrients, light, and moisture
- Not a nutritional food source for birds
- A mild toxin, a laxative for birds and humans
- Contributes to soil erosion by shading out other plants
- Forms an impenetrable layer of vegetation
- Lacks "natural controls" like insects or disease that would curb its growth
- Dense thicket may promote the population of coyote



Methods to remove buckthorn will vary from site to site.

Information on how to remove the plant is at:

<http://www.removebadplants.com/removal-tips/>.