

# A<sup>2</sup> CITY NEWS



The Newsletter for the City of Ann Arbor, Michigan • JANUARY 2022 • Volume 16 • Number 1



## City holiday schedule

City municipal offices are closed Thursday and Friday, Dec. 30 and 31, to observe New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. Offices will reopen at 7:30 a.m. Monday, Jan. 3. Trash and recycling collections will take place as usual, without delays.

The City of Ann Arbor wishes you a happy, safe and healthy new year!

## Christmas tree free drop-off sites

The City of Ann Arbor will again provide drop-off locations for free disposal of Christmas trees, Monday, Dec. 13, 2021-Monday, Jan. 17, 2022, since trees are not collected curbside at residences. All tree stands, nails, ornaments, tinsel and plastic items must be removed from the trees and discarded. The collected evergreens are chipped into mulch or composted. Any metal, glass or plastic ornaments left on the tree can ruin the processing equipment, harm the operators, and spoil the landscaping mulch. Since wreaths and evergreen roping are generally made with wire or plastic backing, these items should be placed inside trash carts.



Four park locations will be open for Christmas tree drop offs during normal park hours, 6 a.m.–10 p.m.:

1. **Southeast Area Park** located on Ellsworth at Platt. Trees may be left at the dirt lot north of the basketball courts.
2. **West Park parking lot** off Chapin near West Huron Street.
3. **Gallup Boat Launch parking lot** (not the Gallup Livery), entrance on the southeast side of Geddes Road, East of Huron Parkway.
4. **Olson Park parking lot**, 1515 Dhu Varren Road, near Pontiac Trail.



## Monthly winter curbside compost cart service to begin

Be "green" all year round with the launch of monthly curbside collection of compost during winter months in Ann Arbor! The monthly pickups will occur the first full week of each month, taking place the weeks of Jan. 3, Feb. 7 and March 7, 2022, on the regular curbside service day. (Regular, weekly compost pickups for 2021 will resume in early April 2022.)

A few details to remember: Only compost carts will be serviced during the winter months. Paper yard bags or bundled branches will not be collected. In addition, food scraps/waste, including meat and bones, are required to be in Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI) certified or paper grocery bags to keep material from freezing to the carts, which may make them unserviceable.

To obtain a compost cart, residents can contact City of Ann Arbor Customer Service at 734.794.6320 or [customerservice@a2gov.org](mailto:customerservice@a2gov.org). Learn more about this service at <https://www.a2gov.org/news/pages/article.aspx?i=846>.

## Safety measures for in-person meetings

As some public meetings are transitioning to a hybrid meeting model, the City of Ann Arbor highly encourages the public to view and participate in public meetings remotely due to the high COVID-19 transmission rate in Washtenaw County. In order to prevent the transmission of COVID-19, protect the health of meeting attendees, minimize the possibility of disrupting the meeting, and thereby promote public participation by creating a safer meeting environment, City Council has established a regulation that all in-person attendees at meetings are required to wear a mask. The City of Ann Arbor has existing COVID-19 safety rules that are required of visitors entering city facilities. If you choose to attend a meeting in-person, the following safety rules are expected to be observed. These include:

- **Masks** — Required indoors. Masks are available at the guest services desk in the lobby of Larcom City Hall.
- **Physical distancing** — Individuals should be physically distanced from one another at least 6 feet.
- **Illness** — Anyone diagnosed with COVID-19, who has symptoms of COVID-19, or has had recent close contact with someone with COVID-19, should not attend a public meeting.

See the city meetings and events calendar online at <https://www.a2gov.org/pages/calendar.aspx>.

WEARING A MASK IS THE SAFE  
& NEIGHBORLY THING TO DO.



#AZGETHER • #MASKUPMICHIGAN



## Be kind. We take your words to heart

City of Ann Arbor employees work incredibly hard to deliver exceptional services that sustain and enhance a vibrant, safe and diverse community. While we're here to help you, we have the right to work in a safe environment. Aggressive or abusive language and behavior will not be tolerated.

Thank you for your support  
and understanding.



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## Assistance is available to help with home energy, utility costs

The State of Michigan and local energy companies are working to ensure protections are in place for customers as efforts to help slow the spread of the coronavirus impact families and businesses across the state. The Michigan Public Service Commission (<https://www.michigan.gov/mpsc>) encourages any customer struggling with their energy bills due to the impacts of COVID-19 and in need of utility bill assistance ([https://www.michigan.gov/mpsc/0,9535,7-395-93253\\_99286\\_99470-525246--\\_00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/mpsc/0,9535,7-395-93253_99286_99470-525246--_00.html)) to first contact their utility company to ask what kind of protections, funding, flexible payment options, or energy savings tools and resources are available.

You may also call 2-1-1 or go to [www.mi211.org](http://www.mi211.org) for energy assistance information or to learn about agencies that can help you with your energy bill. In addition, you can apply for state emergency relief (SER) through MI Bridges ([https://newmibridges.michigan.gov/s/isd-landing-page?language=en\\_US](https://newmibridges.michigan.gov/s/isd-landing-page?language=en_US)) or by contacting your local MDHHS office (<https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs>).

Households who qualify for SER also qualify for assistance through the Michigan Energy Assistance Program (MEAP), which provide supplemental bill payment assistance and energy self-sufficiency services. The State of Michigan has implemented changes to allow for faster processing of emergency requests and to make access to assistance benefits easier. For more information about energy assistance, visit [https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mpsc/mpsc-ca\\_homeheatinghelp\\_276964\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mpsc/mpsc-ca_homeheatinghelp_276964_7.pdf) (PDF).

See also this fact sheet to learn about some of the health risks associated with cold weather and ways to stay safe: [https://www.a2gov.org/departments/communications/Documents/Cold\\_health\\_and\\_safety\\_fact\\_sheet\\_V4\\_final\\_with\\_logo\\_2021\\_716514\\_7.pdf](https://www.a2gov.org/departments/communications/Documents/Cold_health_and_safety_fact_sheet_V4_final_with_logo_2021_716514_7.pdf) (PDF).

## 24/7 hotline for substance use treatment support starting Jan. 1

Washtenaw County residents who want substance use treatment support can call a 24/7 hotline, 734.544.3050, to receive an immediate screening, referral to a community-based provider, or guidance on how to get connected to services. The calls will be answered by licensed mental health and substance use professionals at Washtenaw County Community Mental Health (WCCMH). For all other needs, the 24/7 access line will connect callers to local, professional services. Residents can also call the access line with a broad range of questions, including how to help loved ones and how to navigate the county's substance use treatment system.

WCCMH promotes hope, recovery, resilience, quality of life and wellness by providing high quality, integrated services to eligible individuals. Because of the Public Safety and Mental Health Preservation Millage, WCCMH expanded its services to all county residents regardless of insurance, ability to pay, or crisis severity. For guidance on how to get connected to substance use treatment support and other services, call 734.544.3050 or visit <https://www.washtenaw.org/2936/Crisis-Services>.

## American Rescue Plan Act funding

Help the City of Ann Arbor spend \$24 million. The city will receive a one-time allocation of \$24 million from Congress's passage of the American Rescue Plan to fund eligible projects within the city, as an effort to recover from the impacts of COVID-19. The city seeks public input to be considered as decisions are made about how to spend the \$24 million that the city will receive. The engagement process for this initiative includes informational videos, a series of digital/Zoom Q&A sessions, and a community-input survey to let decision makers know which projects you think should be selected to receive funding. Save the date for the first Q&A session, Wednesday, Jan. 12, 6–8 p.m.; visit [a2gov.org/rescuefunds](https://a2gov.org/rescuefunds) for meeting access details, a complete schedule of meeting dates, and to subscribe for email updates. Questions? Email Kayla Coleman at [kcoleman@a2gov.org](mailto:kcoleman@a2gov.org) or call 734.794.6435.

# Quality Water Matters

The January issue of Quality Water Matters includes an overview of important projects that were completed in 2021 as well as annual data for 1,4-dioxane concentrations and PFOS and PFOA concentrations in the city's drinking water since 2017. Read QWM at [https://www.a2gov.org/departments/water-treatment/Documents/quality\\_water\\_matters\\_newsletter\\_january\\_2022.pdf](https://www.a2gov.org/departments/water-treatment/Documents/quality_water_matters_newsletter_january_2022.pdf) (PDF).



## CTN highlights

Check out CTN's wide range of programs available to watch online now!

**Around Ann Arbor** — "Tree City" 40th Anniversary: <https://youtu.be/gtixHAjxB5E>.

**City Round-up** — Tina Stephens, volunteer and outreach coordinator with NAP, gives details about this organization's rewarding volunteer opportunities: <https://youtu.be/t5grOD7f-kE>.

**CTN Holiday Poem:** <https://youtu.be/a2JSMu4ArXo>.

**FYI** — Interview with Yael Rothfeld, Thurston Elementary School music teacher and semi-finalist for the Grammy Award and Recording Academy's 2022 Music Educator Award; Hustle for Housing with the Shelter Association of Washtenaw County; and learn ways to get involved with the Natural Area Preservation (NAP): <https://youtu.be/UhXmQmZqjxk>.

**Green Room** — The guest in the Green Room this month is Dr. Mike Shriberg, executive director of the National Wildlife Federation's Great Lakes Regional Center. He will be discussing NWF's Vanishing Seasons campaign, which focuses on climate change impacts to hunting and angling: <https://youtu.be/E75dt1KuHQI>.

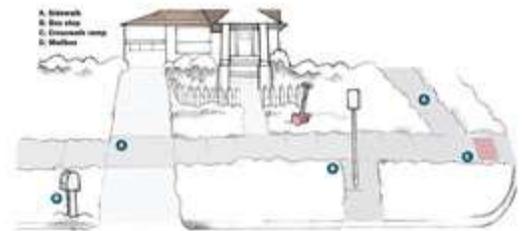
**Santa Satellite Network 2021** — Santa, with help from Mrs. Claus and some handy elves, checks his list to find out who's been naughty and who's been nice! Watch as Santa zooms from the North Pole to chat with some lucky kids: <https://youtu.be/rhE0IFp4I2E>.

**Senior Moments** — Catherine Mitchell, president of Washtenaw County Senior Leaders, discusses the role of the organization, which consists of professional individuals having or serving for a businesses or non-profit organization providing senior-related services for older adults and their families in and around our county: [https://youtu.be/YD5\\_Dwp0PjM](https://youtu.be/YD5_Dwp0PjM).

**Ward Talk** — Kathy Griswold, Ann Arbor City Councilmember from the Second Ward: [https://youtu.be/3G\\_vAFjs1Fs](https://youtu.be/3G_vAFjs1Fs).

## Snow and ice management reminders

Property owners are responsible for removing and/or treating snow/ice on sidewalks, crosswalk ramps and bus stops with concrete pads adjacent to their property. Please also be on the lookout for ways to help neighbors clear sidewalks, especially during difficult weather. Working together can create a safer and more walkable community. Let's care for one another this winter.



### Residential property

Within 24-hours, any accumulation of snow greater than 1 inch must be cleared by the owner or occupant from adjacent sidewalks, concrete bus stop walks and crosswalk ramps. Any ice accumulations within 18-hours of forming must be treated with sand, salt or other substance, to prevent it from becoming slippery. The city is not responsible for clearing mailboxes of snow and/or ice.

### Nonresidential property

All snow and ice which has accumulated prior to 6 a.m. on a sidewalk adjacent to property not zoned residential shall be removed by the owner or occupant by noon the same day. The owner or occupant of the property shall also remove snow and

ice from walks and ramps that are at bus stops or that lead to a marked or unmarked crosswalk. Provided that when ice has so formed upon any sidewalk, walk or ramp that it cannot be removed, then the owner or occupant shall keep the same effectively sprinkled with sand, salt or other suitable substance in such manner as to prevent the ice from being dangerous, until such time as it can be removed, and then it shall be promptly removed.

Find more information about sidewalk snow and ice, please check out <https://www.a2gov.org/departments/police/units/Pages/Snow-and-Ice-Removal-on-Sidewalks.aspx>.

## Free sand/salt mixture for residents

During the winter, the city provides residents with up to five gallons of a sand/salt mixture, per visit, at various locations around Ann Arbor to help treat sidewalks. Residents need to bring their own shovel and bucket as well as load material themselves from the marked piles. Sand/salt mixture is not for contractors or landscapers. Material will be available as of Monday, Nov. 29, 2021.

Locations for pickup include:

- Veterans Memorial Park
- Gallup Park
- Allmendinger Park
- 721 N. Main St.
- Buhr Park
- Burns Park
- Leslie Park

A map of the locations is available at [www.a2gov.org/snow](http://www.a2gov.org/snow) (bottom of the page).



## A2ZERO Ambassadors wanted: Apply today!

Volunteers who wish to participate in sustainability-related efforts and inspire change in our community are invited to apply for the A2ZERO Ambassadors 12-week program with the City of Ann Arbor Office of Sustainability and Innovations. Applications are being accepted now through Tuesday, Jan. 18. Apply online

at [https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=haWvSHVjcEG50enFaLuS8zpAv-KG74pMt\\_L0pOtzMJBUMVU5U0syTEZJUFZZTE0xTU5DTVFFN0YyTy4u](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=haWvSHVjcEG50enFaLuS8zpAv-KG74pMt_L0pOtzMJBUMVU5U0syTEZJUFZZTE0xTU5DTVFFN0YyTy4u).

The A2ZERO Ambassadors Program, which is modeled after the seven strategies of the ambitious A2ZERO Carbon Neutrality Plan, lasts approximately 12-weeks and covers:

- Equity and environmental justice.
- Community sustainability, climate change, and climate action.
- Energy efficiency, beneficial electrification, and renewable energy.
- Water efficiency, water quality, stormwater, and our watershed.
- Transportation and choices about moving around the community.
- How to get to a circular economy: waste reduction, composting, recycling, sustainable purchasing, and material reuse.
- Local food: how to grow it, eat it and find it.
- Personal and community resilience and emergency preparedness.
- Tying it all together: A2ZERO and You.

In addition to coursework, ambassadors are tasked with completing a sustainability-related project and committing to volunteer for at least 20 hours to inspire change in the community.

For more information, visit <https://www.a2gov.org/news/pages/article.aspx?i=845>.

## Good news

- The League of American Bicyclists has named Ann Arbor a Gold-level Bicycle Friendly Community! The Gold-level BFC award recognizes Ann Arbor's commitment to improving conditions for all people who bike through investments in bike education programs, regular bike events that promote and encourage people to choose biking, pro-bike policies, and bike infrastructure. Learn more about this honor at <https://www.a2gov.org/news/pages/article.aspx?i=843>.
- In its eighth annual study, SmartAsset has named Ann Arbor among the top 10 places to get physically fit in 2022. Data was analyzed for 284 metro areas nationwide to find the most fitness-friendly places. Learn more about A2's No. 8 ranking at <https://smartasset.com/data-studies/most-fitness-friendly-places-2022>.



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