



Fall 2010

# The Winnetka Report

Published by the Winnetka Village Council

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Village of Winnetka  
510 Green Bay Road  
www.villageofwinnetka.org

## Election Day is November 2 - Be Sure to Register to Vote Early Voting Starts Monday, October 12

The last day to register to vote at Village Hall is Tuesday, October 5. You are required to provide two pieces of identification at the time of registration. Voter registration starts again at Village Hall two days after the election.

Cook County offers "Grace Period Registration and Voting" October 6 - 26, at the Skokie Courthouse, 5600 Old Orchard Rd., Skokie, and at 69 W. Washington, Chicago, 5<sup>th</sup> floor. Grace-period voters must vote absentee, either in person immediately after registering, or by mail. **Grace-period registrants are not allowed to vote at the polls on Election Day or vote at any early voting site.**

**Early Voting** will be held October 12 - October 28. For times and locations, visit [voterinfonet.com](http://voterinfonet.com), or call the Village at 847-716-3541. State law requires early voters to provide valid identification,

such as a current driver's license, state ID card or another government-issued photo ID.

**Absentee Voting by Mail:** Applications can be downloaded from the web at [voterinfonet.com](http://voterinfonet.com). You may also get an application by visiting the second floor of Village Hall or by calling 847-716-3541.

**In-Person Absentee Voting:** You may vote absentee in person at the Skokie Courthouse or the Clerk's downtown office from October 29 - November 1. Hours are 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM Friday & Monday; and 9 AM to noon on the weekend.

The polls are open from 6 AM to 7 PM on Tuesday, November 2, for those wishing to vote on Election Day. To find your polling place, visit the Cook County Clerk's website at [voterinfonet.com](http://voterinfonet.com), or call the Village at 716-3541.

## Curbside Leaf Collection Runs October 18 - November 29

### PLACE LEAVES ON PARKWAY BY 7:00 AM



The Village asks residents to rake leaves onto the parkway just **inside** the edge of the curb for collection.

**PLEASE DO NOT rake leaves into the streets**, as doing so creates a hazard, since leaves become very slippery when wet and also clog storm sewers and may contribute to flooded streets and yards. A long, low row is better than a single large pile of leaves, as it makes collection more efficient and limits the blowing of leaves into the street or back onto your yard.

It is not necessary for residents to schedule the curbside leaf collection service. Crews will continuously collect all leaves placed at the curbside weekdays between 7AM and 3:30 PM starting on the Northwest edge of Winnetka and proceeding in a counterclockwise fashion.

Leaf collection begins on the west side of Scott Street, and crews then work their way south between Green Bay Road and the Forest Preserves until they reach the Village's southern limits.

Crews will then cross over Green Bay Rd. and work their way north from the southeast edge of Winnetka until they reach the Village's northern limits – thus completing a full circuit.

The Village's goal is to complete as many rounds as possible; however, when extra-large quantities are piled on the parkways, or during periods of inclement weather and weeks that include holidays, one circuit may take 5 - 7 working days. Each circuit

will be continued until complete. In total, crews will make 8 - 10 complete circuits during the collection period.

#### **Please follow these guidelines for safe & efficient service:**

Rake leaves into a row(s) in the parkway near the curb - **NOT IN THE STREET** - to reduce hazards and enable crews to move more quickly and collect leaves more efficiently.

Remove stones, litter, branches or other landscape debris. Piles containing these items will not be collected as they can damage our equipment and injure our employees!

#### **DO NOT:**

- Place leaves in front of storm drains or utility covers.
- Pile leaves around cars, boulders, fire hydrants, trees or posts.
- Park on top or close to the leaf piles.
- Rake to alleys or service roads.

**Leaf piles that are mixed with grass trimmings, branches, brush or other yard waste must be bagged and collected as part of the regular curbside yard waste program and will not be collected through regular leaf service.**

After November 29, all yard wastes are to be placed in Winnetka yard waste bags designated for yard waste only, which may be purchased at Village Hall for \$2.00. The bags should weigh no more than 70 pounds each when filled and will be collected as part of the regular curbside yard waste program.



## FIND OUT WHY THE VILLAGE'S UNFUNDED PENSION

In the fall of 2009, the Village explained how pension fund assets / reserves declined due to unprecedented losses in the capital markets, low asset returns, and escalating costs due to pension sweeteners authorized by the Illinois General Assembly. It was noted that the unfunded pension liability had grown from \$7.87 million in 2000 to \$31.59 million in 2009. Since public employees' contributions are capped by the General Assembly, the fiscal burden of pension shortfalls is paid by local taxpayers and utility ratepayers.

The Actuaries estimate the unfunded pension liability is still about \$32.26 million as of 3/31/2010, which places the overall funding ratio for the Village's three pension plans at 66%, up 3% from last year's 63% figure. As noted last year, the Village has consistently followed

professional actuarial recommendations and has contributed the required amount.

It should be noted that the Police and Fire Fighter pension funds have reduced their assumed earnings rate from 7.0% to 6.0% within the last 10 years. This assumed earnings rate reduction accounts for \$6.44 million of the increase in the unfunded pension liability over the ten year period.

### What pensions are available to Village employees?

As required by State law, all municipal employees (police, fire, and all other personnel) are covered by three separate pension programs: Police pension, Fire Fighters pension, and the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF). Police officers and fire fighters do not receive social security benefits, but if hired

after the mid-1980's, they are covered by Medicare. All other personnel are covered by both Social Security and Medicare.

### How are pensions funded?

The funding for Village employee pensions comes from three sources – investment returns, Village contributions (primarily property taxes), and employee contributions. All three plans are mandated by State law, which also sets the employee contribution rates. Thus, any funding shortfall must be covered with Village revenues and taxpayer contributions. One hundred percent of the cost of the Police and Fire Fighter pensions is included in your property tax bill. The Village's share for the IMRF pension is paid by a combination of property taxes and utility fees.

### Below is a summary of the costs paid by the Village for employee pensions:

	2010	2011	Increase (\$)	Increase (%)
Police	\$ 1,006,480	\$1,031,000	\$ 24,520	2.4%
Firefighter	936,668	1,002,000	65,332	7.0%
Other (IMRF & SS)	1,604,000	1,833,000	29,000	14.3%
Total	\$ 3,547,148	\$ 3,866,000	\$318,852	9.0%

### On a per employee basis, the average pension costs to the Village are as follows:

	2010		2011	
	# EE's	Amount	#EE's	Amount
Police Officer	28	\$35,946	27	\$ 38,185 (Excludes Medicare)
Fire Fighter	24	39,028	24	41,750 (Excludes Medicare)
Other Employees	110	14,581	105	17,457 (Includes Social Security and excludes Medicare)
Total / Average	162	21,896	156	24,782

### As a percent of payroll, Winnetkans pay the following pension costs for their Village employees:

	Police Officers	Fire Fighters	IMRF Employees
Pension	42.09%	42.12%	14.10%
Social Security / Medicare	1.45%	1.45%	7.65%
Village Total	43.54%	43.57%	21.75%

### As required by law, the employee's pension payments as a percent of payroll are:

	Police Officers	Fire Fighters	IMRF Employees
Pension	9.910 %	9.445 %	4.500 %
Social Security / Medicare	1.450 %	1.450 %	7.650 %
Employee Total	11.360 %	10.895 %	12.150 %



## OBLIGATIONS HAVE INCREASED 264 % IN 10 YEARS

### Has the Village made its actuarially required pension payments?

Yes. For the last ten years, the Village has made its required accounting and legal pension payments as determined by professional actuaries. Despite making these pension payments, **the Village's unfunded pension liabilities have increased by 264% in ten years:**

	<b>FY ending 2001</b>	<b>FY ending 2010</b>	<b>Increase (\$)</b>	<b>Increase (%)</b>
Police Pension	\$ 500,000	\$10,730,000	\$10,230,000	1,946%
Firefighter Pension	2,080,000	11,080,000	9,000,000	333%
IMRF	4,380,000	10,450,000	6,070,000	39%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 6,960,000</b>	<b>\$32,260,000</b>	<b>\$25,300,000</b>	<b>264%</b>

The above unfunded pension liabilities for the police and fire pensions are based on 3/31/2010 asset values and estimated pension liabilities. The IMRF data is on a calendar year basis as of 12/31/2009.

Unlike the State of Illinois and some governmental units, Winnetka has not borrowed any amounts to pay its pension costs. Borrowing money to make pension payments is generally not considered to be fiscally responsible.

### How has the recent downturn in the economy impacted public employee pensions?

Because of poor investment returns in the capital markets, the Village has been required to increase pension contributions. However, because there was a significant rebound in investment values for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2010, the funding increase is projected to be smaller than in recent years for the police and firefighter pensions. Because of the two year time lag in how IMRF rates are set, the 2011 IMRF amount reflects investment losses.

### What are some of the pension benefits?

Municipal employees receive defined pension benefits that are earned by years of service and compensation. At age 50 and 20 years of service, police officers and fire fighters can retire and receive a pension of 50% of their final pay. At age 50 and 30 years of service, police and firefighters can retire and

receive a full pension of 75% of their final pay. A significant cost driver is that the pension payments are increased by 3% compounded annually. If a retiree precedes his/her spouse in death, the spouse receives 100% of the employee's pension benefits until the spouse passes away.

At age 60 and 20 years of service, all other Village personnel (IMRF) can retire and receive a pension of 35% of pay, based on the average salary for the last four years of employment. At age 60 and 40 years of service, IMRF employees can retire and receive a full pension of 75% of pay, based on the average salary for the last four years of employment. The pension payments are increased by 3% per year which is not compounded annually. If a retiree precedes his/her spouse in death, the spouse receives 50% of the employee's pension benefits until the spouse passes away.

### Have pension benefits been increased?

Pension benefits for police officers and fire fighters have been significantly enhanced three times in the last 11 years. No significant pension enhancements have been authorized for IMRF employees for decades.

In April 2010, the State passed new legislation (Public Act 96-0889) that will reduce the IMRF pension cost for new hires by about 40%. This was accomplished by slowing the rate at which

pension benefits are earned, lengthening the number of years of earnings used to calculate pension benefits, and capping pension payments. This will reduce the pension cost for new hires but will not change the existing liability for current employees.

There was similar legislation proposed to reduce the cost of Police and Fire Fighter pensions for new hires. However, this legislation was not passed by the State legislature.

### Who determines the benefits for pension programs?

The General Assembly determines the benefits for pension programs, not your local elected officials. Only elected State Representatives can make changes.

### What can you do to help us control pension costs?

You can contact your State Senator and Representative and ask them to stop increasing pension benefits and to support efforts for meaningful pension reform as outlined in the Village Council Resolution, adopted on May 19, 2009 and posted on the Village website: [villageofwinnetka.org](http://villageofwinnetka.org).

You can also support the efforts of your Village Council in educating the public and seeking ways to reduce pension costs in the future. Only in this manner can we make changes that result in a sustainable pension system in the future.

### Below is the contact information for your state elected officials:

State Senator Jeffrey Schoenberg  
820 Davis Street, Ste. 102  
Evanston, IL 60201

State Rep. Edward Maloney (18th)  
820 Davis Street, Ste. 103  
Evanston, IL 60201

State Rep. Elizabeth Coulson (17th)  
3801 W. Lake Ave.  
Glenview, IL 60025



## Elm Street Train Station Update

The Metra reconstruction and rehabilitation of the Elm Street Train Station is moving on! The project lost some time and momentum this summer due to a construction workers strike. Aggressive work schedules were set in motion upon settlement of the strike to keep the project on track for a planned completion in 2010. The readjusted timeline anticipates a September unveiling of the first phase of the project, which includes the new ticket office, north stairs, platforms and trackside warming shelter.

Metra expects a December completion of the second phase of the project, which includes the pedestrian bridge, south platforms, stairs and elevators.

Handicapped access during the construction is available at the Glencoe, Kenilworth and Wilmette Stations.

## Village Hall Rehabilitation Begins

The Village Council has awarded contracts to renovate the exterior of Winnetka's historic Village Hall. Mortenson Roofing will remove the existing clay-tile roof, salvage re-usable tiles, install a new underlayment system, and then reinstall a mixture of salvaged and new tiles. They will also make repairs



to the building's clock tower. Mortenson is known for its skilled craftsmen and attention to detail. All of their professional roofers have completed at least a 4-year apprenticeship for their specialty.

GC Masonry and Construction will repair, clean, and tuckpoint the masonry exterior of the building. Although scaffolding will be erected around the building during construction, Village Hall will remain open during construction, which is expected to last into December.

These two projects are part of a larger vision to renovate and restore the Village Hall, which was built in 1925, and is a designated local landmark.

The remainder of the work, which is expected to go to bid in the next few months, includes: i) replacement of the antiquated HVAC system; ii) installation of a fire sprinkler system; iii) window restoration and repair; iv) AV and technology upgrades and architectural restoration in the Council Chambers; v) architectural restoration of the interior lobby and staircase; and vi) reconfiguring and rehabbing the Finance Department office space on the first floor. The Village will be seeking L.E.E.D. certification for this portion of the Village Hall Renovation. Approximately \$3.3 million has been programmed for the renovation.

## No Political Signs on Public Property

The Village reminds residents that political signs are only permitted on residents' own property, using the following rules:

No individual sign may exceed eight square feet in area;

All signs should be located behind the public sidewalk, not on the parkway;

Signs may not be placed on other public property such as parks, schools or other institutions;

Signs shall be removed within seven days after the election.

Signs which are inadvertently displayed by residents between the curb and sidewalk may be relocated by Village staff to a conforming location behind the sidewalk (Village staff does NOT confiscate signs inadvertently displayed on the parkway).

Contact Brian Norkus in the Community Development Department with questions at 716-3522, or [bnorkus@winnetka.org](mailto:bnorkus@winnetka.org)

## Forum on Intergovernmental Cooperation November 1, 7:30PM at Village Hall

Mark your calendars for an intergovernmental forum scheduled for Monday, November 1<sup>st</sup> at 7:30 p.m. at Village Hall.



The Village President and Village Manager have invited the elected presidents and chief administrative officers of the Winnetka Park District, the Winnetka-Northfield Library District, School District 36, New Trier High School and New Trier Township to participate in a public discussion exploring ways the various public bodies can control operational costs by sharing common resources or acting jointly.

The forum is the next step in a public discussion initiated by the Village Council at its September 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. Everyone is encouraged to go to the Village's web site at [villageofwinnetka.org](http://villageofwinnetka.org) to watch the video from that meeting and to review the agenda materials, which provide a framework for the discussions and include a 10-page listing of the Village's many cooperative programs with other governmental bodies.

The various public bodies that serve Winnetka rarely have the opportunity to hold joint informational meetings. We hope to see you at this important meeting as we launch an ongoing discussion on maximizing the use of your tax dollars and the public resources they fund.



## 2010 Fall Tree Planting

The Village is currently taking requests for the Fall Parkway and Private Tree-Planting Program. Under this program, various species of 2 1/2-inch diameter trees are planted in suitable parkway areas, at no cost to residents. Larger diameter sizes are available, but adjacent homeowners are responsible for the cost difference. The deadline for planting requests is October 15, 2010. For more information contact the Village Forester at 716-3535, [jstier@winnetka.org](mailto:jstier@winnetka.org).

## Get Your Hands on the Library's Future

What is the library to you? The Winnetka-Northfield Public Library District's Strategic Planning Committee has commissioned a community-wide survey to find out what you think of the library and what you want it to look like in the future. Your opinion on library services, facilities, and materials will be used to develop the library's next strategic plan. In October, the library will be mailing a survey to every household in the district. Please fill out the survey and return it to the library, either online or by mail. You can help write the future of the Winnetka-Northfield Public Library District!

**Raise Your Hand.** Do you have questions about the library's survey? Want to learn more about the library's strategic planning process? Library Board President Bob Sanfilippo and Library Director David Seleb invite you to join them at two community meetings, where they will discuss the survey process and answer your questions. Bring your questions and plan to attend one of two meetings in the Lloyd Room of the Winnetka Library, 768 Oak St., on either Saturday, October 2, at 9:30 AM or Tuesday, October 12 at 7:00 PM.

## Buildings Research Project

The Village Council has authorized the Landmark Preservation Commission to undertake a Buildings Research Project this fall. The research will be conducted for free by graduate students from Loyola University, in order to create a report that includes the following information for each building in Winnetka: i) Date built; ii) Building type; iii) Building style; iv) Architect; v) Builder; vi) Whether or not the building has been torn down; and vii) A photograph.

The final report will be made accessible to the public, since the information is public record. There will be no determination of historical integrity or potential historical significance; the report is simply a compilation of information into a useful format that can be used by a wide array of users, including potential homebuyers, the Historical Society, the BCDC, and the Plan Commission.

### TRICK OR TREAT HOURS

On Halloween children should "trick or treat" only between the hours of 3 PM & 7 PM on Sunday, October 31.

#### Homeowners:

Please leave a front light on so that children will know that they are welcome to visit.

#### Motorists:

Watch for children out "trick or treating."



## Fire & Police Dept. Open House

Saturday, October 9  
10AM -- 2PM

The Winnetka Fire and Police Departments join in inviting all Winnetka and Kenilworth residents to attend their 2010 Open House.

Visitors to the Fire House will have an opportunity to learn about this year's Fire Prevention Week theme, "BEEP, BEEP, BEEP: Smoke Alarms: A Sound You Can Live With." Fire Apparatus and equipment will be on display for the enjoyment of youngsters, and firefighters will also educate them about home fire safety.



*Families enjoy a display of firefighting equipment at last year's Open House.*

Activities at the Police Department will include tours of the Police Communications Center, Lockup, Firearms Range, and Fitness Center, as well as a display of various Police vehicles and equipment. This will be a great opportunity for children to meet and talk with a Police Officer and to take home some gifts to remember the day.



*Cmdr. James Christensen and a Winnetka Police patrol vehicle*



# Winnetka, IMEA and the Prairie State Power Plant

## The Facts Behind the News Stories

Winnetka is one of 33 municipal members and purchasers of wholesale power from the Illinois Municipal Electric Agency (IMEA). Recent media reports have implied that IMEA's wholesale costs would rise significantly due solely to IMEA's participation in the Prairie State power plant project in downstate Washington County. That implication is grossly misleading.

The power plant under construction at the Prairie State Energy Campus is a 1,600 megawatt state-of-the-art plant that will deliver electricity to more than 2.5 million customers in seven states through its public power owners. However, Prairie State will provide only 20% of the total capacity IMEA projects it will need in 2013. The media reports overlook this key fact by implying that IMEA's projection of cost changes from 2007 to 2013 are solely due to the Prairie State Project. The article also leaves significant misimpressions, including an assertion that there are direct costs to Winnetka as a result of IMEA's participation in the Prairie State Energy Campus.

IMEA's share of the Prairie State project costs is not a debt of the Village of Winnetka. The only payments Winnetka makes to IMEA are payments for the purchase of electricity from IMEA pursuant to purchase power agreements. Those agreements are paid through revenues from Winnetka's sale of electricity. No tax dollars are pledged, and no tax dollars will be spent.

Further, the impact of the Prairie State costs on Winnetka's electric rates needs to be placed into two other important contexts. First, because Winnetka buys all its power from IMEA, it's necessary to look at all

of the costs that IMEA factors into its wholesale prices. There have been many changes in the cost of IMEA's power supply portfolio over the past several years, which include:

- replacing IMEA's expiring lower cost power supply contracts with new contracts based on current market rates;
- IMEA's new 70 megawatt wind energy purchase;
- IMEA's new energy efficiency program; and
- all other cost increases related to IMEA's entire power supply portfolio, such as increased fuel costs.

Second, Winnetka's costs of purchasing power from IMEA are less than half of the operating costs of Winnetka's electric utility.

All electric utilities, Winnetka's included, need to provide a reliable source of base load power, meaning power for the normal, ongoing needs of its customers. Prairie State is

still the lowest cost long-term base load source of power and energy. Technologies such as those that gasify coal cost up to twice that of Prairie State, and that cost does not include the cost of carbon capture and sequestration. There is presently no nuclear generation available and the cost of nuclear power is projected to be more than double that of Prairie State. And despite what many of us would desire, it is not currently possible to satisfy the energy needs of Illinois (or even the Village itself) using only renewables. The need for electricity is always present, including those days when the sun isn't shining and the wind isn't blowing.

In summary, Prairie State is just one piece of IMEA's diversified power supply portfolio, which includes wind generation and energy efficiency, and is designed to provide long-term, reliable, stably-priced, environmentally responsible power to IMEA's municipal members.





The many elected and appointed volunteers who donate their time and energy to making Winnetka a great place to live and work deserve a special

**“THANK YOU!”**

By serving on Village boards, commissions and committees your fellow Winnetkans help to insure that our community’s charm and beauty are preserved.

The residents of Winnetka owe them a debt of gratitude for their willingness to give so generously of their own time and energy.

## Winnetka Boards & Committees

### Village President

Jessica B. Tucker

### Board of Trustees

Gene Greable  
Bill Johnson  
Linda Pedian  
King Poor  
Jennifer Spinney  
Chris Rintz

### Business Community Development Commission

Cicely Michalak, Chair  
Arthur Braun  
Terry Dason, Chamber Rep.  
Paul Dunn  
Dean Egerter  
Jason Harris  
John Iberle, PC Rep.  
Bill Johnson, Council Rep.  
Peggy Swartchild

### Design Review Board

Gary Frank, Chair  
Robert Dearborn  
Joan Evanich  
Brooke Kelly  
Charles Page  
Janet Shen  
John Swierk

### Environmental & Forestry Commission

Debbie Ross, Chair  
Jan Bawden  
John Canfield  
Chuck Dowding  
Ed Harney  
Scott Madlener  
King Poor, Council Rep.  
Steve Ryan  
Katie Stevens  
Lawson Whitesides

### Landmark Preservation Commission

Louise Holland, Chair  
Hugh Brower  
Susan Curry  
Marilyn Garcia  
Laura Good  
Anne Grubb  
George Pappas

### Plan Commission

Becky Hurley, Chair  
Jan Bawden, EFC Rep.  
John DiCola, Park Board Rep.  
Louise Holland, LPC Rep.  
John Iberle  
John Jansson, Library Board Rep.  
Joni Johnson, ZBA Rep.

Mark Kurensky  
Charles Page, DRB Rep.  
Midge Powell  
Chris Rintz, Village Council Rep.  
Susan Whitcomb, School Board Rep.  
Lawson Whitesides

### Zoning Board of Appeals

Joe Adams, Chair  
Litt Clark  
Hal Francke  
Mary Hickey  
Joni Johnson  
Carl Lane  
Scott Myers

### Board of Fire and Police Commissioners

Stephen Presser, Chair  
Mark Crane  
Michael Duhl

### Police Pension Board

Richard Glenn  
John O'Malley

### Fire Pension Board

David Bender  
Mark Fuller



# The Winnetka Report

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Village of Winnetka  
510 Green Bay Road  
Winnetka, Illinois 60093

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**Postal Customer**  
**Winnetka, Illinois 60093**

### Village Telephone Numbers

<b>Police/Fire/Paramedics Emergency</b>	<b>911</b>
Police (Non-Emergency)	847.501.6034
Fire (Non-Emergency)	847.501.6029
Electric or Water Outages	847.501.2531
Refuse and Recycling Collection	847.716.3568
Manager/Finance Offices	847.501.6000
Public Works Office	847.716.3568
Water & Electric Office	847.716.3558
Water & Electric Billing Services	847.446.9550
Community Development Department	847.716.3576

### Winnetka Village Council

<b>Village President</b>	
Jessica Tucker	847.441.9561
<b>Village Trustees</b>	
Gene Greable	847.446.6356
Bill Johnson	847.784.9177
Linda Pedian	847.446.2291
King Poor	847.441.4011
Chris Rintz	847.441.5718
Jennifer Spinney	847.446.7945

## Residential Holiday Refuse and Recycling Schedule

**If a holiday falls on Monday - both Monday and Tuesday collections occur *one day later*.**

**If a holiday falls on Tuesday - Tuesday collection occurs *one day later*.**

**If a holiday falls on a Thursday - Thursday collection occurs *one day earlier*.**

**If a holiday falls on Friday - both Thursday and Friday collections occur *one day earlier*.**

## Thanksgiving 2010 – Week of Nov. 21 – 27

**Monday & Tuesday will be as usual**

**Thursday's pickups will be on Wednesday**

**Friday will be as usual.**

