



ELGIN

THE CITY IN THE SUBURBS

May-June
City of Elgin
2021 Newsletter

Boletín en Español: Cada número del boletín está disponible en español en línea en cityofelgin.org/boletin.



Explore Elgin Like a Visitor

Column written by Madison Bishop, Marketing & Experience Specialist for the Explore Elgin Area tourism bureau.

Spend your weekend getting to know your community from the visitors' point of view. Start your trip with the basics by checking into where you will be staying. Hotels in the area sometimes offer deals and specials to summer travelers. All deals can be found at ExploreElginArea.com/deals-offers.

Get the day rolling by exploring some exhibits at one of the three museums in Elgin. The Elgin History Museum and the Elgin Public Museum feature interactive exhibits that are great for kids. Near the Elgin Public Museum you'll find Lords Park—a scenic park known for its beautiful pavilion and zoo where you can visit the bison. Pay a visit to the Elgin Fire Barn No.5 Museum—the fifth original fire barn in Elgin which initially housed horses and a firefighting carriage. Built in 1903, this historically recognized landmark now houses the city's fire-related collection of memorabilia, including trucks. Gail Borden Public Library also features exhibits throughout the year. The exhibits here are temporary, so check to see if there's one on display ahead of time. Otherwise, there are still a number of kid-oriented events and programs regularly scheduled.

If you are looking for an active day, you'll love spending time on the Fox River Trail. Walk the trail and enjoy the scenery or jump on your bikes and ride over 40 miles of trail. You can also head over to Festival Park located near the riverfront where kids can explore the unique, towering playground. This park is also used for events, like open-air concerts. But most notable, it hosts movies in the park, which is organized by Elgin Parks and Recreation. Did you know the City of Elgin has over 70 parks and open spaces for you to explore? Plan your weekend adventure at www.ExploreElginArea.com.

Elgin Public Museum



Elgin Cultural Arts Commission Brings Public Art to Storm Drains

The Elgin Cultural Arts Commission (ECAC) has a new program that brings public art to a new canvas—storm drains. Art featuring images and messages to raise awareness about storm water and the importance of storm drains will be applied to up to 40 storm drains citywide.



Image from Raleigh, NC

Public Art Installations

Selected artwork is used to create templates for residents and businesses to install the public art. Elgin residents and businesses interested in having a storm drain painted in their neighborhood can apply online at cityofelgin.org/drainart. There is no cost to the resident or business for this program. The ECAC will provide the template, paint, supplies and instructions on the installation. If the applicant is unable to facilitate the installation, assistance can be provided. The City will prep each selected storm drain to ensure the artwork surface is optimal for the installation. The painted storm drains will be listed on the City's online public art map at cityofelgin.org/publicart. Neighborhood applications will be accepted on a rolling basis and installations will begin this summer.

Attention Artists

Artist applications opened this spring and will be accepted on a rolling basis. Selected artists will receive an honorarium of up to \$500. Artists interested in having their artwork applied to storm drains can complete the application at cityofelgin.org/drainart.



Be Part of the Solution to Storm Water Pollution

As stormwater flows over driveways, lawns and sidewalks, it picks up debris, chemicals, dirt and other pollutants. Stormwater can flow into a storm sewer system or directly to a lake, stream, river or wetland. By practicing healthy household habits, homeowners can keep common pollutants like pesticides, pet waste, grass clippings and automotive fluids off the ground and out of stormwater.

Healthy Household Habits

- Use pesticides and fertilizers sparingly and avoid application just before rainfall.
- Grow native plants and grasses that require less water, fertilizer and pesticides.
- Sweep yard debris, rather than hosing areas down and compost or recycle yard waste when possible.
- Vegetate bare spots in your yard to prevent soil erosion.
- Water during the cool times of the day, and don't let water run off into the storm drain.
- Cover piles of unused dirt and mulch to prevent blowing or washing off your yard.

Where Does Stormwater Go?



Storm sewers empty directly into our creeks, channels, streams and rivers, unlike the sanitary sewer system, which carries wastewater from your indoor drains to a wastewater treatment plant. Stop and think before you pour anything into the gutter or down the drain.

Dumping anything in the storm sewer system is illegal and can harm the environment. To illustrate potential damage, when oil is released into water, it does not blend with water. Oil spreads out into a slick less than 0.01mm thick. one quart of motor oil can make a slick over 1000 square feet in area, affecting birds and fish.

Help ensure the safety and enjoyment of our environment by keeping the storm sewer system free from harmful pollutants.

Help Keep Your Workplace & Our Water Resources Safe

The storm drain system is designed to collect stormwater—both rain and snow melt—and release it directly to the Fox River or one of its tributaries without treatment. Pollutants may be transported in stormwater as rain and snowmelt flow across surfaces such as lawns, roads and parking lots, picking up chemicals and other pollutants before entering the storm drain system. These pollutants degrade the quality of our community's water resources, so care must be taken to keep stormwater runoff clean.

The following list of Best Management Practices (BMPs) is applicable to many businesses and workplaces. Implementing these BMPs and other good housekeeping practices will help ensure a safe workplace and help protect our water resources.

Cleaners and Solvents

- Follow the manufacturer's directions for safe use.
- Collect wastes for recycling or proper disposal. Do not dump chemicals into the storm drain system.
- Use non-toxic substitutes for chemicals whenever possible.



Trash

- Cover all dumpsters and replace damaged lids.
- Keep the area around the dumpsters free of trash.
- Ensure that trash is properly bagged before placing it in the dumpster.



Spills

- Clean up spills immediately.
- Use absorbent materials to clean spills, rather than hosing down the area.
- Ensure that loading/unloading, fueling and grease removal operations are observed by personnel familiar with proper spill response procedures.
- Keep absorbent materials and other spill response equipment on hand.



Material Storage

- Close and secure any opened containers.
- Store all containers under cover to shield them from rain and snow.
- Use secondary containment measures for storage areas.





Stay Informed on City Construction Projects



The City of Elgin is committed to investing your tax dollars in a manner that will benefit current residents and future generations. Elgin prioritizes the maintenance of City infrastructure to help accomplish this goal.

There are many projects happening in Elgin this year, including neighborhood street resurfacing, combined sewer separation, LED street light retrofitting and intersection reconstruction. There are many ways to stay informed on projects.



cityofelgin.org/construction



Email Updates



elgin311@cityofelgin.org



[/cityofelgin](https://www.facebook.com/cityofelgin)



Elgin mobile app



[@ElginRoadAlerts](https://twitter.com/ElginRoadAlerts)

Construction: Frequently Asked Questions



When will projects begin & end?

Some projects are already underway, and others are beginning soon. Projects are expected to be complete in November. Individual project plans and details are available at cityofelgin.org/construction.



Are road closures expected?

If a road closure is necessary, a detour will be determined, likely on an adjacent residential street. Streets may be reduced to one lane or closed temporarily. Plan for extra travel time in morning and evening commutes to account for any delays.



Will I be able to park along the street during construction?

Parking restrictions will be implemented during construction. Vehicles will be restricted from on-street parking during construction work to allow equipment to maneuver.



If there is utility work on my street, how will my water service be affected?

Water service loss is expected during water main connections, disconnections and transfers to a new water main. Water service loss is usually less than 4 hours, but can vary. Unfortunately, it is unavoidable to install a new water main without experiencing water service loss. Affected residents will receive a door hanger prior to water service disruption.



What are construction hours?

Monday-Saturday 7 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Sunday 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.



Will I lose access to my driveway during construction?

If you live on a street with road work, there may be periods of time that your driveway will be inaccessible, specifically if the project involves curb, gutter and driveway apron removal and replacement. All property owners in project areas will receive notice and project information prior to construction.



Will my trash or recycling service be impacted by construction?

Often, waste trucks will service construction routes first thing in the morning, as to not interrupt project work. If you live in a construction area, it is especially important to have your bins out before 6:00 a.m. on your scheduled collection day.



If I have a lead service line, will I need to replace my private portion of the service line?

When a construction project with underground street work occurs, the City notifies the property owner of their options when it comes to replacing the private portion of the lead water service line. More information is available at cityofelgin.org/leadserviceinfo.



Saving Energy Saves Money and Helps the Environment

Staying home more this past year may have made you more aware of your energy usage. The more you are home, the more energy you use and the higher your bills are. There are many ways to reduce your energy usage at home. You can implement small lifestyle changes like taking shorter showers and washing clothes in cold water as much as possible. You can also make some changes to your household, like replacing appliances with more energy efficient ones, installing a smart thermostat and fixing leaking faucets. Some actions to reduce energy can be costly upfront, but save you money over time. Local utility companies, ComEd and Nicor, offer free resources to residents wishing to reduce their energy use. They offer free home energy assessments as well as energy-saving kits and products to help you achieve your goals.

Free Energy-Saving Products with a Home Energy Assessment from ComEd

ComEd has partnered with local natural gas utilities to offer free in-person or virtual home energy assessments for single-family homes, two-flats, condos, and townhomes. Renters in these building types are eligible, with permission from their landlord. ComEd also offers multi-family building energy assessments for landlords or property managers. Tenants who live in these buildings are encouraged to let their landlords or property managers know about this energy-saving program.

The assessment includes a free inspection to determine energy-saving opportunities, a personalized assessment report, and free energy-saving products. The free products include LED bulbs, energy-efficient showerheads and aerators, up to 6 feet of hot water pipe insulation, and programmable thermostats. Smart thermostats are available for purchase at a discount. ComEd energy advisors will install the products at no cost during in-home assessments and will send the customer products during virtual assessments.

Free Assessments and Kits from Nicor

Nicor's free home assessment includes installation of energy-saving products and a comprehensive report of efficiency recommendations tailored to your home. You can also order free water-saving and weatherization kits to be delivered to your door so that you can see even more savings.

Free Water-Saving Kit

- 1 or 2 low-flow showerheads
- 1 or 2 bathroom faucet aerators
- 1 dual-spray kitchen faucet aerator
- Shower timer
- Plumber's tape

Free Weatherization Kit

**Up to two per customer*

- 12-pack of outlet and switch foam gasket
- 17' roll of closed cell foam tape weatherstripping
- 17' roll of V-seal type weatherstripping
- Self-adhesive door sweep
- 30' roll of rope caulk



For more information and to schedule your assessment, visit nicorgas.com/waystosave.



Customers will also receive a free personalized report, which shows the estimated annual savings from the products that were installed and additional ways that residents can save money.

For more details, go to the ComEd Energy Assessments webpage at comed.com/waystosave.

To schedule an assessment, call 855-433-2700.

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