

Mayor's Update



Unfortunately 18 percent of the recycling in our green bins is contaminated. As a result, our waste hauler is fining us, and it has cost us \$65,611 this year.

That's why we applied for the state grant to run an aggressive educational initiative to help all of us understand what should go into our green bins and what shouldn't.

Newton inspectors have checked 14,604 recycling bins over the past nine weeks. Preliminary results show people along the three routes (of 25 across Newton) randomly selected for the program are learning and improving.

The inspectors first gave a warning if they found the wrong items in the cart along with specific feedback on what the problem was.

If, after the warning the bin was found to again contain contamination, it was not collected that week. A tag indicating the issue was left on the handles, and follow-up letters were sent. Once the issue was corrected, bins were collected the following week.

During the first week, 391 warnings were given. Last week, during the final week of the program, just 62 warnings were written.

What's our biggest mistake? Plastic bags! But, we improved. During the first week, 237 of the warnings (or 61 percent) were issued for plastic bags. Last week, just 30 plastic bag warnings (48 percent) were written.

Bravo to Director of Environmental Affairs Waneta Trabert and Recycling Administrative Assistant Conni Melia who walked these routes and checked the bins no matter the weather.

What can and cannot be recycled curbside? Click [here](#).

Here are some post-holiday recycling tips:

- Ribbon = trash
- Plain colored wrapping paper = recycling
- Foil/shiny/sparkling wrapping paper = trash
- Gift boxes = recycling
- Packaging peanuts and foam wrap = trash
- Any wrappers from candy and chips or clear plastic wrappers from items like microwave popcorn = trash

(We'll be dedicating the Bullough's Pond Overlook under portable lights tonight, Wednesday, Dec. 19, at 6:30 p.m. Kudos to the Bullough's Pond Association, our Parks & Recreation Department and Building Department for making this beautiful community space a reality.)

Christmas Trees and Leaves

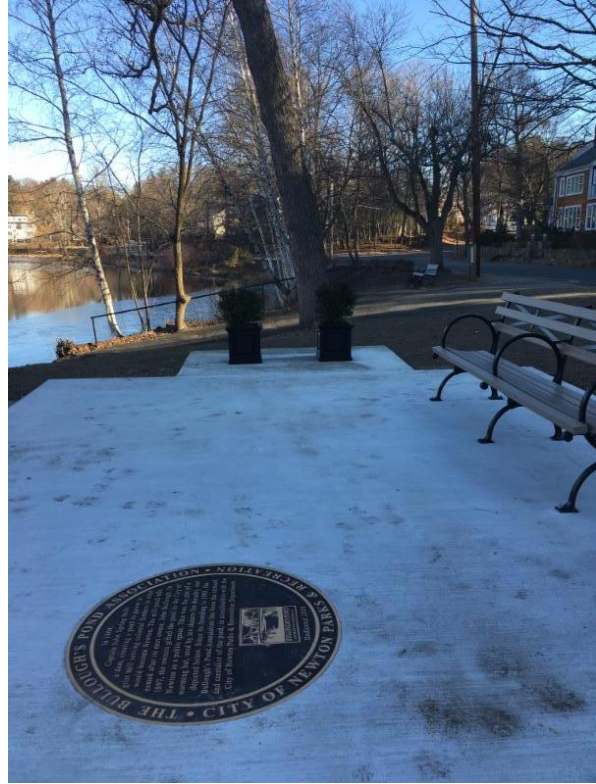
Christmas tree pick-up runs Monday, Jan. 7 through Friday, Jan. 18, 2019. Collection occurs on your regular waste collection day. The tree must be out to the curb by 7:00 a.m. Please make sure all decorations and lights are removed and sorry, trees cannot be in a plastic bag.

And a reminder, this is the last week for leaves and yard waste collection.

More EV Charging Stations at City Hall

Do you have an electric vehicle? Come on over to City Hall and use one of the four new charging stations installed over the weekend in the War Memorial Circle.

The four new stations have ports for eight cars. These are in addition to the charging stations at Newton South High School and at 52 Eliot Street. Two more stations with ports for four cars are coming to City Hall in 2019.



Progress on Street and Sidewalk Repairs

Our streets and sidewalks need a lot of work.

With the \$9.5 million in the fiscal 2019 budget for road paving, marking and maintenance, sidewalk repairs and construction we've made some progress this year:

- 23.8 miles of road repaved and repaired
- 8.6 miles of sidewalk installed or repaired
- 208 new Americans with Disabilities Act ramps installed (there are now 6,152 ramps citywide)
- 13 miles of white pavement markings painted
- 36 miles of yellow pavement markings painted
- 800 crosswalks restriped

Yes, we have a lot of work still in front of us and we'll keep at it.

Unlocking the Potential of Arts and Culture

I'm excited about a new advisory group recently formed to develop a plan to unlock more of the potential of arts and culture in Newton.

The Community Design for Arts and Culture working group has the mission to “investigate, study and recommend a plan that will support and sustain arts and culture opportunities and programming as a thriving, integral part of our village centers.”

The committee is chaired by longtime arts advocate Gloria Gavis who served as the first Chair of the citywide Festival of the Arts. The committee also includes Adrienne Hartzell (Executive Director of the New Philharmonia Orchestra), Sachiko Isihara (Director of the Suzuki School of Music), Howard Sholkin (President of Newton Community Pride), local ceramic artist Lindsay Pike, and City Councilor Victoria Danberg who is also a board member of the Newton Cultural Alliance.

Bob DeRubeis (Commissioner of Parks & Recreation), Lily Canan Reynolds (the Community Engagement Manager in the Planning Department), Dana Hanson (Director of Community Engagement & Inclusion), and Jonathan Yeo (City of Newton Chief Operating Officer) will partner with the group.

Please get involved. The Community Design for Arts and Culture group will be actively reaching out for input and ideas.

Sign up to receive updates [here](#), and send emails to ArtsCulture@newtonma.gov.



New Year's Eve Open House

Have some fun with me and Frosty and do some good at the same time. Join us at City Hall (1000 Commonwealth Ave.) on Monday, Dec. 31 at 10:00 a.m. to noon for the 2018 Mayor's New Year's Eve Open House and Food Drive. Bring the whole family.

Come at 10:00 a.m. and meet in the War Memorial to sort all the food donated to help Newton's four food pantries. It's not too late to donate. This year the pantries are asking for breakfast items. Bring along a box of cereal, granola, oatmeal, energy and granola bars, non-perishable milk boxes, coffee, tea, and peanut butter.

Starting at 10:30, stop by my office on the 2nd floor. I'll have holiday cookies and a large coloring project.

Prepare Veterans Care Packages in Room 204, create paper plate noise makers in Room 205,

and we'll be painting designs on many little faces in Room 211.

Also in Room 211, there will be a loom and a community weaving project. Write a personal wish for 2019 on a scrap of fabric and weave it into a larger piece. We will also have touch-a-truck vehicles outdoors.

Help Teens Make Smart Choices

Hear from 30 community groups who provide teens with alternatives for navigating life's pressures at the "Just Think Expo" on Tuesday, Jan. 8 at Newton North High School from 5:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Vaping, personal safety, healthy eating, body confidence, stress reduction and mental health support will all be highlighted. For more information click [HERE](#).

Honoring Rev. Howard Haywood

(With Rev. Howard Haywood and his wife Katy at Sunday's gathering at Temple Shalom.)

Rev. Howard Haywood, the Pastor Emeritus of the Myrtle Baptist Church, a son of Newton, a man of grace, a spiritual leader, an outspoken advocate for human dignity, and a visionary has been a fierce, resolute, persistent activist for racial equity, social justice and



making his beloved City of Newton more inclusive, more welcoming and more accessible.

The 300-plus crowd that gathered last Sunday afternoon to celebrate his work reminded me again about all that is good in our City.

The speakers encouraged us to do more than simply honor Rev. Haywood - we need to work together and harness Rev. Haywood's courage, grit and passion in the years ahead to shore up our own resolve so we do right by his life's work, we do right by the vulnerable, and we do

right by this City to create the Newton he has spent a lifetime championing.

Warmly,

Ruthanne

P.S. – Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays & New Year!

