



And Wishes for Happy Healthy Holidays and a Great New Year

Happy Holidays to everyone. It appears we are into another old fashioned winter, lots of snow and cold. Not very good for our ailing budget! The village crew is busy keeping our streets clean. They do an excellent job. The office staff is busy with the tax season. The police and fire departments have also completed very busy years. We are truly lucky to have such a dedicated group of employees. We welcome Cathy Wright and Sandra Forsting as new employees in 2008.

Snow Removal: Winter has arrived and it appears we will have snow. Snow means all sidewalks need to be cleaned within 24 hours of the end of the storm. Please remove your cars from the street so the maintenance department can clean our streets, such as Main Street, vehicles may be ticketed and/or towed away.

The Village strives to provide safe winter driving conditions on all village streets. Each storm has its own unique characteristics (i.e. duration, intensity, time of day, composition) so salting/sanding and plowing operations will vary from storm to storm. During a typical storm the village will salt/sand and plow Main Street and secondary streets first, and then plow all streets as snow accumulates.

Referring to weather forecasts, we usually begin plowing operations immediately after a significant storm ends. You can support snow plow operations in your neighborhood by observing the following guidelines:

**Never push snow into the street.*

**Clear snow from sidewalks, corners, and crosswalk ramps.*

**Clear snow from fire hydrants.*

During long-lasting storms, the snow plow crew may conduct "interim" plowing which will provide basic access to streets until the storm is over. More complete "clean-up" plowing would then follow the storm. Multiple passes by snow plow are always necessary to complete "clean-up" street plowing.

Be sure that snow plowing is complete on your street before shoveling your driveway approach; we don't want you to do it twice!

The Village Board has had a very busy year with projects including a lot of time and energy being spent getting everything in order so Oakwood Lake can be refilled next spring. It appears we are nearing that goal. The Village has offered to buy the mill property by the dam from the Thompsons for a price of \$18,500. The offer has been accepted.

The Village will have our engineering firm working on the demolition of the old mill building and developing a plan for the site that will be acceptable to the Department of Natural Resources. We contemplate the lake filling to start around the end of April, 2009.

We are also planning for the reconstruction of STH 12/27 thru the village in 2012 or later. The Board would like to see a finished product similar to the completed STH 95 project.

The Village Caucus is scheduled for January 6, 2009 at 6:45 P.M. at Village Hall. The 2-year term of Village President; Ray Ransom and 2-year terms for Trustees; Larry Green, Penny Danielson, and Kristy Lunderville will expire.

If you are interested in being a candidate for position of Village President or Village Trustee to be more involved in your community please contact Village Clerk Debra Green for further information at 333-2332.

The Village Caucus: How to Become a Candidate for Trustee for the Village Board or Village President:

Serving as a Trustee for the Village is a good way to give back to your community. By becoming a Trustee, you help to shape the current and future environment in which you and your family live.

The primary responsibilities of a Trustee are to attend the Village Board meetings on the second Tuesday of each month and chair at least one standing committee. Those committees meet as a Whole the first Tuesday of the each month. Committee chair assignments are made by the Village President.

Nomination to the Board of Trustees will take place at the Village Caucus which is set for **Tuesday, January 6th at 6:45 p.m.** at the Village Hall. That evening potential candidates will be nominated by a village resident and seconded by another to be placed on the election ballot for the April Spring election.

All Village residents, who are 18 years of age or older, are eligible to run for the office of Village Trustee or Village President, there are no papers to file prior to becoming a candidate.

If more than six people are nominated for the three open Trustee positions and more than two people nominated for Village President position, all Village residents attending the Caucus that night will vote to reduce the list to six or two candidates.

The winning candidates at the April 7th election will take office on the third Tuesday in April and serve a two year term.

2009 Dog & Cat Licenses - Tag/Tax Fees: Your 2009 dog and cat licenses are here. They can be purchased at the village hall, either by mail or in person.

Certificate of valid rabies shot is required for dogs and cats.

Dog or cat licenses will not be issued without proof of vaccination.

Dog - Non-spayed or Non-neutered licenses are **\$10.00.**

Dog - Spayed or neutered licenses are **\$5.00.**

Cat - Non-spayed or Non-neutered licenses are **\$5.00.**

Cat - Spayed or neutered licenses are **\$3.00.**

Kennel Licenses: Kennel licenses are required for properties that have 3 or more dogs or cats or any combination thereof.

For information regarding how to obtain a kennel license please contact the village hall. The annual kennel license fee is \$50.00.

Residents wishing to re-apply for a kennel license will need to again fill out an application, due by January 31st to be approved for a 2009 kennel license. Applications are available at the village hall.

ELECTRICAL SAFETY - WINTER

Statistics show that sales of electrical products increase during the winter months. The introduction of counterfeit electrical products into the marketplace is on the rise. Counterfeit electrical products, which have not met testing and safety standards, can cause death, injury and property damage. To avoid electrical hazards caused by counterfeit electrical products, purchase products from reputable distributors and retailers, and check certification marks, such as CSA, UL or ETL.

PORTABLE HEATER SAFETY

ESFI offers the following safety tips and precautions regarding space heaters, baseboard, and in-wall heaters as you head into cooler weather: Keep all furniture, draperies, and other household objects at least three feet from the in-wall fan heaters and 12 inches from baseboard heaters. Keep portable space heaters at least three feet away from all flammable materials, such as furniture and draperies. Plug portable space heaters directly into the outlet; do not use an extension cord. If an in-wall or baseboard heater is shut off at the circuit breaker, be sure to lock or tag the circuit breaker to prevent someone from inadvertently turning it back on. Some portable space heaters, electric in-wall fan heaters and baseboard heaters have been subject to product recalls. Check your brand and model number and visit www.cpsc.gov for possible information about your heater.

FOR HAPPY HOLIDAYS, FOLLOW THESE ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS

The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) reminds those at home and in the workplace to keep electrical safety in mind when decorating for the holiday season: Before decorating, read and follow the manufacturers' instructions concerning installation and maintenance of all decorative electrical products. Indoors and out, use lights and other electrical decorations certified by a recognized independent testing laboratory such as CSA, UL, or ETL. Outdoors, use lights and other electrical decorations certified for outdoor use. Carefully inspect each decoration before plugging into an outlet. Cracked, frayed, loose or bare wires, and loose connections may cause a serious electric shock or start a fire. Replace damaged items. Always unplug an electrical decoration before replacing light bulbs or fuses, or before leaving the house or going to bed. Don't mount or support light strings in any way that might damage the cord's insulation. Never nail or staple light strings or extension cords. Don't overload extension cords – they can overheat and start a fire. Keep all outdoor extension cords and light strings clear of snow and standing water and well-protected from weather. Use caution when decorating near power lines. Stay at least 10 feet away from overhead power lines. Never use electric lights on a metallic tree. The tree can become charged with electricity from faulty lights, and a person touching a branch could be electrocuted. Plug outdoor electric lights and decorations into circuits protected by ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). Portable GFCIs can be purchased wherever electrical supplies are sold.

CARBON MONOXIDE – THE SILENT KILLER

As the mercury dips, some families, struggling to pay their heating bills, will turn on the kitchen stove burners and the oven in an effort to take the chill off of their home. What these families don't realize is how dangerous this practice can be. A gas oven or range top should never be used for heating. A fire could start and poisonous carbon monoxide (CO) fumes could fill the home. Any fuel burning heating equipment (fireplaces, furnaces, water heaters, space or portable heaters, generators and chimneys can produce carbon monoxide. Often called a silent killer, CO is an invisible, odorless, colorless gas created when fuels, such as gasoline, wood, coal, natural gas, propane, oil and methane, burn incompletely.

CO enters a body through breathing. CO poisoning can be confused with flu symptoms, food poisoning and other illnesses. Some systems include shortness of breath, nausea, dizziness, light headedness or headaches.

The goal of the Merrillan Fire Department is to reduce the number of carbon monoxide incidents in our fire district and discourage anyone from using the range or oven to heat their home. Install CO alarms inside your home to provide early warning of accumulating CO. Have your heating equipment inspected by a professional every year before cold weather sets in.

MERRILLAN, WI 54754