South Mercer Turf Field Now Open for Play

The new all-weather artificial turf field is now open at the South Mercer Playfields. Opening day festivities were held on November 17, 2007.

The existing sand and dirt surface was replaced with synthetic turf to support multiple sports and activities in every season and in all weather conditions. In the next stage of the project, aging light fixtures will be replaced with fewer, more modern lights which will reduce the glare on adjoining neighborhoods. The South Mercer Playfields All-Weather Field Renovation project was approved by City Council and included in the 2007 Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The total approved budget for the base work and turf installation is $755,830. A separately funded field lighting project to be completed in the spring of 2008.

The new field is lined for soccer, men's and women's lacrosse, and football practice. Parks and Recreation staff installed drainage and irrigation along with new grass along perimeter of field.

For field use scheduling, please contact Merrill Schadt, Facility Scheduler 206.236.3541, merrill.schadt@mercergov.org. More information about the project itself is available at www.mercergov.org/southmercerplayfields.
Park and Ride Update from Sound Transit

The Mercer Island Park-and-Ride project is nearly complete, with some structural repairs left to finish. The opening of the Mercer Island Park-and-Ride will be delayed until these repairs are complete, the facility is safe and in compliance with building codes, and a certificate to occupy the facility has been received from the City of Mercer Island. Sound Transit’s priority is making sure the garage is safe and fully operational.

The project was on schedule to open in March 2007 when structural problems were identified in fall of 2006. These problems have been addressed and retrofit of the facility is complete, with the exception of one remaining beam. Once the remaining repair work has been permitted and completed, load testing will be conducted to ensure the repair is effective. Further work may be necessary but will not be known until load testing is completed, and therefore an exact opening date cannot be identified at this stage. An update will be provided as soon as the repair work has been completed and more information is available. The repair work is currently scheduled for completion in December 2007.

An in-depth Question and Answer section relating to the structural issues is available on the web project page at www.soundtransit.org/x1342.xml and at www.mercergov.org/parkandrideFAQs.

Interim parking and shuttle service that is available during construction will continue until the project opens for service. A map of interim parking locations is available on the web project page. Your patience is appreciated as Sound Transit works to resolve the remaining issues and complete the project. For more information, contact Roger Iwata, Community Outreach Specialist at 206.689.4904 or roger.iwata@soundtransit.org.

Sunset Highway Closure

Sunset Highway from 77th Avenue east to the cul-de-sac and 78th Avenue between Sunset Highway and 27th Street will be closed temporarily to facilitate construction projects in the Town Center. The closure is scheduled to begin on Monday, November 26 and could last up to two years. Signs will be posted at the street closure points directing parking permit holders to alternate parking locations. Parking spaces are reserved for permit holders at Island Square near the SE 28th entrance until the Park and Ride facility is completed. Questions regarding the Sunset Highway closure can be directed to Steve Lancaster, Development Services Director at 206.236.3593 or steve.lancaster@mercergov.org.

Have you noticed construction in a street or park in your neighborhood?

During the summer and fall months, the City will be making several improvements throughout the Island. Please visit www.mercergov.org/CIP for information about projects underway or soon to begin in 2007. To request a complete list and map of the projects, please call Communications Coordinator, Joy Johnston at 206.236.7238.

Grant Awarded for Shoreline Master Program Update

The City of Mercer Island Development Services Group applied for and received a grant from the Washington State Department of Ecology in the amount of $150,000 to update the City’s Shoreline Master Program. This dollar amount is the maximum required update to the Shoreline Master Program.

The Washington State Legislature enacted the Shoreline Management Act (SMA) of 1971 (Chapter 90.58 RCW) to provide a uniform set of rules governing the development and management of shoreline areas. As a basis for the policies of the SMA, the Legislature incorporated findings that “the shorelines are among the most valuable and fragile” of the state’s resources, that they are under “ever increasing pressure of additional uses” and that “unrestricted construction on the privately or publicly owned shorelines of the state is not in the best public interest.”

The SMA sets up a process for managing development of the state’s shorelines through state-monitored, locally administered permitting program. Local governments are required to prepare shoreline master programs to manage shoreline development within their jurisdiction. The SMA specifies that each local shoreline master program includes goals and policies that take into account the specific local conditions influencing the shoreline jurisdiction. The purpose of the Shoreline Master Program is to implement the Shoreline Management Act of 1971 and to establish regulations for development based on local shoreline goals and policies (MICC 19.07.110). There are 14.6 miles of shoreline on Mercer Island.

For more information, please contact Matt Torpey at 206.236.3260 or matt.torpey@mercergov.org.
Dial Your City Direct! 311
New Phone Numbers for City Staff

In an effort to provide better customer service to Mercer Island citizens, the City of Mercer Island will be replacing its antiquated phone system and assigning new numbers to all city staff. In the process, the City will be activating a new number for information. Residents can simply dial “311” when on the Island and will be directly connected to the City. Following are the new phone numbers for city departments. Please visit the City’s website for a comprehensive staff directory: www.mercergov.org.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Main City Number ..........................</td>
<td>311 also 206-275-7600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Attorney .......................................</td>
<td>206-275-7601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Manager .........................................</td>
<td>206-275-7602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community and Organization Relations (CORe)</td>
<td>206-275-7603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court ....................................................</td>
<td>206-275-7604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Services (Building/Planning/Permits)</td>
<td>206-275-7605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance (Business Licensing/Utility Billing/Parking Permits)</td>
<td>206-275-7606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire ......................................................</td>
<td>206-275-7607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance ............................................</td>
<td>206-275-7608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks and Recreation ............................</td>
<td>206-275-7609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police ...................................................</td>
<td>206-275-7610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth and Family Services .......................</td>
<td>206-275-7611</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Residents Can Help Protect Drinking Water from Contamination

Fortunately it doesn’t happen often, but when drinking water becomes contaminated it’s a major problem with potentially health-threatening consequences. In our region, the Spanaway area recently dealt with suspected contamination that forced the closure of 10 schools and several businesses. In all, more than 20,000 residents were affected.

As the supplier of your drinking water, the City of Mercer Island makes preventing contamination a top priority. The City currently is working to identify “cross-connections” between the public water supply and possible sources of contamination. A cross-connection is any actual or potential physical tie between a drinking water line and another pipe carrying non-potable fluid that could flow back into the water system.

The City is working to prevent cross-connections in two ways: (1) making sure plumbing and other piping is installed properly; and (2) working with homeowners to get approved backflow prevention devices installed on water lines where hazardous cross-connections exist or are likely to occur.

Residents with active water permits will receive a letter alerting them to backflow assembly requirements. The ideal time to install a Reduced Pressure Backflow Assembly (RPBA) is at the time a water service line is installed during construction. Installing it at the end of construction when requesting a final inspection is more expensive and disruptive.

For more information about backflow assemblies, please contact Sandy Love at 206-236-3624. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

2008-2009 Parking Permits Now Available

Whether you are renewing or purchasing a new parking permit, the 2008-2009 parking permits are now available for parking in the Town Center and the North Mercer Restricted Parking District (RPD). Permit applications are available online at www.mercergov.org/parking or in person at City Hall. Residents can apply for a permit for each licensed vehicle in their household. For each permit requested, the applicant will need to supply the vehicle license number and the year, make and model of the automobile, as well as provide a copy of the vehicle registration for each vehicle for the current year. For residents whose automobiles are registered to an off-Mercer Island address, other proof of residence/vehicle ID will be required.

The fee for each parking permit is $10. Permits are valid for two years and are nontransferable. Permits are to be placed on the inside of the rear windshield in the lower corner of the driver's side of the vehicle. The penalty for parking in a permit restricted area without a valid permit is $35 and a penalty for any transfer, attempt to transfer or other unauthorized use of a parking permit is $250.

For more information, please visit www.mercergov.org/parking.
Holiday Waste Reduction

It is estimated that Americans generate 25% more trash between Thanksgiving and New Year’s Day than at other times of the year. This amounts to an extra 1 million tons of trash per week. Making choices about what to give and how to wrap presents can help reduce holiday waste.

For example, give experiences instead of “things.” The Mercer Island Parks and Recreation Department will soon release the Winter Recreation Guide which is full of classes including fitness, dance, cooking and language classes, ski and snowboard trips and more. Visit myparksandrecreation.com to view the full list of activities. Gift certificates are available. Stop by the Community Center or call 206.236.3545 for more information.

King County is sponsoring the annual “Waste Free Holidays” program (www.wastefreeholidays.com). Through this program, over 150 businesses are offering discounts on the purchase of classes, theater tickets, spa treatments and more.

Other low waste or waste-free gifts include donating to a charity in a person’s honor, offering your time, restoring a family heirloom as a gift, or giving homemade food.

The City of Mercer Island is committed to sustainable practices for a healthy environment. For more information and other helpful tips, please visit www.mercergov.org/sustainability.

Holiday Tree Chipping

Starting December 26 and going through January 6, the City of Mercer Island will be offering its annual holiday tree chipping service. Bring your undecorated Christmas tree to the City’s Maintenance Shop at 9601 SE 36th St. (enter on the west side of City Hall) and it will be chopped into useful materials for the City’s parks, trails and open spaces. Details:

• No flocked trees or artificial trees.
• Please remove stands.
• Please remove all ornaments and lights.
• Deliver your tree only during daylight hours.
• Christmas trees only, please.

For more information about tree chipping, please contact the City’s Maintenance Department at 206.236.3613.
Parks and Recreation Winter Registration Begins Dec 17!
Register for All Classes Running January through March!
The new Winter Recreation Guide will be out in mid-December and it is chock full of exciting activities. Register now for fitness, dance, language, and cooking classes as well as ski and snowboard trips. Here are a few of the other activities that are planned for Winter 2008:

Family Valentine’s Party
February 8, 6:30pm - 8:30pm, Community Center at Mercer View
Get on your dancing shoes for an unforgettable night! Bring your whole family to celebrate Valentine’s Day with dancing, refreshments, photos, games and more! Love is in the air as you make unforgettable memories at this wonderful family fun event. For ages 2 – 12 yrs (accompanied by an adult) Fee: $16.00 per child and one family member, $5.00 for each additional family member

Hot Spot Basketball
February 10, 12 pm – 1:30 pm 7-10 yrs / 1:30pm – 3 pm, 11-14 yrs
Community Center at Mercer View
Think you can shoot? Don’t miss the 12th Annual ‘Hot Spot” competition for boys and girls 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, and 13-14 years old. This skills competition tests players by seeing how many points can be earned from five ‘Hot Spots’ marked on one half of the court in a series of one minute rounds. Rise to the challenge and local qualifiers will advance to the Washington State Finals! Call 206.236.3545 for details. Must bring a copy of your Birth Certificate to participate. FREE

"Sweet Cakes" - Valentines Day Tea for Senior Adults
February 14, 2 pm to 4 pm, Community Center at Mercer View
Join us for an afternoon Valentine’s Day Tea on February 14th between the hours of 2:00pm to 4:00pm at the Community Center at Mercer View. Enjoy a relaxing afternoon with friends as you sip on flavorful teas and taste the scrumptious finger foods, sweet cakes, and valentine treats. Make a special valentine, play some Valentine’s Day trivia, enjoy the entertainment, and socialize with others in a festive atmosphere. Bring your favorite tea cup to show off…prizes will be awarded in various categories. Registration required. Call 206.236.3545 to reserve your spot for this one of a kind Valentines’ Day event. Fee: $4.25

NEW! Nature Vision
Mercer Island Parks and Recreation & The Friends of Luther Burbank Park are teaming up with Nature Vision, Inc., a local non-profit organization of professional naturalists to offer the Mercer Island community a chance to get to know the nature of our parks through this family series of programs listed below. Come join us this winter for some fresh air and a guided experience! Note: These programs are designated for child & parent(s). Please dress for the weather, each program will offer indoor and outdoor activities and will run rain or shine!

Animals in Winter
January 28, 2 pm to 3 pm, meet at the Community Center at Mercer View
Where do animals go in the winter in Luther Burbank Park? Come join a park naturalist and find out how animals hibernate and migrate! Ages: 3 – 7 yrs, Fee: $11.00/child & parent, $5.00/sibling fee.

Parks & Recreation: 206.236.3545
www.myparksandrecreation.com

SAVE THE DATE!
On April 19, 2008, the entire community is invited to an exciting Earth Day fair for kids from 10 am to 3 pm at the Community Center at Mercer View. Kids of all ages can jump into fun activities both indoors and out including music, science demonstrations, storytelling, food, art, theater, dancing and more. Don’t miss it! If you are interested in helping with this event, please contact Joy Johnston at 206.236.7238 or joy.johnston@mercergov.org.

Volunteer in Mercer Island Parks
Exciting changes have been happening in many of our parks! In November, a Carbon Offset work party was hosted in Pioneer Park, following several months’ worth of invasive plant species removal. Over two hundred native conifers were installed by over 40 volunteers in an ongoing effort to restore the park’s forest canopy, as well as offset local carbon emissions.

A portion of Ellis Pond Park which had been cleared of invasive plants in late summer was sheet mulched and planted with over 50 native trees and shrubs during the neighborhood’s annual fall work party. Wildwood Park also benefited from an annual fall work day during which neighborhood volunteers helped suppress invasive plant growth through sheet mulching and removal by hand. Several volunteer work events in Island Crest Park have enhanced contracted invasive removal work through the addition of over 50 native trees. A combination of volunteer and contracted work on invasive removal and thinning of the dense understory began in Secret Park in late October.

Mercer cultured Hillside and North Mercerdale Hillside have also received contracted and volunteer attention in similar efforts to reduce the impact of invasive species and increase the number of native tree seedlings.

Native plant restoration work will continue in the park forests throughout winter and into spring as we take advantage of prime Pacific Northwest planting conditions! Look for the next edition of the Recreation Guide or contact Mercer island Parks & Recreation to find out when and how you can become part of the urban forest restoration effort! ~Paul West, Park Arborist 206.236.3544
Save a Life!

CPR Classes Available Through the Mercer Island Fire Department

To sign up, please call 206.236.3600.

CPR (Adult, Infant and Child) – Cost is $15 by check or cash the day of the event.
January 16 – 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm
February 20 – 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm
March 19 – 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

First Aid and CPR (CPR is Adult Only) – Cost is $30 by check or cash the day of the event.
January 12 – 9:00 am – 3:00 pm
February 9 – 9:00 am – 3:00 pm
March 8 – 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Ways to Support Youth and Family Services

Tatters Holiday Sale: “You buy, Tatters gives, YFS receives”
Buy great clothes and gifts at Tatters (located in Mercer Island Town Center) during December and a portion of the proceeds will go to Youth and Family Services.

Giving From the Heart 2008 Benefit Breakfast
Save the Date! February 13, 7:30 am at the Community Center at Mercer View. Sponsored by the Maren-Swenson Fund administered by the Seattle Foundation.

Yogathon 2008
Mark your calendar for May 17, 9:30 am at the Community Center at Mercer View. For the novice or advanced yogi.

Senior Outreach Events

Grief & Loss Support Group
Thursday, January 10, 1 pm
Thursday, February 14, 1 pm

Senior Commission
January 17, 2008 Meeting
from 7-8:30 pm, Community Center at Mercer View

“Taking Care of your Aging Family”
January 31, 2008 - from 7-8:30 pm, Community Center at Mercer View, presented by Betsy Zuber and Karin Miller
There are many issues to consider when taking care of an aging family member. Come learn effective techniques and pertinent information regarding all issues of care including emotional, physical and changing family roles. Current resources for housing, in-home care, financial and legal resources will be discussed. Plenty of time will be allowed for questions and discussion. To register for this class, please call Parks & Recreation at (206) 236-3545

“What is Dementia?”
March 4, 2008 1-3 pm at the Community Center at Mercer View, presented by Betsy Zuber. Learn about the different types of dementia, the progression of the disease, and the often perplexing behaviors that occur. Also, learn behavioral and communication techniques that are necessary to care for people with dementia.

For more information about any of these activities, please call 206.236.3525

Last Sale for 2007 at MITS

December 18 through January 5; Bag Day on Saturday, January 6 (all sale items are $0.99 per pound). The last sale of the year will be 50% off all yellow tags and holiday items.
Preparing Your Car for Winter Driving
December 21 marks the official beginning of winter. January, February and even early March can bring some of the most frigid temperatures of the season along with other severe winter weather. Snow, freezing rain and black ice can make for treacherous driving conditions. While people anticipate the seasonal change, they can be surprised by the sudden onset of snow, leaving them stuck at home or stranded in a vehicle awaiting assistance.

How to Prepare Your Vehicle:
- Winterize your car by taking it to a trusted mechanic, who will check things like the tires for appropriate pressure and tread, the cooling system, the battery, the wiper blades and washer fluid, etc.
- Keep extra blankets in the trunk in the event that you are stranded and have to wait for help.
- During the winter months, make sure to keep your gas tank near full to avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines.
- Before hitting the road, make sure you and all passengers have a warm coat, hat, gloves or mittens and water resistant boots. It is best to dress in several lighter layers of clothing as opposed to one large outer layer.
- Assemble a disaster supplies kit for your car including:
  * Blanket and/or sleeping bags
  * First aid kit and manual
  * Flashlight with extra batteries
  * Battery booster cables and flares
  * Tire repair kit and pump
  * Heavy sack of sand or cat litter (for tire traction) and tow rope
  * Bottled water and non-perishable, high-energy foods
  * Extra clothing to keep dry
  * Windshield scraper and brush

Information courtesy of the American Red Cross. For more information, please visit www.seattlredcross.org. Citizens are reminded to be prepared to care for themselves for 7 to 10 days following a disaster. For more information about how to get prepared, please visit www.mercergov.org/emergencyprep.

Get Earthquake Safe! Free Class January 24, 2008
6 pm to 9 pm
Community Center at Mercer View

Is your home safe enough to withstand the next earthquake? Was your home built before the early '70's? Are you interested in the studies done about building and road safety on the Seattle Fault Line? Mercer Island sits smack dab in the middle of the Seattle fault line. Join us for an evening of learning what that means to the buildings and roads that surround us, and what you can do to make your home safe.

Mark R. Pierpiekarz, P.E., S.E. was one of the experts on the team that drafted the Seattle fault line study for King County about the impacts of a 6.7 earthquake. He will speak on the possible impacts to some of our critical infrastructure in the event of a Seattle fault earthquake. Mark is the President of MRP Engineering, a structural engineering firm based in Newcastle, Washington. He has over 20 years of professional experience focusing on structural and earthquake engineering. He has performed structural analysis, pro-active retrofit and upgrade design, and repair of impacted commercial, industrial, and public buildings and other facilities throughout the U.S. and abroad. His structural engineering experience also includes seismic upgrade design and analysis of bridges, reservoirs, and lifeline systems.

Bruce Schoonmaker with Earthquake-Safe Home helps provide an ongoing program helping thousands of homeowners in the Puget Sound region take steps to prepare their homes and families for earthquakes. Through a partnership between State Farm Insurance, Simpson StrongTie, and local emergency management agencies, the Earthquake-Safe Home campaign educates you on how to ensure your home is ready for the next earthquake. You’ll learn how to evaluate your home to determine if it qualifies for the standard earthquake retrofitting plan.

You’ll also find out: How to retrofit your home using Project Impact's Regional Home Retrofit guidelines; tool usage and proper installation of parts; how to brace pony walls; how to secure the first floor framing; and which engineering solutions can be applied to your home, and when. Mercer Island's own Building Official Don Cole will also be on hand to answer questions. There is no fee for this class.

TO REGISTER: call 206.236.3545 or visit www.myparksandrecreation.com

Emergency Well Moving Forward
The new Emergency Water Supply Well at Rotary Park soon will be ready for temporary use in the event it’s needed before a permanent facility can be designed and built.

A number of engineering and operational questions have been answered, and the installation of a pump, power supply and system for distributing water from the well should be in place sometime this winter.

The City Council requested the development of a temporary use strategy while authorizing the work necessary to create a final production well facility in June. The Emergency Water Supply Well project got started earlier this year with a test well drilled to a depth of 570 feet. The test well produced water of both the quality and quantity needed to serve as a short-term source during an interruption in the Island’s water supply, which is provided solely by Seattle Public Utilities. More information: www.mercergov.org/testwell.
It's the Law! Mandatory Boater Safety Education

Beginning on January 1, 2008 boaters 12 years and over in Washington State are required to take or have taken a National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) and Washington State approved boating education course to operate a boat with a motor rated over 15 horse power. In 2008 this requirement applies to persons under 21 years of age with full implementation being phased in over the next several years.

The Washington State Parks NASBLA approved boating safety course is offered by the Mercer Island Marine Patrol’s State Parks certified instructors. This course covers general aspects of boating, Washington State law and boating safety. Topics include boating equipment, marine environment, trip planning, boat operations, personal watercraft, emergency preparedness and much more.

Classes take place over two days for a total of 6 to 8 hours. Upcoming dates include:

“Adventures in Boating Washington”
January 8 & 9 (2-day course), 5 pm to 9 pm
Location: Medina City Hall, 501 Evergreen Point Road, Medina

January 22 & 23 (2-day course), 5 pm to 9 pm
Location: Mercer Island Fire Station, 3030 78th Ave SE, Mercer Island

TO REGISTER: Pre-registration is required. Register by contacting Mercer Island Marine Patrol at 206-236-5309 or by e-mail at: keith.mcdonough@mercergov.org. Cost: $15.00

To receive a Boater Education Card, boaters must complete the course then submit a copy of their course certificate along with the State Parks application. In addition to the "Adventures in Boating Washington" class, boaters also have the option to fulfill boater education requirements online.

www.mercergov.org/boatersafety