

# Park Bench

Edmonton

May 2020 Edition

## Community Connections

### McQueen Community Seniors Tea



The Community of McQueen usually would be holding their Annual Seniors Tea at this time to recognize the contributions made towards building the community over the past year and to help friends and neighbours of all ages to connect.

This year a physical tea was not an option due to AHS COVID-19 guidelines but it was still important to the community to recognize and connect, especially during this time when many seniors are feeling vulnerable and isolated. The community created 200 beautifully decorated cards for the seniors instead. The cards were combined with flowers from a local greenhouse and an info tag outlining support offered by nearby agencies and contact information for seniors who needed help or just someone to talk to.

## Edmonton Window Art

The [Edmonton Window Art Map](#) makes it easy for people to plan “window walk” routes. Just click on a location near you to find windows decorated with messages or art. You can use the map to go for a “window walk”, or decorate your windows and add them to the map.

## Fostering Connections

*“Now, more than ever, we need to take care of each other...this means now, more than ever, keeping a physical distance..and now more than ever finding creative ways to maintain our bonds.”*

- Dr. Deena

Hinshaw

The City of Edmonton is here to “walk alongside” neighbourhoods so that together we can respond to the range of challenges that are facing individuals, families and neighbours. Being prepared for unexpected situations is not only about having the right supplies but also relying on connections to others such as family, friends and neighbours. We believe to build sustainable connections there is no better place to start than your own neighbourhood.

Here are some ideas and resources to foster connections:

- **Consider ensuring that your block/floor has a contact list** so that you can collectively respond to neighbours who may need help. For support in connecting your block email [abundantcommunity@edmonton.ca](mailto:abundantcommunity@edmonton.ca)
- **Reach out to your Neighbourhood Resource Coordinator** with your neighbouring stories, successes, ideas and/or challenges so that we can learn and grow together
- **Organize acts of kindness** by taking an inventory of ways that neighbours would like to contribute to the care and wellbeing of neighbours. The [Nextdoor App](#), and particularly the Help Map function is one tool that can help
- **Find opportunities to safely connect with neighbours.** Community League websites & their social media pages are great avenues to build connections
- [Guidance on Outdoor Activities](#) - Advice to help Albertans plan and safely enjoy outdoor activities
- **Call or visit [211 Alberta](#)** a helpline and website that provides information on and referrals to Alberta’s community, social, health-related and government services

**Keep Neighbouring!**

## Abundant Community Edmonton (ACE) Virtual Workshops - May 2020

Abundant Community Edmonton will be hosting two virtual workshops in May:

- **Recruiting Block Connectors using Digital Platforms:** this workshop is for ACE Support Teams, Neighbourhood Connectors or Community League board members involved, or who want to be involved in ACE.  
Wednesday, May 27th 6:30pm - 8:00pm.

If you are interested in joining please email [abundantcommunity@edmonton.ca](mailto:abundantcommunity@edmonton.ca).

## Community Gardens

Community gardens are a source of food security, support wellness, and promote a sense of neighbourly connection. In order to operate community gardens, support neighbourhoods, and stay safe during COVID-19, the City has developed [community garden requirements and guidelines](#). These requirements and guidelines apply to permanent and temporary community gardens located in open spaces, including those on parkland, right-of-way, community league licensed land, as well as private land leased by the City. The [community garden guidelines](#) have been posted on [edmonton.ca/communitygardens](http://edmonton.ca/communitygardens). We are asking that you share these guidelines with everyone that will be working in the community garden area over this growing season.

We understand it's a difficult time for Edmontonians. Our top priority is the health and safety of Edmontonians. It's important to go outside, and to continue to be active while following the AHS guidelines for people to maintain a safe physical distance, while enjoying the outdoors. By working together to stay apart, each of us help to contain the spread of COVID-19 in our community.

Please keep your physical distance. We are in this together.

The Community Gardens team is here to support you, please reach out to [communitygardens@edmonton.ca](mailto:communitygardens@edmonton.ca) if you have any questions or concerns.

## Farmer's Markets - Opened on May 1st

### [On-street farmers' markets](#)

The province has declared all horticultural businesses and farmers' markets as essential businesses that may remain open. The Province has developed guidelines, including measures to facilitate physical distancing in addition to regular hygiene and food safety requirements.

[Read More](#)

## Support Local Businesses - Shop Local

The City has sponsored [Things That Are Open in Edmonton](#) to help easily find local businesses that are still open and what services they are providing. Support Edmonton businesses and buy local when they are able. Businesses are adapting to help all of us stay safe while continuing to provide great products and services.

## Did you know 'Recreation and Parks Month' is just around the corner?

Connecting communities in traditional ways that bring people together has shifted significantly in recent months. Whether we, as a society are isolating, or practicing physical-distancing, we have never been more in need of connection. In the spirit of raising hope, Neighbourhood Services' Building Community Through Recreation initiative encourages you to promote 'June is Recreation and Parks Month' (JRPM) in your neighbourhoods and communities. JRPM is one way to build connections and a sense of community, while practicing physical distancing to keep everyone safe.

Visit the [ARPA website/Events](#) to find out more and use **#BCTR**, **#liveactive** and **#JRPMConnect** in social media posts so we can see what you are doing this June!

If you have any questions, please contact Shireen Mears at [bctr@edmonton.ca](mailto:bctr@edmonton.ca).

## Spring Cleaning? Please keep your property tidy.



Unkempt properties can lead to decreased property values, untidy neighbourhoods and complaints from neighbouring residents and businesses. Keeping your property in good repair is the responsibility of every property owner.

### Unkempt conditions include:

1. Excessive accumulation of materials (appliances, boxes, tires, garbage)
2. Damaged, dismantled or derelict vehicles
3. Long grass or weeds higher than 10 cm

4. Building in serious disrepair (graffiti, broken windows)

**If you have a concern about a bylaw infraction:**

1. Discuss the concern directly with the owner
2. If you can't resolve it directly, record the address of the violation and description of the problem
3. Call 311 or use the 311 app to place a complaint
4. Provide your name, address, phone number and the details of your concern

**Need Help with Needle Disposal?**



Now that the snow has melted, improperly disposed of needles are being found. Capital City Clean Up offers citizens many solutions for safe and reliable disposal of needles and needle debris. Our goal, in collaboration with our community partners, is to keep our streets, parks and playgrounds clean and safe for everyone.

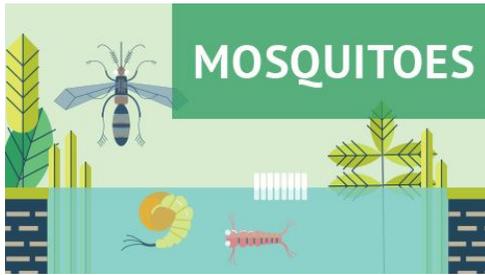
If the needle is on **public** property, please call 311 for assistance. A City crew will assist with the clean up.

If the needle is on **private** property, please call Boyle Street Ventures at 780-426-0500 and they will assist you.

Capital City Clean Up also offers free disposal boxes throughout the city, frequently asked questions about safe needle handling and a safe needle pick up guide. Please click [here](#), for more information.

For all general inquiries, email [capitalcitycleanup@edmonton.ca](mailto:capitalcitycleanup@edmonton.ca).

## There's a Buzzzz in the Air - Mosquito Season has Arrived



With winter snow melting and the onset of warm spring conditions, mosquito larvae are hatching in temporary pools of standing water and roadside ditches throughout the Edmonton region.

As of April 21, 2020, the Mosquito Control Program has started targeting the aquatic larvae in order to reduce the numbers of mosquitoes before they emerge as biting adults. Pest Management crews are using trucks and backpack sprayers to treat ground and ditch habitats within the city, while contracted vendors are using helicopters to begin treating open field pools.

Keeping the number of adult mosquitoes down improves the quality of life for Edmontonians who may be looking to enjoy the outdoors during the spring and summer season.

For more information about our mosquito program, please visit [edmonton.ca/mosquitos](https://edmonton.ca/mosquitos)

### The Dreaded Black Knot...

There are many thoughts that could go through one's mind when they read the words "black knot" - but would a fungal disease cross your mind? Black knot is a fungal disease that occurs on numerous fruit-bearing trees, such as mayday, plums and cherries, including local and native chokecherry. Extremely common in Edmonton, the disease is notable for the long, unsightly growths formed on the branches of infected trees.

**Appearance:** Initially, black knot appears as small light brown swellings on current or previous season's growth. The following year, the swellings appear olive green in color with a velvety texture, turning black by the end of the season.

**Its Impact:** New growth and wounded areas are most susceptible to infection. Larger branches may take several years to display damage. Infected trees decline and become more symptomatic with each successive season. Black knot causes trees to weaken, decline and possibly die. Trees with multiple infections become stunted and misshapen, reducing their productivity and attractiveness.

Warm, wet weather prompts the fungus in the growths to release spores, which are spread by splashing water, wind, insects and birds. Diseased knots can produce and release spores for up

to 4 months after removal. Spores can also be carried by unsterilized pruning utensils, spreading the infection from tree to tree.

#### Prevention Tips

- Remove infected branches to at least 15-20 cm (6-8 inches) below the knot.
- Heavily infected trees may have to be removed completely.
- Prune trees during winter when they are dormant.
- Sterilize tools between each cut using chlorine bleach or ethyl alcohol.
- Removed knots should be burned, buried or removed from the site immediately.
- Avoid planting trees near areas with known problems.
- If possible, remove all black knot sources within 200m.

### **Help Protect our Natural Tree Canopy**



Did you know that the City of Edmonton has over 380,000 boulevard and open space trees, and 2,500 hectares of forested natural areas? The City's urban forest provides many environmental, ecological, economic, and social benefits. The urban forest consists of the city's boulevard and park trees, as well as naturalized and natural areas.

The many benefits of trees include purifying the air that we breathe, sequestering carbon dioxide and combating climate change, improving water quality, reducing erosion, providing habitats and corridors for wildlife, and promoting overall well-being and positive mental health.

With careful stewardship, these benefits can continue for generations, appreciating over time. Proper management and education is crucial for continuous growth and improvement of the urban forest.

One of the City's primary goals is to ensure that natural areas are allowed to function naturally, which allow for sustainable biodiversity of plant and animal life. To maintain the integrity of our natural areas, we encourage people to leave trees and branches where they fall so that the forest can renew itself.

Under the *Parkland Bylaw 2202*, the City is responsible for preserving and protecting all public parkland. The Bylaw further states that it's illegal to cut or remove trees and vegetation from parkland.

If you have concerns about or have witnessed any illegal cutting on City property in your neighbourhood, please call 311 (City of Edmonton).

If you are interested in learning more about Edmonton's urban forest, please visit the City's [Urban Forestry webpage](#) or email [citytrees@edmonton.ca](mailto:citytrees@edmonton.ca).