

City Beat

Outdoor Watering Schedule Explained



The Outdoor Water Use Schedule, described in City of Valdosta Ordinance 2011-1, allows daily outdoor watering for purposes of planting, growing, managing, or maintaining ground cover, trees, shrubs, or other plants before 10 a.m. and after 4 p.m. on days dictated by the citizen's home address.

No outdoor watering should occur during the hours of 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., which is typically the hottest part of the day.

Outdoor watering will be allowed on odd/even days as follows:

- ▶ Odd-numbered addresses can water on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday
- ▶ Even-numbered and unnumbered addresses are allowed to water on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.
- ▶ No outdoor watering for the above stated purposes will be allowed on Sundays.

All citizens are strongly encouraged to still conserve and use irrigation water sparingly during the prescribed time periods.

For more information, call the city's Public Information Office at (229) 259-3548.



Mud Creek WPCP Gets Facelift

The City of Valdosta Mud Creek Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP), located at 1638 New Statenville Highway, recently received a \$36 million facelift to continue its mission of providing sanitary sewer services for approximately one-third of Valdosta households and industrial customers in the southeastern portion of the city. City, county, state and federal officials, project managers, city staff and citizens gathered at a ribbon cutting ceremony on April 24, to celebrate a project long coming.

The Mud Creek Water Pollution Control Plant expansion and upgrades are the culmination of several years of work to meet the ever more stringent environmental regulations and to prepare for the future growth expected in its service area. This facility utilizes the latest proven technologies in the wastewater treatment field to guarantee the safe, effective and efficient treatment of sewage, as well as ensuring protection of the environment.

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18 Graduate from Gov't 101



Citizens in the 3rd annual City Government 101 Orientation Program graduated in a ceremony held in City Hall, on May 7. Graduates in this class were: Lili Bartoletti, Mario Bartoletti, Mary Brannan, Anya Burns, William Daniel, Astrid Elstak, Iwan Elstak, Dale Flucas, Robert Gallagher, Carla Gervin, Alan Miller, Helen Roseberry, Sandra Strawder, Rebecca Taylor, JaTaryia Thomas, William Bill Tucker, Joseph Wheeler and Robert Yehl. The program is divided into six Monday night sessions which gives participants an opportunity to get an inside look at how their local government works.

The next class will be held in April 2013. Call (229) 259-3522 for more information.

Street Maintenance is Ongoing Task



Citizens may have noticed that several city streets were resurfaced over the past few months, including Cherry Creek Road, Northside Drive, Rosedale Place, East Brookwood Drive, River Street and South Oak Street. These projects were bid out to local contractors and managed and inspected by the city's Engineering Department.

With over 322 miles of city streets to maintain, the Street Maintenance program is an ongoing task. The Georgia Department of Transportation (DOT) alleviates some of the cost burden associated with street maintenance—as well as other local transportation projects such as safety, economic development, sidewalks, maintenance and bridges—through the Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG) program.

The resurfacing process involves several steps, beginning with the placing of a ½ to 1 ½ inch layer of asphalt onto an existing road (depending on the road condition). The asphalt is applied in one of two ways. It is either placed directly on the existing pavement, or the existing road is milled—or “peeled off”—and then the asphalt is placed. Once the pavement is allowed to cool, the street is suitable for vehicular traffic. The resurfacing process not only allows for a smooth driving experience for city motorists, but it also provides protection for the sub base below.

For the purpose of restoring service to our citizens in a safe manner, temporary striping is placed on the pavement. However, since the placement of permanent striping requires different equipment than that used to place the asphalt, this part of the project may take a few days to complete.

As always, the Engineering Department urges citizens to drive with caution through construction areas—for their safety and the safety of workers on site. In the event that a road needs to be closed, motorists are informed through the city website and local media, and traffic is safely detoured while work is in progress.

The City of Valdosta appreciates the patience of citizens while construction projects are being accomplished. For more information, citizens may call the Engineering Department at (229) 259-3530 or visit the Street Maintenance page of the city's website at www.valdostacity.com.

Farm Days Draws Crowd to Downtown Valdosta

The 2nd annual season of Downtown Valdosta Farm Days kicked off in April and features new vendors and a nutrition incentive program. Located on the sidewalks surrounding the historic Lowndes County Courthouse, the market will be open every first and third Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., rain or shine. Due to popular demand, the event will run bi-weekly through October.

Citizens can enjoy a diverse selection of vendors at the farmers market and can expect to find farm fresh produce, baked goods, meats, eggs, honey, plants and other specialty items at this year's events.

Contact the Valdosta Main Street office at (229) 259-3577 or visit the new Valdosta Main Street website at www.valdostamainstreet.com for more information.



WPCP Facelift

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Some of the latest technologies being utilized in this plant expansion include a Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system for fully automated operations, Disk Filtration Systems, High Efficiency Air Blower Systems and an Ultraviolet Light Disinfection System. Furthermore, this facility is capable of running entirely on its emergency generators when needed.

The state-of-the-art facility was constructed with major participation from local Valdosta contractors and was entirely funded through low-interest means, including the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The city received \$4 million as a forgivable loan from the ARRA because the project was considered “green.”

The current expansion was not the plant's first. Originally constructed in 1977, the Mud Creek WPCP was expanded in 1986 to an average daily flow of 3.22 million gallons per day (MGD). The current expansion has increased the plant's capacity to an average daily flow of 5.7 MGD, with a peak flow of 17.1 MGD, and will provide long-term services for the city's growth.

Need a Facility for Your Summer Event?

Summer is a great time for family and friend gatherings or other special events. To rent the Mathis Auditorium, call Mathis Supervisor Christopher Wood at (229) 333-1816 or cwood@valdostacity.com.

Citizens who would like to rent a facility at one of the many beautiful parks in our area, please contact the Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks and Recreation Authority at (229) 259-3507.

FIRST STEP: Taking Care of Business



The City of Valdosta strives to maintain a proactive business environment and encourages new development in our community. New and existing businesses in our city provide jobs, enrich the fabric of our community and stimulate the local economy.

Starting a business is exciting; however, it can also be challenging. The "Establish a Business" link located on the city's website (www.valdostacity.com) provides information that can aid anyone from the first-time entrepreneur to the seasoned developer with primary steps to building a successful business in the city limits. Citizens are provided valuable information on the First Step and Pre-Application meetings, plan submittal and review, permitting and inspection processes, obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy, and applying for a business license.

The First Step meeting was designed to be one of the "first steps" in establishing a business. Meetings are held every Thursday morning and need to be

scheduled in advance. These informal group discussions give potential developers and citizens a chance to meet with representatives from city departments such as Engineering, Fire, Inspections, Landscaping, Planning/Zoning, Public Works, and Utilities all at the same time. As needed or requested, representatives from the Health Department and the Chamber of Commerce S.E.E.D.S. center may also be present to answer questions. These meetings save valuable time that can be spent in other areas of business planning and development.

Additional links provided on the city's website provide information about the City of Valdosta Land Development Regulations, Valdosta Small Emerging Business Program (VSEB), Valdosta State University Small Business Development Center, the Valdosta - Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce and more.

A host of information is right at your fingertips at www.valdostacity.com. To speak with someone about scheduling a First Step meeting, contact the city's Planning and Zoning Division at (229) 259-3563.



Citizens in Southern Georgia Transportation Region 11, which includes Valdosta and Lowndes County, will have the opportunity to vote in July 2012 on the Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (T-SPLOST)—a funding proposal for transportation improvements and upgrades in our region.

The proposed regional one penny tax will generate an estimated \$670 million dollars in the region over 10 years, of which \$107 million will fund transportation projects in Lowndes County and \$53 million will fund transportation projects in Valdosta.

In addition to Lowndes County, Region 11 serves 18 counties in South Georgia, including Atkinson, Bacon, Ben Hill, Berrien, Brantley, Brooks, Charlton, Clinch, Coffee, Cook, Echols, Irwin, Lanier, Pierce, Tift, Turner and Ware Counties. All of the proceeds raised in Region 11 will be spent on local projects with local oversight in the region.

Lowndes County has 14 approved transportation projects that would be funded by T-SPLOST if passed, 6 in Lowndes County and 8 in Valdosta. These include the construction of the St. Augustine Road overpass, Five Points Intersection Improvements, Exit 2 and Exit 11 interchange improvements and ten others.

Voters should educate themselves about T-SPLOST and make an informed vote. The City of Valdosta will provide additional educational information on T-SPLOST in July to assist citizens.

Three Vacancies on Tree Commission



Citizens who want to get more involved with their community and local government should consider serving on one of the city's 18 different boards, commissions, authorities and advisory committees.

The city has announced three vacancies on the Valdosta Tree Commission. Interested applicants must review the Membership Requirements and Code of Ethics Booklet, complete a General Board Application, and sign a Code of Ethics form. The deadline for submitting the General Board Application and Code of Ethics form to the City Clerk for the current vacancies is Wednesday, Aug. 1. The Mayor and City Council will evaluate the applications and appoint individuals to the vacancies listed above at the Aug. 9 City Council meeting.

For information or to get a copy of these documents, contact City Clerk Teresa Bolden, at Valdosta City Hall, at (229) 259-3503, or at tbolden@valdostacity.com. All documents are also available at www.valdostacity.com.

Hurricane Season Upon Us Again



Do you and your family know what to do in the event of a disaster? The National Hurricane Season runs June 1 through Nov. 30 each year. Although the South Georgia topography protects Valdosta from the devastation of most storms, citizens are urged to brush up on hurricane awareness and preparedness and learn how to take potentially life-saving action.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) predicts a quieter hurricane season in 2012, with four to eight hurricanes in the Atlantic. NOAA is expecting nine to 15 named storms, with sustained winds of 39 mph or greater. Four to eight of them could see winds up to 74 mph, becoming hurricanes, and one to three of them are expected to become major hurricanes with winds of at least 111 mph. Although the seasonal outlook predicts the Atlantic storm activity, it does not predict how many storms will hit land.

Several years of milder hurricane season weather may have some Valdostans complacent. Here are some tips to include in your hurricane preparedness:

- Sign up for the Code Red emergency alert system at www.lowndescounty.com and click on the Code Red link at the bottom right of the home page.
- Equip your home with a NOAA Weather Radio. They can be purchased locally for around \$30, can be programmed to receive alerts just for Lowndes County, and is the best way to receive emergency alerts and weather related information directly from the National Weather Service.
- Have an emergency supply kit. A list of recommended items is available at www.ready.ga.gov.
- Review insurance policies to make sure you have adequate coverage. Also, talk to your insurance agent to be sure storm-related damage is covered. Most policies do not cover flooding, so if you are in an area that is prone to flood you make want to check on flood insurance—even if you do not live in a designated flood plain.
- Keep trees trimmed. Dead or decaying limbs are easily broken during a storm and can cause serious damage. Also, make sure you secure outdoor furniture and other free-standing objects when severe weather is expected to keep them from becoming dangerous flying debris.

For local emergency management information, contact Lowndes County Emergency Management Agency Director Ashley Tye at (229) 671-2790.



7th Annual Workcamp Helps Eliminate Substandard Homes in City

Over 150 youth from around the country will spend part of their summer vacation serving the citizens of Valdosta through the Southern Hospitality Workcamp, June 24-30. These “campers” will repair 17 substandard houses in just five days and help the city meet its goal to eliminate substandard housing in our community by year 2020.

This is the seventh year the city has hosted the Workcamp, bringing in youth to perform basic home repairs, painting and minor construction at no cost to elderly or disabled homeowners. The home sites were selected by the city and each meet the qualifying criteria, which include: owner occupied; elderly homeowner (62 years of age or older); income meets HUD low/moderate income criteria; if not elderly, then disabled and meets income criteria; home needs minor repairs and it is in one of the focus areas identified by the city.

In addition to the City of Valdosta and Lowe’s Distribution Center—who are the official project co-sponsors of Workcamp—other sponsors include the Valdosta City Schools System, Lowe’s Retail Store and Group Cares, Inc. Local Habitat for Humanity staff members will be on site as coaches for the event.

For more information about the Workcamp, call the Public Involvement Department at (229) 259-3522.

Keep Yard Waste in Yard

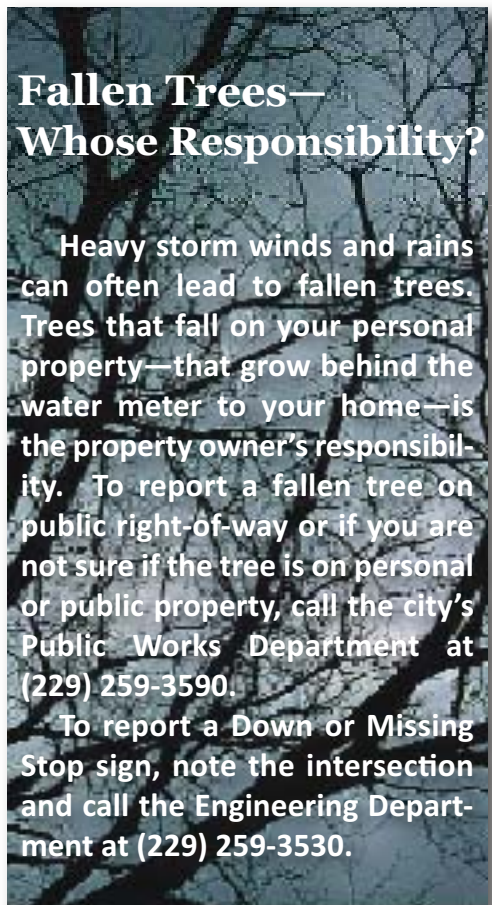


When preparing for residential yard waste collection, be sure that any leaves, branches, and other materials are kept out of the streets and away from storm drains, ditches and streams. Leaves and other yard debris can block drainage ways and clog storm drains, which can impact water quality and lead to possible flooding.

Whenever possible, use a rake or broom to clean your yard, driveway and gutters. If a leaf blower is necessary, use it responsibly in order to prevent waste from entering the stormwater system.

Also, remember, large leaves can collect pools of water, which in turn can be breeding sites for mosquitoes.

For more information, contact the Stormwater Division at (229) 259-3530.



Fallen Trees— Whose Responsibility?

Heavy storm winds and rains can often lead to fallen trees. Trees that fall on your personal property—that grow behind the water meter to your home—is the property owner’s responsibility. To report a fallen tree on public right-of-way or if you are not sure if the tree is on personal or public property, call the city’s Public Works Department at (229) 259-3590.

To report a Down or Missing Stop sign, note the intersection and call the Engineering Department at (229) 259-3530.

Citizens Play Key Role in Mosquito Control

Did you know that mosquitoes need standing water in which to grow, from egg to larva to pupa and finally to hatch into a full-grown mosquito? Citizens can play a key role in controlling the local population of these irritating insects for the health and safety of their family members and neighbors by following these simple tips:

- ☑ Dispose of items around your property that collect water—tires, containers, flower pots, etc. Breeding sites are not always obvious and may be areas of standing water in a bird bath or flower pot. However, these sites may be producing hundreds of new mosquitoes each day in your area.
- ☑ Eliminate weeds and tall grass, as these become mosquito “resting sites” around your property
- ☑ Use larvicide where standing water cannot be removed. Free larvicide tablets are available to city residents at the City of Valdosta Public Works Department, at 1017 Myrtle Street, weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- ☑ Stock ornamental ponds with mosquito eating fish.
- ☑ Clean and chlorinate swimming pools, outdoor spas, saunas and hot tubs; keep them covered when not in use.
- ☑ Clean out clogged gutters.

It is not necessary to limit outdoor activities, but precautions should be taken from dusk to dawn when mosquitoes are most active. If you must be outside during these times, you should protect yourself with long pants, long-sleeved shirts and socks. Also, use insect repellent containing DEET on body and clothing when outdoors. The CDC also recommends repellents that contain oil of lemon eucalyptus or the chemical Picaridin.

The city’s Public Works staff will continue to monitor mosquito activity throughout the city limits and maintain its aggressive spraying and larvicide efforts to control the mosquito population. Since the city can only spray in public areas and on public streets—which constitute less than 1% of the land area of the city—it is important for citizens to play an active role in prevention.

For more information, contact the Public Information Office at (229) 259-3548.

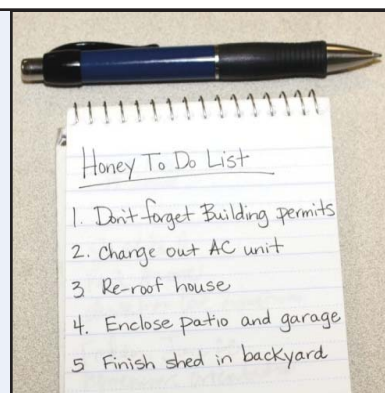
“Honey To-Do” Projects Need a Permit

Summer is a great time to tackle some of those “honey to-do” projects around the house. Citizens should be reminded that a building permit is required for all new residential and commercial construction as well as remodeling, repairs, additions and demolition.

A homeowner acting as his own contractor may purchase a building permit for the house he/she owns. Otherwise a licensed contractor is required for all residential and commercial permits.

Citizens should be sure that the person they hire has the proper permits and qualifications for the job. Also, there are a lot of small projects that may not require a permit. It’s always best to be safe than sorry.

Call the Community Development Department at (229) 259-3506 or the Permitting Office at (229) 259-3506 before you start any building projects.



- Honey To Do List
1. Don't forget Building permits
 2. Change out AC unit
 3. Re-roof house
 4. Enclose patio and garage
 5. Finish shed in backyard



Valdosta Photo Contest: Let the Judging Begin

June 11 - July 18

All entries for the 4th Annual Valdosta People's Choice Photo Contest are on display in the Tillman Art Gallery at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, from June 11-Aug. 1. Citizens are invited to visit the arts center, at 527 N. Patterson Street, where they can participate in the people's choice voting for their favorite in five categories as well as Best in Show overall. The people's choice voting will take place from June 11 through July 18.

Citizens are invited to join Mayor John Gayle as he announces the contest winners at the awards reception, on Friday, July 20, from 5 to 7 p.m. This event is taking place in conjunction with the popular Art After Dark and Wine Down events.

For more information, call the arts center at (229) 247-ARTS or (229) 259-3548.

Have a Safe July 4th



While sparklers and similar non-explosive fireworks are legal in Georgia, the City of Valdosta Fire Department urges citizens to use extreme caution to avoid injuries when using any fireworks during the Fourth of July holiday. REMEMBER: The sale and use of most types of fireworks, including firecrackers, skyrockets, and cherry bombs, are still illegal in Georgia and punishable by a maximum fine of up to \$1,000 and up to one year in jail.

The majority of all fireworks injuries occur during the four-week period surrounding Independence Day. On the Fourth of July itself, fireworks usually start more fires nationwide than all other causes combined. Don't be a statistic. For a list of safety tips, call the Valdosta Fire Department or visit www.valdostacity.com.

Sanitation Schedule for July 4

The City of Valdosta will be closed on Wednesday, July 4, in observance of the Fourth of July holiday. The Sanitation Division will collect residential garbage ONLY on July 4. Citizens should place their green rollouts at the curbside by 5 a.m. on Wednesday to ensure their garbage is collected. Sanitation pick up services for recyclables and yard waste WILL NOT be available on July 4, but will resume on Thursday, July 5, for both Wednesday and Thursday routes. For more information, contact the Public Works Department at (229) 259-3590.

Have You Tuned in Lately?

Tune into Metro Valdosta 17, the city's government access channel on Mediacom, for the biweekly news magazine show City Focus which showcases community events, public information and the City of Valdosta. City Focus airs six times a day at 4 a.m., 7 a.m., noon, 5 p.m., 7 p.m. and 11 p.m., along with other informative programming on the channel.

The Metro Valdosta 17 office is always interested in citizen feedback. To submit a news tip or suggestion, contact Shemeeka Johnson at (229) 671-3615 or by email at scjohnson@valdostacity.com.



Mission

To be known by our customers and others for high quality municipal services.

Purpose

To provide public services that meet or exceed the expectations of citizens.

To improve the quality of life in the community by a sincere commitment to the ideals of public service.

To be creative and innovative in our approach to the needs of citizens, recognizing the trust and confidence that our citizens place in us as caretakers of governmental services.

To be efficient and effective and use wisely the public resources we are entrusted to manage.

Quality Service by Quality People



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City Beat is a quarterly newsletter for the citizens of Valdosta and is written and published by the City of Valdosta Public Information Office. For more information, contact Sementha Mathews at (229) 259-3548.