



CITIZENS' NEWSLETTER

November - December 2011

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Durham 911 Texting Trial Ongoing

Until January 31, 2012, Durham residents and visitors who use Verizon Wireless can send a text message to 911 for emergency help as part of a trial to test the potential of offering this new technology. This texting trial is designed for two types of emergency scenarios - people who are hearing impaired and people who can't afford to be heard making a voice call.

Keep the following in mind if you send a text to 911 during the trial period:

- Use the texting option when calling 911 is not an option.
- It can take longer to receive a text message. Calling 911 is still the most efficient way to reach emergency help.
- Providing location and the nature of the emergency in the first text message is imperative.
- Text abbreviations or slang should never be used.

- Customers must be in range of cell towers in the Durham County area. If you are outside or near the edge of the county, the message may not reach the Durham Emergency Communications Center.
- Texts sent to 911 have the same 160 character limit as other text messages.
- Verizon Wireless customers must have text-capable mobile phones. Any text message to 911 will either count against your messaging bundle or be charged at 20 cents each.
- The messaging software pre-loaded onto the Droid from Motorola (original version) does not format text messages correctly when 911 is entered as the "To" address. Installing the free "Verizon Messages" application for Droids (version 1.3.24a) from the Android Market fixes this issue.

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UPCOMING CITY HOLIDAYS

Thanksgiving - Thursday, Nov. 24 & Friday, Nov. 25

Christmas - Friday, Dec. 23 & Monday, Dec. 26

New Years - Monday, Jan. 2, 2012

For information about City holidays, garbage collection, or other City service, contact Durham One Call.



Waste Disposal and Recycling Center

2115 E. Club Blvd., Durham

Monday - Friday: 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Saturday: 7:30 a.m. - noon / Closed Sundays

Accepting old electronics, appliances, tires, yard waste, and other recyclables.

The Citizens' Newsletter is published every other month with the water bill on a staggered schedule. Information can be dated for some receiving their bill at the end of the mailing cycle. For the most current information, visit www.DurhamNC.gov.

Durham Home Energy Savings Program Accepting Applications

Durham's Home Energy Savings Program (HESP) can help households save energy through targeted home improvements. Approximately 200 homes will receive subsidized, professional retrofits through the program. HESP is being offered for a limited time only, on a first come-first serve basis.

Participating homes will save an estimated 20 percent of their home energy use. Participants pay \$400 and HESP will pay up to an additional \$1,600 per house.

To qualify, homes must be 1) single story, or 2) two story with the top and bottom floors having the same shape. All homes must be 2,300 square feet or less.

The work done on qualifying homes includes:

- Sealing air leaks in heating and air conditioning ductwork, attic floor, and crawlspace ceiling.
- Installing programmable thermostats, carbon monoxide detectors, and attic insulation
- Installing high-efficiency showerheads, faucet aerators, and carbon monoxide detectors.

For information, visit GreenerDurham.net or contact Tobin Freid at (919) 560-7999.

City Briefs

Holiday Fun Fest

On Saturday, December 3, Durham Parks and Recreation will host its Second Annual Holiday Fun Fest. The festivities will be held at Durham Central Park (502 Foster St.) and the downtown Durham Armory (212 Foster St.) from 2 p.m. – 6 p.m. The entire community is invited to enjoy snow sledding, a petting zoo, meet and greet with Santa, live entertainment, a mini parade, holiday craft vendors, food and more. New this year are trackless train rides, tricycle rides, and a sing along by the campfire. For details, visit www.DPRPlayMore.org or call (919) 560-4355.

Senior Holiday Party

Tuesday, December 13, 4:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Sheraton Imperial Hotel, 4700 Emperor Blvd. Mature adults are invited to join this pre-holiday celebration. Activities include music, dancing, food and fun. For information, call (919) 560-4355. Tickets are now on sale.

Kwanzaa Celebration

Friday, December 30, noon – 6 p.m. Holton Career & Resource Center, 401 N. Driver St. Learn about and celebrate the African American holiday Kwanzaa! There will be food and entertainment for the whole family. For information, call (919) 354-2750.

Contact the Durham Convention & Visitors Bureau for public events and non-City holiday schedules at (919) 687-0288.

Durham... Beyond the Headlines

It's that time of year, when organizations are looking for speakers. The City of Durham is available to talk to you on a wide variety of topics about your city. We want to be your best resource for getting answers to important questions about Durham. Call us at 560-4123 or e-mail us at SpeakersBureau@DurhamNC.gov.

Notice Under the Americans with Disabilities Act

Persons who require assistance should call (919) 560-4197, TTY (919) 560-1200, or email ADA@durhamnc.gov no later than 48 hours before the event or deadline date.

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- The texting function should only be used for emergency situations that require an immediate response from police, fire, or emergency medical services.
- Non-emergency issues should be sent to the Durham Emergency Communication Center non-emergency line at (919) 560-4600.

For information, visit the City's website at www.DurhamNC.gov/Departments/911.

Pilot Project for Monthly Water and Sewer Billing Begins

The City's Water Management Department began a pilot project for monthly billing in mid-October. About 4,000 water and sewer customers in parts of East and Northern Durham, including Guess Road, Treyburn and Glenbrook Drive, have received monthly bills. Meter readings in this district have been read successfully and accurately for the last several months using Automated Meter Reading (AMR) technology.

Among the many benefits of monthly billing is the ability to detect leaks earlier helping to reduce water lost due to leaks. Identifying these issues sooner help customers avoid high water and sewer bills. Many residents, especially those on fixed incomes, will find monthly bills easier to budget. Also, AMR technology increases the accuracy of meter readings.

The City is now in Phase 2 of the AMR project and anticipates having more than 40,000 radio-read meters installed by December 31, 2011. By utilizing both AMR technology and monthly billing, the Water Management Department expects to realize long-term savings from reduced labor costs, leak detection, and eliminating the cost and need to send out payment reminders.

After the pilot project is assessed, the City will roll out a timetable for other meter reading districts. Customers will receive a letter from the City at least four weeks prior to receiving a monthly bill. Look for updates and details in future newsletters and on the City's website at www.DurhamNC.gov.

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