



Wellesley Natural Resources Commission

Insights from Outside A Monthly Update from the NRC

August 2016

Wellesley Goes Plastic-Bag Free Beginning January 25, 2017

Last April, Wellesley Town Meeting overwhelmingly passed a new bylaw banning distribution of plastic check-out bags. Now the NRC is happy to report that the bylaw has received final approval from state Attorney General Maura Healey. For stores 3,500 square feet or larger, the bylaw goes into effect on January 25, 2017. For stores smaller than 3,500 square feet, the compliance deadline is April 12, 2017. Retailers will also need to make sure that paper shopping bags are 100-percent recyclable and contain 40-percent post-consumer recycled content. One of the main goals of the bylaw is to ensure that all bags distributed in Wellesley can be recycled at the Recycling and Disposal Facility.



Please bring reusable bags wherever you shop! Reusable bags are easiest on the environment and they save money for local merchants as well.

[Click here for more on the bag bylaw!](#)



Town Trees Severely Stressed by Drought

Wellesley remains under a [water alert](#) following a summer of hot, dry weather. In extreme drought such as this, trees, both young and old, are especially vulnerable and many are showing signs of stress. Brown lawns will go dormant and rebound next spring, but trees cannot. As reported in a recent [Boston Globe](#) article, communities throughout the state are asking residents to stop worrying about lawns and focus on watering trees.

"Trees need an inch of water per week to maintain adequate moisture," said Cricket Vlass,

landscape planner for the [Wellesley Department of Public Works](#). "Crews are working diligently to protect town trees, but we need help. We're seeing trees on public land and private property with brown or shriveled leaves which indicates they aren't getting enough water." Vlass recommends these simple steps to help keep trees healthy:

- Use a soaker hose or trickling garden hose, placed about 2 feet from the trunk in several areas around the tree base. Water for at least 2-3 hours. DO NOT use sprinklers to water trees as they don't provide enough moisture.
- Remove turf grass and mulch with wood chips or shredded bark around the tree base to preserve moisture.
- Water in the evening to reduce evaporation.

Share Photos of Your Favorite Trees in Year-long Exhibit

Colorful fall foliage, snow-capped evergreens, stunning spring blooms - share your favorite photos of trees in the [Wellesley Tree Photo Exhibition](#), a year-long project highlighting town trees and the importance of preserving and protecting them. Wellesley residents are encouraged to contribute photos to the exhibit, which will run at the Wellesley Free Library in the Carol and Alan J. Bernon Media Room through Earth Day - April 22, 2017.



This local project was conceived by a town resident who was inspired by the [2015 Paris United Nations Conference on Climate Change](#). Participating nations at the conference were invited to mark the upcoming 50th Anniversary of World Earth Day in 2020 by planting 7.8 billion trees globally, one for every person on earth.

[Click here to find out how to submit your photos!](#)

Building a Better Beaver Dam

A family of busy beavers in Rosemary Brook is enjoying the benefits of a recent home "renovation." Earlier this month, crews installed a Flexible Pond Leveler pipe system, called a beaver deceiver, into the beaver dam to prevent flooding in the area. The device creates a small leak in the dam, undetectable to the beavers, allowing water to flow through while keeping the dam intact and not harming the beavers. Our thanks to Wellesley's [Department of Public Works](#) for working with Beaver Solutions of Southhampton, MA, to improve water quality while protecting wildlife.



Flexible pipe is inserted into the dam upstream.



Another section of pipe carries water from the dam, emptying



Protective cages keep beavers from getting into the pipes and

Two Ways to Have Your Say...

Weigh-In on Wetlands Regulations

There's still time to share your thoughts on proposed changes to the town [Wetlands Protection Regulations](#). These regulations serve as a guide for the Wetlands Protection Committee on decisions about water supplies, flood control, erosion control, storm damage prevention, water pollution prevention, fisheries, wildlife habitats and more. [Email](#) comments to Wetlands Protection Administrator Linda Hansen.

Help Shape the Future of Our Town

Do you want to help Wellesley plan for its coming years? Consider applying to join the [Unified Plan Steering Committee](#), a group made up of representatives from town departments, Town Meeting members, residents, business owners, and others who will help establish and execute a vision for the future of our town. Deadline for [applications](#) is August 24.



Volunteers Needed for Vernal Pool Clean Up

Help us save the North Forty vernal pool from invasive weeds! The NRC is planning a clean-up on **Tuesday, September 6 from 4 to 6 pm**. Please [sign up](#) if you would like to help preserve this home for wood frogs and salamanders. The water level in the pool is low due to the dry summer, giving us easy access to the banks. By removing weeds from the area now, we can discourage seeds from spreading this fall and help maintain a healthy habitat for aquatic life.



A Green Goodbye to David Wright

Goodbye and good luck to David Wright (left) a longtime member and chair of the [Wellesley Historical Commission](#), a tireless volunteer on the Fuller Brook Coordinating Committee, and vice chair of the current [Fuller Brook Park Preservation Project](#). David is returning to his home state of New Jersey to be closer to family. Thank you, David, for so many years of service to our town - we will miss you!

And a Thumbs Up for WHS Students

Student members of an earth-friendly club at Wellesley High School have given themselves a new name and developed some big ideas for the upcoming school year. We're looking forward to partnering with the **WHS Climate Action Club** (formerly the WHS Green Team) as students take action on climate issues and encourage sustainable practices at WHS and throughout town.



Mark Your Calendar for Upcoming Events

- Sunday, August 21, Morses Pond CLOSED for the season.
- Thursday, September 1, [Wetlands Protection Committee Meeting](#), 6:30 pm, NRC Office, Town Hall.
- Monday, September 5, Labor Day, Town Hall CLOSED.
- Thursday, September 8, [MA Primary Election](#).
- Thursday, September 8, [Friends of Morses Pond Fall Meeting](#), 7 pm, Arnold Room, Wellesley Free Library. Discussion of ongoing Morses Pond management project.
- Tuesday, September 20, 9th Annual [Wellesley Friendly Aid Association Networking Forum](#), 10 am - 2 pm, Wellesley Community Center, "Wellesley's Green Wave: How Sustainability Is Transforming Our Town" Discussion will highlight key initiatives of [Wellesley's Green Collaborative](#) including the NRC and [Sustainable Energy Committee](#), followed by a luncheon. To attend, [email](#) Wellesley Friendly Aid.
- Sunday, September 25, [Wellesley Trails Committee Fall Guided Walks](#), 10 am, Boulder Brook Reservation. Kick off the [2016 Fall Trail Walks](#) season!

New! Sustainability Lecture Series Begins September 19

"Conservation Information for Suburbanites," is a series of five lunchtime classes focusing on climate change and sustainability issues in Wellesley and neighboring towns. Offered by [Wellesley Weston Lifetime Learning](#), this program is available to seniors 55 years-old and over; classes meet once a week at the [Wellesley Unitarian Universalist](#) church. [Email](#) for registration information.

[Web Site](#) [NRC Meeting Agendas](#) [Permit Applications](#) [Community Gardens](#)

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