



CITY OF UNIVERSITY PLACE

HEADLINES

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Special Green Edition

It's ~~not~~ easy being green....

The City of University Place is **GREENING UP** with responsible approaches to **SUSTAINABILITY**. One of the City Council's 2009-2010 goals is to explore "green options." With everyone's help, we can reduce our carbon footprint, increase community participation in recycling and conservation practices, and preserve our quality of life by better protecting our environment.

Because we live on the shores of the beautiful Puget Sound, stormwater pollution is a particular concern. Throughout the world, ocean pollution has become as massive a problem as air pollution – possibly even greater. Huge areas in the Gulf of Mexico have literally become "dead zones" which are areas completely devoid of marine life, due to contaminated urban runoff. As a community we should be very concerned about the pollution problems that are occurring in the South Sound area.

Rain is a part of life in the Pacific Northwest. Stormwater run-off is causing pollution problems throughout the Puget Sound because it transports a mixture of pollutants such as petroleum products, heavy metals, animal waste, and sediments from construction sites, roads, highways, parking lots, and lawns into the waters along our portion of the Sound.

The Puget Sound area south of the Narrows Bridge is particularly vulnerable to pollution. It is the farthest point from the cool waters entering the Sound from the ocean. There is an underwater sill at the Narrows that further impedes the exchange of water to the inlets to the south. This shallow configuration and slow circulation result in a marine environment that is highly susceptible to low oxygen and warm temperature. This condition is very destructive to shellfish resources, salmon and the health of our swimming beaches.



Leach Creek runs along the east side of the City and collects approximately one-quarter of our stormwater run-off. Both Silver and Chum salmon use this stream for spawning. Contaminants such as oils, detergents, pesticides, and pet waste threaten the health of this stream and others in University Place.

Everyone counts and everyone needs to be part of the solution!

By following the simple steps outlined in this newsletter, we can greatly reduce the amount of harmful pollutants that may be entering the beautiful Puget Sound waterway. We can improve the environmental quality of our city in many ways, from washing our cars, to walking our dogs. We should be especially aware during heavy rains to check the storm drains in our neighborhoods and keep them clear of debris. We all can help by using environmentally safe products in our homes and in our landscaping. Be sure to recycle your used motor oil and filters. **NEVER** put them into the storm drain system. Simple steps like composting your yard trimmings, picking up after your pets, or washing your car on the lawn and not your driveway can help significantly. **And remember – recycle everything you can.**

It is ultimately up to each of us to be informed, responsible and involved. With everyone's help, we can reduce our carbon footprint, increase our community participation in recycling and conservation practices, and preserve our quality of life by protecting our environment. Every day there are ways that each of us can contribute to keeping the health of our city and our beautiful Puget Sound shoreline, clean and healthy. And we should, because **Community Matters!**

"Don't blow it – good planets are hard to find."

Time Magazine

Spring Flower Show & Plant Sale on May 2 & 3

Spring is in the air and that means it won't be long before we reap our rich rewards for enduring months of winter rains. Daffodils, tulips and rhododendrons will be in full bloom very soon, but if you want to see an even more stunning explosion of color, make plans to attend the free University Place Spring Flower Show & Plant Sale on May 2 and 3 at Homestead Park.

The show, which is the fourth largest rhododendron exhibit in the country, will feature an exhibit of more than 400 rhododendron trusses in all their rich and magnificent colors as well as a "Mountain of Flowers" and other spectacular displays of regional flora.



The two-day event also features an incredible plant sale featuring a large selection of rare and unusual rhododendrons, azaleas, fuchsias, ferns, dahlias, roses and companion plants from specialty vendors across Puget Sound. The plants are offered at competitive prices and proceeds from the sales support the development and maintenance of the Homestead Park Rhododendron Garden.



Those attending the show can also take a self-guided walking tour of the five-acre Homestead Park Rhododendron Garden which will be in full bloom.

For information on how you can participate in the community-judged rhododendron truss exhibit go to www.CityofUP.com.

If you are interested in being a plant vendor or exhibitor, contact Dr. Gary Becker at (253) 265-2796 or Gbecker@Centurytel.net.

The University Place Spring Flower Show and Plant Sale is sponsored by the Friends of Homestead Park and the Peninsula Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society.



Spring Flower Show & Plant Sale

Sat. May 2: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sun. May 3: 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

Homestead Park
3715 Bridgeport Way

Admission is free

Save the Sound, build a rain garden!

Free workshops throughout Puget Sound

Please join Stewardship Partners, WSU Extension and Pierce Stream Team for a hands-on classroom workshop on rain garden design and construction. Several classes are scheduled throughout Pierce County through the month of April.

A rain garden consists of native trees, shrubs, herbs, and grasses planted in composted-amended soils in a shallow depression and strategically placed to effectively capture rainwater and slowly infiltrate it into the ground. Rain gardens work like native forests by capturing and infiltrating stormwater from rooftops, driveways, and other hard surfaces. Rain

gardens reduce localized flooding; help recharge groundwater aquifers; provide beneficial wildlife habitat; and filter oil, grease and toxic materials before they can pollute local waterways.

Workshop participants will receive a rain garden handbook

and other useful materials. They will also be invited to participate in several full scale rain garden installation workshops scheduled later in the spring and summer.

Workshops are free and registration is required. Participants will be sent site-assessment instructions in advance to help maximize their learning at the workshops. Contact Melissa Buckingham (253-845-2973 or melissab@piercesoundcd.org) at Pierce Stream Team to register and for more details.

STEWARDSHIP PARTNERS



Helping Landowners Preserve the Environment

Remaining Pierce County Rain Garden Classes:

Monday, April 20: University Place – U.P. City Hall
Thursday, April 30: Edgewood – Edgewood City Hall

Classes are from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

5 Steps to Natural Yard Care

We enjoy our yards for their beauty, for relaxing and as a space for recreation. But in taking care of them, we often waste water, produce a lot of rubbish and overuse chemicals that are bad for the environment and the health of our family. The good news is that by making some easy changes we can save money and time, protect the environment and our family's health, and make a healthy, beautiful yard without working too hard.

Step 1: Build healthy soil with compost and mulch

- Feed your soil with compost. Dig 1-4 inches of compost into beds when planting.
- Make compost at home, or buy it in bulk.
- Spread 1-3 inches of compost, leaves, grass, bark, wood chips or mulch to conserve water, prevent weeds and feed the soil.

Step 2: Plant right for your site

- Pick plants that resist pests and use less water.
- Group plants by their needs for water, sun and soil.
- Plant your lawns and vegetables where they grow well: in sunny, well drained, level sites.
- Make space for wildlife by using trees and native plants.

Step 3: Practice smart watering

- Moisten the entire root zone, then let the soil dry before watering again.
- Make every drop count by mulching, selecting drought-tolerant plants, using soaker hoses and water timers and only watering early in the morning or in the evening to avoid evaporation.
- Use automatic irrigation systems efficiently. Have a professional test and adjust your system annually. Check for leaks regularly.
- Direct downspouts out into lawns or garden beds. Use open pavers, rain gardens, compost and mulch.

Step 4: Think twice before using pesticides

- Select disease-resistant plants and pull weeds before they spread.
- Identify the problem before you spray, squash or stomp. Most bugs are good bugs!
- Accept a little damage and give natural predators time to

control pests.

- Select the least toxic control method.
- Replace problem plants with more pest-resistant ones.
- Only use pesticides as the last resort.

Step 5: Practice natural lawn care

- Mow higher (1-2 inches) and leave clippings. The clippings make lawns healthier and provide free fertilizer.
- Add nutrients to your soil or fertilize moderately in May and September with a natural organic or slow release fertilizer, such as SoundGRO.
- Water deeply but infrequently.
- Think twice before using "weed and feed" fertilizers.
- Consider alternatives to lawns for steep slopes, shady areas, or near streams and lakes.

The "5 steps to Natural Yard Care" content has been provided by the Tacoma/Pierce County Health Department. Any questions? Call Geoff Rinehart in the Natural Yard Care Program at (253) 798-4587.

Want to know more?

Resources:

- **TAGRO soil products:** www.tagro.com, (253) 502-2150
- **SoundGro fertilizer:** www.soundgro.com, (253) 798-3099
- **Composting:** www.cityoftacoma.org/composting
- **Natural lawn & garden care:** www.cityoftacoma.org/naturalyards
- **Water conservation, indoors and outdoors:** www.tacomawater.com, (253) 502-8723
- **Washington State University Master Gardener information:** <http://gardening.wsu.edu>, (253) 798-7170
- **Yard and garden chemical disposal:** www.cityoftacoma.org/hazwaste, (253) 591-5418
- **Choosing the right plant for the right place:** www.greatplantpicks.org, www.dnr.metrokc.gov/gonative
- **Native plant information:** <http://gardening.wsu.edu/nwnative>, www.wmps.org

City to sponsor Natural Yard Care workshops

Would you like to learn about environmentally friendly yard and garden maintenance practices to help you have a beautiful and healthy lawn and landscape? This spring, the City of University Place and the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department are presenting fun and informative "Natural Yard Care" workshops. Learn how yard care practices can impact storm-water and what we can do to protect our water quality.

The workshops are presented as a series and will address yard maintenance issues including natural lawn care, smart watering techniques, garden design and selecting the right plant for the right place, growing healthy soil, pest management practices and backyard composting.

Come hear advice from local experts, access useful information and resources, and enter to win great door prizes. Workshops will be presented as a series with different topics and speakers each evening on Tuesdays April

28, May 5 and May 12. The workshops are free, but space is limited! To register for the workshops and reserve your space, please contact Geoff Rinehart at 798-4587 or grinehart@tpchd.org.

Natural Yard Care Workshops

- Tuesday, April 28: "Right Plant, Right Place" Garden Design and Smart Watering
- Tuesday, May 5: Building Healthy Soil and Backyard Composting
- Tuesday, May 12: Natural Lawn Care and Garden Pest Management

All workshops will be 6:30-8:30 p.m. at University Place City Hall, 3715 Bridgeport Way W.

Where does the stormwater on your

We have all seen rainwater run into the storm drainage grates in the streets, but have you ever wondered where the water ends up after it enters the City storm drainage system?

The descriptions below illustrate the various drainage areas in the City. Use the map to the right to locate your neighborhood.

1. Day Island and Soundview drainage basins

In these basins, the stormwater is collected in both pipes and open ditches that drain directly to Puget Sound.

2. Morrison Pothole drainage area

In this area, stormwater drains to the Morrison Wetland located between Morrison Road and 67th Avenue, immediately adjacent to the Adriana Wetland Park (on Morrison). In high storm events, this wetland overflows into the Day Island basin that drains into the Sound.

3. Crystal Springs Creek basin

In this area, storm drainage drains directly to Crystal Creek at the north end of the City. This creek runs into Puget Sound at the Day Island lagoon.

4. Curtis Pothole

This area in the center of the City drains to a depressed area near Curtis High School. From there the water ponds and eventually infiltrates into the groundwater.

5. Leach Creek basin

Stormwater in this area on the east side of the City drains directly into Leach Creek. Both Silver and Chum salmon use this creek for spawning. This creek ultimately runs into Chambers Creek near the Kobayashi Park.

6. Chambers Creek basin

Stormwater in this basin drains to Chambers Creek either directly into the creek or through Peach Creek. Chambers Creek supports Silver, Chum and Chinook salmon and runs into the sound at Chambers Bay.

7. West Side basins

Stormwater in the southwest area of the City either infiltrates into the groundwater or drains directly to Puget Sound.

8. Flett Creek basin

Water in this area drains to the south into Lakewood and ultimately runs into Flett Creek. This creek joins into Chambers Creek near the Kobayashi Park.

Pet waste can hurt our streams and our health

We all love our pets but they can be significant contributors to the pollution in our local streams and waterways. Pet waste in stormwater run-off has many impacts to urban stream water quality with the most significant being fecal bacteria.

This bacteria can pose serious health risks to humans and wildlife and result in the spread of disease. Non-human waste represents a significant source of bacterial contamination in urban watersheds. Studies conducted in Seattle have found that dog waste is responsible for 20 percent of the bacteria found in streams and lakes.

Recently the Department of Ecology has reported elevated levels of fecal coliform in Leach Creek. This stream, that supports both a Silver and Chum salmon run, is now on the verge of being significantly impaired as a result of these coliform levels.

It is estimated that two days' worth of droppings from 100 dogs spread over a 20 square mile area would contribute enough bacteria to a watershed to make a small coastal bay unsafe for swimming or shell fishing.

When your pet waste is disposed of improperly, not only water quality suffers – your health may be at risk at home, too. Pets, children playing outside and adults gardening are most at risk for infection from some of the bacteria and parasites found in pet waste.

Fortunately, it is fairly simple to take care of the pet waste and minimize

the risks to our health and the environment. Pick up your pet's waste in the yard quickly – don't let it set. When walking Fido, be prepared to pick up after him; bring a plastic bag or two just in case. The City has provided pet waste collection bags along Grandview and in some of our parks to help encourage pet owners to pick up.

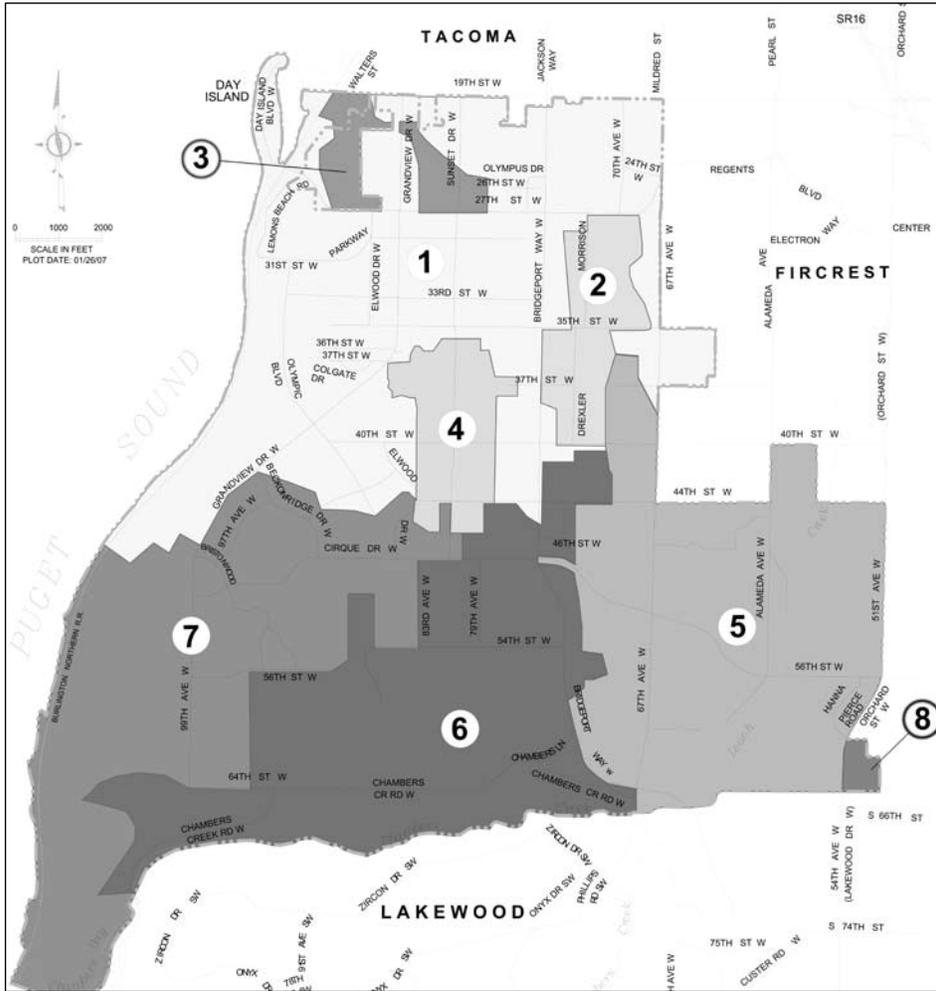
Dog parks can also represent another option for helping to protect our local water quality. These off-leash parks provide a dedicated place for pets to run and play in areas that have provisions for the proper disposal of pet waste and are designed to minimize the impacts to stormwater run-off.

There are several ways for us to pitch in and help with our environment, but picking up after our pets is one of the easiest and most effective. It helps protect our water quality and health and makes it more pleasant for everyone to enjoy our yards, sidewalks and open spaces.



street go?

NPDES / surface water management program requirements



The City of University Place is required by Federal law to obtain and comply with the NPDES (National Pollution Detection and Elimination System) Phase 2 permit. The intent of this permit is to protect the water quality of the surface waters of the state (ie. lakes, streams, Puget Sound) by improving storm drainage run-off regulations and increasing public education and participation.

This permit imposes several new requirements on the City including increased tracking, documenting, and reporting of surface water management activities in the City. The City has obtained a \$75,000 State grant to assist in the implementation of this permit. The permit requires the City to be fully compliant with the program by February 2015.

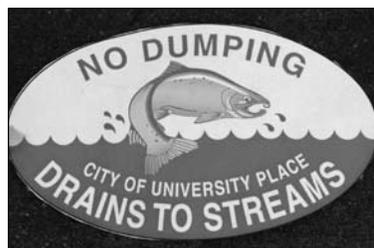
As part of this permit, the City has prepared a surface water management program and has updated the City's storm drainage system map. These documents can be viewed on the City's website at www.CityofUP.com/planning/maps.asp.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the City's surface water management program, the City's NPDES permit, or any other storm drainage issue, please contact the City Engineer, Jack Ecklund, at 460-5411 or jecklund@CityofUP.com.

University Place is "marking the way" for storm drainage

This summer the City will be installing 1,000 markers on the curbs of our main streets near drainage grates that let people know where the storm-water is going. The markers will state "No Dumping" and "Drains to Puget Sound" or "Drains to Stream" (depending on the location) with a salmon logo.

In the past, residents have dumped various materials down the storm drainage grates, such as motor oil, paint, detergents and other household chemicals. In most places, water in the storm system drains directly to the Puget Sound or one of our local streams or wetlands. These materials impair our waterways, causing serious harm to fish, animals, birds and people. By installing these markers, the City is hoping to increase community awareness of the link between the storm drainage in our streets to the environment.



These markers are being paid for through a grant from the Washington State Department of Ecology.

Car wash events soon to have clean option for wash run-off

University Place is taking steps to eliminate pollution of our storm system by purchasing two pollution elimination systems to be used for car wash events in the City. The Portable Safewash Unit is the answer to wash-water management because it captures wash water before entering the storm system and redirects it into a grassy or landscape area where it can be filtered by vegetation. Unfiltered wash water causes detergents to be dumped directly into the waterways of our City, causing harm to aquatic life. The system is extremely easy to setup and use and is an excellent water quality measure in pollution elimination.

These units can be checked out from the City's Public Works Department for any car wash event in the City. Organizations will be given set up and care instructions prior to picking up the units. Units like these have been successfully used to reduce pollutants in waterways in several communities in the state. University Place has purchased these units through a grant from the Washington State Department of Ecology.

For more information regarding these units, contact Kevin Schmidt at 460-6493 or kschmidt@CityofUP.com.

The Pierce Stream Team

The Pierce Stream Team is a local volunteer organization whose goal is to improve the quality of streams in Pierce County for the benefit of fish, wildlife and people through public education and action projects. For many people who are concerned about local environmental and natural resource issues, Stream Team provides opportunities to get involved in your community's conservation efforts.

Stream Team background

Begun in 1994, Stream Team has grown from a one-year program focused on a small geographic area, to a countywide, multi-activity organization that has worked with thousands of volunteers over the last 15 years. Housed within the Pierce Conservation District, Stream Team receives partial funding from Pierce County and a number of local cities – including University Place – through a \$5/per parcel conservation assessment fee.

What does Stream Team do?

Stream Team's primary mission is to educate and involve Pierce County citizens in stream

related issues. Volunteers can participate in a variety of ways, from becoming water quality monitors on local streams and lakes, to planting native trees and shrubs to restoring stream-side habitat. In University Place, Stream Team volunteers conduct water quality monitoring on Leach and Chambers Creeks and have worked with the City on planting projects at several community parks. Stream Team also gives presentations to school and community groups, and can provide free technical assistance to landowners who have questions about invasive weeds or other habitat and restoration issues.

How can you get involved?

It's easy to get involved with Stream Team! Depending on your interests, you can be trained to conduct water quality testing on a stream of your choice, participate in a habitat enhancement project, or just keep up to date through their free, quarterly newsletter.

Perhaps you have your own ideas about stream projects to do, or maybe you've talked with your neighbors about starting your own stream stewardship group. Stream Team can also help with these ideas and can facilitate resources to help you meet your stream goals.

For more infor-

mation about upcoming Stream Team activities and how you can become involved, please contact the team directly at (253) 845-2973 or streamteam@piercecountycd.org. You can also visit the website at www.piercecountycd.org/streamteam.html for a list of all the team's spring activities.



Stream Team volunteers plant native vegetation along Leach Creek near Bridgeport Way as a part of the culvert replacement project.



Visit your local Audubon Society

Did you know that within the University Place is an arm of the local chapter of the National Audubon Society? The Tahoma Audubon Society, a Pierce County Chapter, is housed at three different locations within the county. In U.P. they are located at the Adriana Hess Wetland Park, 2917 Morrison Road W.

This chapter is responsible for the many education opportunities that you find at the park including birdwatching and naturalist field trips, discovery walks, summer day camps and the Great Backyard Bird Count. Their mission is to conserve and restore ecosystems focusing on birds, other wildlife and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and earth's biological diversity.

More information can be found on the internet at www.TahomaAudubon.org, including their up-to-date event calendar. Take some time to check out the abundant classes and birdwalks.

For more information, contact the Tahoma Audubon Society at Adriana Hess by calling (253) 565-9278 or emailing StephSwaim@TahomaAudubon.org.



Parks Appreciation Day on April 18

Join your neighbors and friends throughout Pierce County as we give back to the earth on **Saturday, April 18 from 9 a.m. to noon.!**

This year will mark the 8th Annual Parks Appreciation Day in our county. Work parties will trim limbs, groom grounds and plant flowers and trees! Volunteers are encouraged to bring labeled tools from their homes such as small hand tools, loppers, pruners, rakes, shovels, small pitch forks and even wheelbarrows. A complete list of Pierce County agencies and cities that are participating this year

is available at www.ParksAppreciationDay.net, but the University Place community is encouraged to volunteer at the City's newest addition to its park system: Morrison Park, which is located at the 3300 block of 67th Avenue West.

The day will begin at 9 a.m. with volunteers congregating to coordinate work teams while they enjoy coffee, juice, cookies and a cake in recognition of the planned opening of this wonderful new park. Remarks from elected officials will take place at 9:30 a.m.,

followed by the ribbon cutting ceremony at 9:40 a.m. Work parties will begin immediately subsequent to the ceremony.

For more information about this great event, contact Todd Smith, Parks Maintenance Supervisor, at 460-6493 or tsmith@CityofUP.com.



Free U.P. Bike Ride & Rodeo

Saturday, May 9, 2009 from 9 to 11 a.m.

A fun ride for bicyclists of all ages and experience! Join us on **Saturday, May 9** for a Community Bike Ride and Rodeo throughout University Place! All events begin at the Pierce County Environmental Services Building, 9850 64th Street West (near Grandview and 64th) in University Place.

All bike ride and rodeo participants must wear helmets. Helmets will be available for purchase for \$7 (cash or check only).

*Sponsored by
The City of University Place,
Tacoma Wheelmen's Bicycle Club
and Spoke and Sprocket.*

For more information, contact 460-2530.

Event Schedule:

9 a.m. Bike Rodeo for new bicyclists.
Learn safe biking techniques and receive a free bike safety checkup.

After completing the rodeo, novice riders are invited to bike down the Soundview Path overlooking the beautiful Chambers Bay Golf Course.

10:15 a.m. Join the Tacoma Wheelman Bicycle Club on a bicycle tour of University Place (approximately one hour).

Utility tax refunds for low income households

All City of University Place low income households are eligible to apply for a utility tax refund of \$56, with an additional \$9 refunded for gas utility customers for utility taxes paid through December 31, 2008. Households that qualify can apply for a refund by obtaining an application form and submitting it no later than June 30, 2009.

"Low income" means a household earning less than 50 percent of median income as described by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. For refunds on your 2008 utility tax, the income eligibility levels are as follows:

Household Size	Annual Gross Income
One person	\$23,150
Two persons	\$26,500
Three persons	\$29,800
Four or more persons	\$33,100

Applicants must also show proof that they have lived in the University Place city limits for nine months or more of 2008. An explanation of the necessary documentation for proof of residency is included on the application form.

Application forms may be obtained by:

Visiting University Place City Hall at 3715 Bridgeport Way W, or;

Emailing a request to City_Hall@CityofUP.com, or;

Downloading a copy of the form at www.CityofUP.com, or;

Calling the Finance Department at 460-2547 to have one mailed to you.

Sign up for booth space for the 10th Annual Treasures in the Park, June 6

Are you looking for some fun? A bargain? Great entertainment? Then look no further! Just join the crowds at the 10th Annual "Treasures in the Park" event in Homestead Park next to City Hall on June 6 from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.!

Treasures in the Park is University Place's BIGGEST garage/antique and plant sale and you won't want to miss it! Sign up for a booth – clean out those closets, bring out the antiques and reusable items to sell. There will be bargains galore, rides and activities for the kids, food, fun and entertainment on stage for the whole family.

On-stage entertainment will feature an array of local musicians and dance groups throughout the day. There will even an opportunity for budding vocalists to showcase their talent during our

karaoke intervals.

Booth space for this great event is limited so sign up for your space today! 10x10 spaces are available for an Early Bird Special of \$40 now through May 15. After May 15 booth space will be \$50. The final deadline to sign up is May 31.

Get an application form online at the website: www.CityofUP.com (look under Current Topics).

For more information contact Ken Grassi at (253) 278-1946 or kgrassi@CityofUP.com.



It's always spring for our City streetsweeper

If it's spring, it must be time to do some spring cleaning – and that includes sweeping the streets of University Place.

When it comes to our City's streets the term "spring cleaning" is a bit misleading since the City of University Place Public Works Department actually cleans streets year-round. In fact, City streets are swept three times a year according to a specific schedule that divides the City's residential areas into four zones. Arterial streets, with their higher traffic volume, are swept monthly.

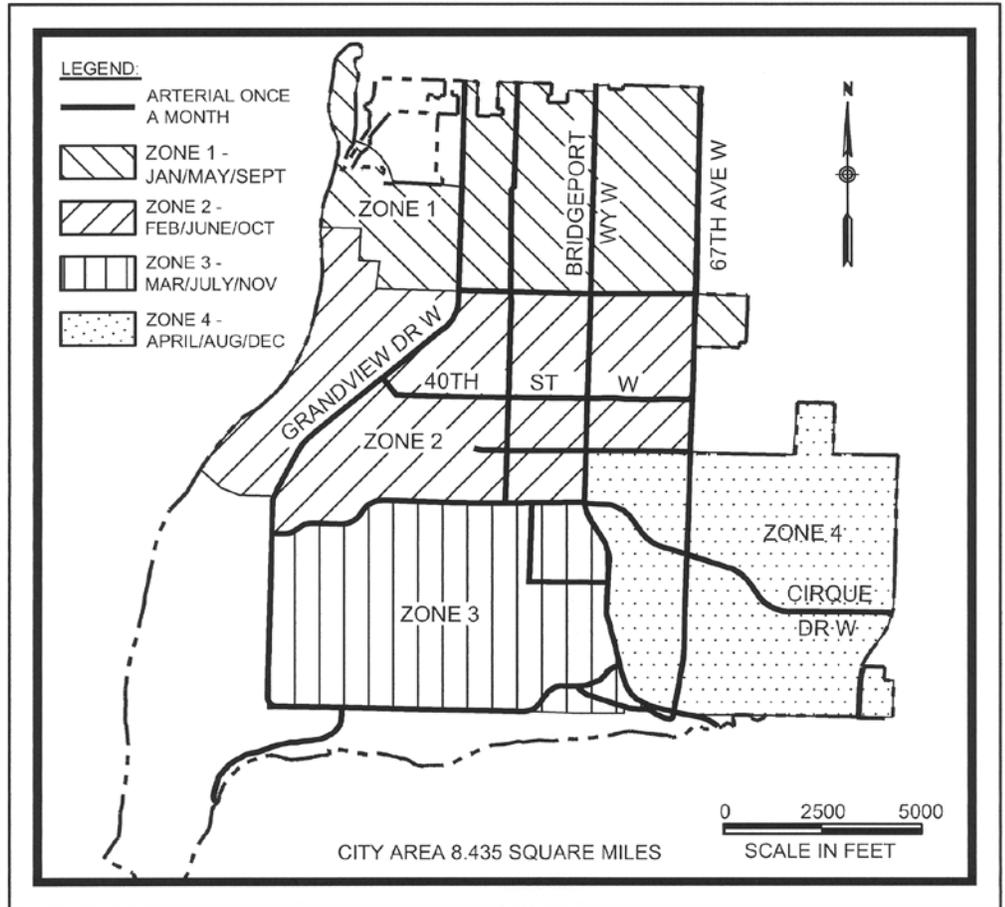
Thanks to a systematic tracking system, Public Works staff can record the name of each street as it is swept, when it was swept and the amount of debris collected. And the amount is staggering: in an average year, the sweeping program covers over 1,800 miles of University Place streets and collects more than 750 tons of debris.

Clean streets certainly contribute to the high quality of life for which University Place is known, but sweeping away dirt and debris also has a significant impact on our environment since it allows us to collect dirt, gravel and other contaminants before they can be washed into storm drains and out into our streams, creeks and eventually, Puget Sound.

Street sweeping is one of the City's most costly maintenance activities, especially given the \$20,000 annual price tag for disposing of the debris collected under the current schedule.

But it's a price worth paying to ensure University Place remains a clean and healthy place to live, work and play.

For more information on our sweeping program, contact Public Works at 460-6493.



UPTV "UNIVERSITY PLACE" ON TV

Each month different programs about University Place air on Click! Channel 12 and Comcast Channel 21. The following programs are scheduled:

- Regular Council Meetings
- Meet Your City
- Destination Recreation – Trips and Tours

Visit our Website: www.CityofUP.com/uptv for a schedule of what's on the channel each week. Send program suggestions and comments to UPTV@CityofUP.com or call 460-5441.

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City of University Place

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8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday-Friday | Email: city_hall@CityofUP.com
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