

MAJOR TOPICS & OTHER ISSUES

Black History Month (1st-29th)

FEBRUARY AWARENESS MONTH

American Heart

International Prenatal Infection Prevention

National Wise Health Consumer

National Children's Dental Health

National Wear Red Day (5th)

Give Kids a Smile Day (5th)

National Donor Day (14th)

World Salt Awareness Week (1st-7th)

Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Week (7th-14th)

Burn Awareness Week (7th-13th)

Children of Alcoholics Week (14th-20th)

Ice Safety Tips

(from **NYC Parks & Recreation**):

During the winter months, ponds and lakes in City parks may appear frozen, but venturing onto them is extremely dangerous and can cause potentially fatal accidents. To remind people of the dangers of thin ice, Parks & Recreation posts warning signs along the perimeter of city lakes and ponds in English and in Spanish. Special ladders are also installed around the edges of city lakes for trained personnel to use in case someone falls through the ice.

- Never go on frozen waters (unless clearly marked otherwise with official signs).
- Parents and caregivers should make sure children are never unattended near ice.
- If you hear cracking, lie down immediately to try to distribute your weight.
- If you witness someone falling through ice, never attempt to make a rescue by yourself.

Call 911 and notify the proper authorities. Be sure to give the exact location and an account of the incident.

Learn more about outdoor skating rinks in City parks

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HIGH SCHOOL ALTERNATIVES ADULT & CONTINUING EDUCATION

IF YOU ARE 21 OR UNDER, A NYC RESIDENT, AND ARE BEHIND IN CREDITS OR HAVE DROPPED OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL, DON'T ASSUME THAT EARNING YOUR HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR GED IS OUT OF REACH. DIAL 311 FOR ASSISTANCE

REMOVAL OF SNOW AND ICE

NYC DIGEST OF SANITATION CODES

REGULATION 16-123 (A&B)

EVERY OWNER, LESSEE, TENANT, OCCUPANT, OR OTHER PERSONS HAVING CHARGE OF ANY LOT OR BUILDING MUST CLEAN SNOW AND/OR ICE FROM THE SIDEWALK WITHIN 4 HOURS AFTER THE SNOW HAS STOPPED FALLING, OR BY 11AM IF THE SNOW HAS STOPPED FALLING AFTER 9PM THE PREVIOUS EVENING.

SNOW MAY NOT BE THROWN INTO THE STREET.

IF THE SNOW OR ICE BECOMES FROZEN SO HARD THAT IT CANNOT BE REMOVED, THE SIDEWALK MAY BE STREWN WITH ASHES, SAND, SAWDUST OR SIMILAR SUITABLE MATERIAL WITHIN THE SAME TIME LIMITS. THE SIDEWALK MUST BE THOROUGHLY CLEANED AS SOON AS THE WEATHER PERMITS. FAILURE TO DO SO MAY RESULT IN FINES UP TO \$350.00.

CALL 311 TO REPORT ALL DANGEROUS SIDEWALKS.

FREE TAX PREPARATION

THE IRS VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE (VITA) AND THE TAX COUNSELING FOR THE ELDERLY (TCE) PROGRAMS OFFER FREE TAX HELP FOR TAXPAYERS WHO QUALIFY.

FIND A VITA SITE NEAR YOU THERE ARE MANY OF VITA SITES LOCATED IN QUEENS. YOU MAY FIND A SITE NEAR YOU BETWEEN JANUARY AND APRIL 15, 2014.

CALL 1-800-906-9887. FIND A TCE OR AARP TAX-AIDE SITE NEAR YOU

A MAJORITY OF THE TCE SITES ARE OPERATED BY THE AARP FOUNDATION'S TAX AIDE PROGRAM. TO LOCATE THE NEAREST TCE SITE OR AARP TAX-AIDE SITE BETWEEN JANUARY AND APRIL 15, 2014 CALL 888-227-7669.

Department of Buildings offers Tips for Winterizing Your Home

1. Reduce drafts. Loose fitting windows and doors can be major sources of heat loss in a building. Properly seal them with weather-proofing materials. Adding weatherstripping around the edges of doors and windows will help keep heat in.
2. Check attic insulation. The majority of heat that escapes from a home is through the roof. Proper insulation of at least six inches will help prevent heat loss.
3. Maintain heating equipment. Properly maintain heating equipment to assure maximum efficiency and reduce the risk of malfunction. Have equipment cleaned and serviced yearly by a qualified individual to ensure safe use.
4. Clean your chimney. Have your chimney cleaned and checked once a year, preferably before heating season starts. If you have not had your chimney inspected within the last three years, you should have it checked to ensure that there are no blockages.
5. Protect water meters and pipes from freezing. Pipes and meters can freeze when in unheated areas. Ensure there is proper insulation in the surrounding areas. Turn off water to outside faucets, remove hoses and drain the pipes.
6. Employ proper precautions when thawing pipes and meters. If pipes and meters freeze, thaw them carefully. Do not use a flame, which could ignite a fire or cause a steam explosion. Open a faucet near the frozen area to release vapors from melting ice.
7. Prevent snow and water accumulation. Snow and rain that collect on roofs can cause a leak or compromise a building's structural integrity if the accumulated weight becomes too great. Remove snow from roofs and drains regularly. Clean gutters and roof drains to prevent clogs.
8. Check contractor qualifications. Make sure that individuals inspecting a boiler or chimney have the proper qualification from the Department of Buildings and Department of Consumer Affairs. Make sure your heating oil company has had its delivery truck inspected by the Department of Consumer Affairs to check for faulty meters.
9. Install smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. Make sure that smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors are working. Change the batteries of these devices twice a year - when you change your clocks for Daylight Saving Time.
10. Avoid fire hazards. Keep space heaters away from draperies, linens and all flammable materials. Do not let candles burn low, and do not place them near children.