Conservation and training go hand-in-hand when caring for the land at the Arden Hills Army Training Site (AHATS). The 1,500-acre site was part of the former 2,730-acre Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant (TCAAP).

"Initially, all of the TCAAP property was owned and occupied by 12 farmsteads before being acquired by the federal government as an ammunition manufacturing plant preceding World War II," explained Mary Lee, environmental protection specialist for the Minnesota Army National Guard.

"The combination of farming practices and ammunition production led to the need for compliance and conservation efforts," added Lee.

Lee has worked for the compliance and conservation division for nearly a decade and serves as part of an award-winning team with her peers at Camp Ripley, who have been honored by the federal government for their sustainability efforts.

At AHATS, Lee leads a number of initiatives in collaboration with the Department of Natural Resources and other organizations that focus on native prairie restoration and invasive plant management, wildlife monitoring, sustainable building initiatives, and event planning.

In addition, the Army training exercises are good for the land, because performing drills that involve running and driving encourages optimal plant growth and keeps down the number of invasive species, explained Lee.

Blocking noise pollution is also an area of focus. "We purposely work to keep noise down by making sure our helicopter exercises are conducted over road paths rather than homes, and we survey surrounding homeowners," Lee said.

Lee’s job in taking care of the land is a reward for the senses. At different times of the year, Lee said she sees and hears trumpeter swans, loons, river otter, great-horned owls, and chimney swifts.

“Minnesota is big on nature, the environment, and the military," she said. "I enjoy being here with the focus on the land and the natural resources.”

Upcoming events at AHATS

Annual events provide opportunities to learn more about conservation and compliance efforts.

American Woodcock Courtship Display
April 11
Free (ages 18 and older)

Earth Day
April 27
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Meet at Ben Franklin Gate
Help clean the site (ages 18 and older)

Urban Bird Festival
May 18, 19, and 20

Butterfly Survey with St. Paul Audubon
June 30

Open House
September 8

Power of One 5K
September 9
Suicide awareness and Beyond the Yellow Ribbon initiatives

For more information about event timing and registration, contact Mary Lee at mary.l.lee.civ@mail.mil or by calling 651-282-4420.
Arden Hills Service Directory
1245 West Highway 96
Arden Hills, MN 55112-5734
www.cityofardenhills.org
651-792-7800
Office Hours
Monday through Friday
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Sheriff and Fire
911
Water and Sewer Problems
(During non-business hours)
651-767-0640
Mayor
David Grant 651-538-0747
dgrant@cityofardenhills.org
Councilmembers
Brenda Holden 651-636-2987
bholden@cityofardenhills.org
Fran Holmes 651-631-1866
fholmes@cityofardenhills.org
Dave McClung 651-332-0352
davemcclung@cityofardenhills.org
Steve Scott 651-604-0919
sscott@cityofardenhills.org
City Administrator
Dave Perrault 651-792-7824
dperrault@cityofardenhills.org
Communications Coordinator
Dawn Skelly 651-792-7817
dskelly@cityofardenhills.org
Communications Committee
Council Liaison
Fran Holmes
Council meetings are held at City Hall on the second and fourth Mondays of the month at 7:00 p.m. Meetings are televised live on Cable Channel 16. Meetings of the Planning Commission are televised as well. Please visit cityofardenhills.org for information about archived meeting playbacks.
Arden Hills Notes is the official newsletter of the City of Arden Hills, an equal-opportunity employer.

Upcoming events

Coffee with a Cop to be held April 24
Continuing the community engagement experience of Night to Unite and Hot Dog with a Deputy, the Sheriff’s Office Public Safety Services Division will hold a Coffee with a Cop event on Tuesday, April 24, 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., at Caribou Coffee, 113 Village Centre Drive, North Oaks (near Hwy 96 & Hodgson).

The goal of the event is to bring neighbors and deputies together in an informal, neutral space for conversation.

Scoops for Troops set for April 29
The Scoops for Troops annual fundraiser will feature a 5k run, 3k walk, silent auction, and ice cream and food social to raise money for The Fallen Heroes Children’s Education Fund through Tribute to the Troops.

The event will be held Sunday, April 29, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., at the Arden Hills Army Training Site, 4761 Hamline Ave N. To register, visit tributetothetroops.webconnex.com/scoops2018. Pets and strollers are welcome outside of the building.

Save the date: Spring Cleanup Day May 19
This year’s Spring Cleanup Day will take place on Saturday, May 19, 7:00 a.m. to Noon at 1425 Paul Kirkwold Drive (Hamline Avenue and Highway 96).

In partnership with Shoreview, Arden Hills hosts a spring and fall cleanup day each year to give residents an opportunity to dispose of electronics, mattresses, furniture, and other common household items.

In 2017, a total of 181 tons of materials were collected between the two events. Additional information will be available on the City’s website as the date approaches and information will be mailed to all residents.

New impound provider for Ramsey County Animal Control
All stray or lost dogs and cats impounded by the Ramsey County Sheriff’s Office Animal Control will be brought to the Saint Paul Animal Control Center at 1285 Jessamine Avenue W., St. Paul. Call 651-266-1100 to retrieve your pet.

Report lost and stray pets to the Sheriff’s Office Dispatch at 651-767-0640.
February 12, 2018
All items approved unanimously by 5-0 vote.

- Approved a professional services agreement with WSB and Associates for professional engineering services.
- Conducted a public hearing and approved improvements to County Road F between Hamline and Lexington Avenues. This project includes the widening of County Road F, intersection improvements at Innovation Way, a trail on the south side of Hamline Avenue, and a watermain replacement. The funding sources for this cooperative project are Ramsey County, the Arden Hills PIR and Water Utility Funds, Minnesota Department of Transportation State Aid, and developer reimbursement.

February 26, 2018
Absent: McClung (Excused). All items approved unanimously by 4-0 vote.

- Appointed Pang Silseth to the position of Accounting Analyst; Ms. Silseth had previously been the City’s Accounting Clerk.
- Entered into a one-year contract with Saint Paul Animal Control for impound services.

- Accepted a donation from the Arden Hills Foundation in the amount of $650 for a park bench at Royal Hills Park.
- Approved plans and specifications and ordered advertisement for bids for the 2018 Pavement Management Program. The project includes reconstruction of Indian Oaks Court, Indian Oaks Trail, Floral Drive, Norma Circle, Gale Circle and James Circle, as well as reclamation of Brueberry Lane, Parkshore Drive, and Wedgewood Circle.

For a complete and detailed listing of recent City Council action, please review the meeting minutes on the City website at www.cityofardenhills.org and click on Agendas & Minutes.

Opportunities to make a difference in Arden Hills

Council seats up for election

The Mayor and two City Councilmember seats will be up for election this fall. All three open seats will be for four-year terms (2019-2022).

If you are interested in running for one of the open seats, you must file an Affidavit of Candidacy. Candidate filing packets will be available this summer at City Hall or at the Ramsey County Elections Office (90 West Plato Blvd., Suite 160, St. Paul). The filing period opens July 31 and closes August 14. The cost to file is $2 and must be paid with cash or check.

Planning Commission vacancy

There is currently a vacancy on the Planning Commission for a regular member and an alternate member. Serving on the Planning Commission is a great opportunity to learn more about proposed development projects and to advise the City Council. The Planning Commission reviews and makes recommendations concerning all land use applications, considers changes to the City’s Zoning Code, and periodically reviews and recommends updates to the Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Commission has seven members. An alternate member sits as a voting member when a regular member cannot attend a meeting. Please visit cityofardenhills.org/planningcommission for more information.

Utility rate study underway

The City of Arden Hills is currently conducting a water and sewer utility rate study.

It is anticipated that the rate study will be concluded in the next couple of months.

A new rate schedule will be mailed to all customers after the rate study has been finalized and new rates have been approved.
Navigating rights-of-way, easements, and underground utilities

Thinking of installing a basketball hoop? Want to add some new trees to your yard? Maybe put up a new shed or fence this year? Replacing that driveway? Avoid unwanted complications by knowing before you start where any rights-of-way areas, easements, and underground utilities are located.

Obstructions and excavations within public rights-of-way, easements, or on public grounds are prohibited by City ordinance with few exceptions.

A right-of-way is generally along roads, trails, or planned future roads. Rights-of-way also encompass sidewalks, boulevards, and the section of land about 13’ wide (in most cases) behind the curb. Utilities are often present in these areas as well. The right-of-way areas have been established for public infrastructure.

An easement is an area that is set aside for access purposes, utilities, and conservation. Most properties have some sort of easement on them.

Both rights-of-way and easements need to remain clear of structures or obstructions such as basketball hoops – portable and permanent, sheds, and large trees for ease of access to maintain public infrastructure.

Fences may be allowed in easements, but not in rights-of-way. There is no requirement to replace or reimburse for structures that must be removed.

Permits are available for rights-of-way excavations related to driveway installation and utility work.

You can save yourself time and money if you know where rights-of-way and easements are located on your property. If you need assistance in locating easement information, please contact Public Works at 651-792-7800.

Homeowners should be aware of the location of underground utilities on their property for safety reasons. You can have public utilities located on your property by calling 811 or 800-252-1166 or signing up at GopherStateOneCall.org. Please note, privately installed utilities like invisible fences, gas grill lines, and irrigation lines will not be marked.

Report sewer backups and prevent blockages by properly disposing items

If you see, hear, or smell anything that may be a sewage overflow or backup in your home, contact the City's Public Works department at 651-792-7800 (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays), or Ramsey County Dispatch at 651-767-0640 (after hours, weekends, and holidays).

If needed, a work crew can inspect manholes in the area and determine if the problem is in the City line or your service line. When you call, be ready to describe where the overflow is occurring and any other details.

To prevent sewer-line blockages, never pour fats, oils, or grease down the drain. These materials harden and block your sewage lines, causing costly plumbing repairs to your private lines. Fats, oils, and grease also create problems for your neighbors when the blockages occur in the City’s lines.

Proper disposal of fats, oils, and grease is easy. Just pour them into a coffee can or other durable container and place in your trash.

Other problematic items include disposable wipes, also known as flushable wipes, and personal hygiene products. Although these products may flush from your toilet, they cause maintenance issues in the sanitary sewer system.

There are more than 45 miles of sanitary sewer lines in Arden Hills. The Public Works Department cleans approximately 1/3 of the sewer lines each year, but we still need your help in preventing sewer maintenance issues and backups.
Did you know that Ramsey County provides a free collection service for the safe disposal of unwanted, expired, and unused medicine at six public drop boxes?

The safe disposal of medicine helps prevent crime, drug abuse, and accidental poisoning. Flushing medicines down the drain or throwing them out in the trash can harm the environment.

Ramsey County began operating the first year-round medicine collection program in the Twin Cities metro area in September of 2011.

This program is a collaborative effort between Saint Paul - Ramsey County Public Health, and the Ramsey County Sheriff’s office to prevent crime and protect the environment.

During the past six and a half years, the program has received nearly 46,000 pounds of waste medicines from an estimated 24,433 visits from residents.

**Drop-off location**

In Arden Hills, the Ramsey County Sheriff’s Patrol Station at 1411 Paul Kirkwood Drive (Hamline Avenue and Highway 96) has a medicine collection drop box that is open to the public Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

For more information, go to RamseyRecycles.com/medicine.

**Steps to prepare medicine for disposal**

1. Keep medicines in their original container for legal transport. Put loose medicines in a clear plastic bag and label it.

2. Seal all containers in clear plastic bags, ideally one-gallon or smaller size.

3. Place bag with medicine into drop box.

**Medicines accepted at public drop boxes**

Medicines from households are accepted in any form, including prescription, over-the-counter, vitamins, supplements, and pet medicines. Examples include:

- Blister packs
- Capsules
- Pills
- Creams
- Gels
- Epinephrine injections (unused only)
- Inhalers
- IV bags
- Liquids
- Patches
- Powders
- Sprays
- Vials

**Items NOT accepted**

No needles, lancets, empty syringes, or used epinephrine pens.

These items are accepted for free at Ramsey County’s year-round household hazardous waste collection site.

No medicines from businesses, healthcare facilities, long-term care facilities, pharmacies, doctors’ offices, or veterinary clinics.
From the Mayor

It seems that every year things get busier, more complicated, with an ever-increasing to-do-list. There are more things that require that most valuable resource . . . time. If only there was a way to make some things automatic. One of those things requiring your time, namely paying your city utility bill, just got a little easier. There are several ways to make things more convenient and less time consuming.

Billing
There are three ways to receive your utility bill: e-mail, paper, or both. If you elect e-mail, you will receive an e-mail notification when your bill is ready. You can be out of town and not have to worry about missing a bill as long as you have access to your e-mail. Or, maybe you just prefer the convenience of an e-mail.

Account access
With an online account you can check the status of your account at any time from any location as long as you have internet access. You can view and even compare (in graph or table format) your quarterly usage going back several years. This can be especially useful during summer months when using more water for things like watering the lawn or washing the car.

Quick payment
Even without an online account, you can make an online payment with the online “Quick Payment” option. All you will need is to provide your water account number, amount you want to pay, and your payment information for either a credit/debit card or checking account. With an online account, most of your information will be prefilled.

You will have the option to save your financial information (required for auto-pay) for easy retrieval. This will save you time and also eliminate the need to enter your financial information each time you make an online payment.

Enroll in auto-pay
Auto-pay is certainly the easiest way to pay your utility bill. You no longer have to remember when to make a payment. Enroll in auto-pay and the payment will automatically be made for you on the due date. This avoids the possibility of incurring a late fee. You can enroll using a checking/savings account or credit/debit card (Mastercard or Visa). Your payment will be made to that account going forward, no more having to remember the due date and no more postage.

Combining auto-pay with e-mail billing and online access makes it effortless for payment and management of your account based on your schedule. It also makes it easier for the city to manage utility billing since the auto-pay process automates the posting to accounts.

Auto-pay eliminates the need to mail a check. The Ramsey County Sheriff’s Department recommends that checks sent in the mail be deposited in a secure mailbox. Examples of a secure mailbox include a US Post Office location, US Post Office receptacle, or a locking type mailbox. Checking account information can be used to create new check blanks or the stolen check can have the ink removed and be rewritten, commonly called “Check Washing.”

Payment methods are secured through an encrypted third-party called Merchant Transact, which works in conjunction with Springbrook Software, our utility billing system. Together the two companies provide a secure PCI-compliant environment to pay utility bills.

Sign up online
Visit www.cityofardenhills.org and click on “Online Services,” then click on “Utility Bill Payments,” to sign up online. If you need further assistance, contact City Hall at 651-792-7800, or email City staff at utilitybilling@cityofardenhills.org. They would be glad to assist you in setting up your account over the phone.

Regards,

David Grant
Mayor