

NEWSRelease

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Village to Host Free “Green Star Home” Workshop

Orland Park’s Green Initiatives Receive Statewide and Energy Star Honors

ORLAND PARK – Orland Park homeowners can learn how to make their homes environmentally friendly while earning points in the village’s Smart Living Orland Park Residential Rewards Program. The Recreation Department will host “Easy Steps To A Green Star Home” on Saturday, February 20 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the village’s Cultural Center, 14760 Park Lane. Jackie Riffice, of Prairie Godmothers, Inc., will lead the free program, presenting tips for conserving water, reducing energy, reclaiming, recycling and maintaining a healthy home environment.

Orland Park’s Residential Rewards Program includes four categories that include ways to reduce a home’s energy consumption. Homeowners may choose which tasks they will complete and earn points to become an “Orland Park Green Star Home.”

“We’ve had a great response to Orland Park’s green initiative,” said Mayor Dan McLaughlin. “People appreciate knowing what they can do to help make their homes more environmentally friendly,” the mayor added.

“As the mayor said when the village unveiled Smart Living Orland Park last year, people wanted to do something but weren’t sure what,” said Trustee Patricia Gira, chair of the village’s Parks, Recreation and Environmental Initiatives Committee. “The village’s green challenges include a number of simple every day ways to conserve energy,” Gira added.

“We’re making information available to help residents make choices that are good for them and for our environment. This is the first step in our green programming for residential usage,” Gira explained. She noted that the village’s Green and Gorgeous Committee, comprised of village residents and business people, will soon choose a development to receive a sustainable landscape plan designed by Prairie Godmothers, Inc. This project will be completed in the spring and will serve as a model for the entire village.

“The Orland Park community is excited about the village’s green efforts and we welcome everyone’s participation,” Gira said.

In late December, Illinois Governor Pat Quinn named the Village of Orland Park Green Team among the 22 individuals and groups statewide to receive the 2009 Environmental Hero Awards. The annual award recognizes a strong commitment to the health and protection of the environment in Illinois.

The volunteer members of Orland Park’s Green Team visit area businesses to offer suggestions to make operations more energy efficient, water efficient and cost effective.

“We’re very proud of our Green Team volunteers,” McLaughlin said. “These people have shown a real commitment to doing what they can to help. Their being honored by the governor gives testament to the important messages they deliver to our local business community,” he added.

“The village recognizes the businesses that participate in our program, doing their part to help the environment,” explained Director of Recreation Nancy Flores. Team members tout the use of CFL bulbs, Orland Hour and other environmentally friendly efforts. “We welcome anyone who would like to be a part of this program,” Flores noted, adding that volunteers should call the department to join.

Orland Park also recently received word that the village has reached its goal to reduce green house gas emissions by 365,900 pounds. According to www.energystar.gov, Orland Park’s community pledges will also save nearly \$30,000 in energy costs.

“We’ve been inviting residents to sign onto www.smartlivingop.com to take the Energy Star Pledge,” explained Recreation Program Supervisor Stephanie Simpson. “We were thrilled to know that so many people signed on, promising to make a difference,” she added.

“This past year brought the debut of Orland Park’s green initiative,” Gira noted. “Having two organizations recognize the community’s efforts thus far is a tremendous honor indeed,” she added. “The green movement in Orland Park is strong and we look forward to everyone being a part of it,” she said.

Pre-registration is required for the free workshop on February 20. Open to those age sixteen and older, the workshop is limited to 50 participants.

Registration is available at the village’s Sportsplex, 11351 West 159th Street and at the Franklin Loebe Recreation Center, 14650 South Ravinia Avenue. For more information, call the Recreation Department at 708/403-7275. Further information about the Village of Orland Park’s SmartLiving Program is available at www.smartlivingop.com.