The Biltmore Forest Chronicle

June 2024

Major Stormwater System Improvements Underway, Will Continue Through November







The Town of Biltmore Forest has some exciting updates to our significant stormwater system improvements in Rosebank Park and in the vicinity of Vanderbilt Road, Stuyvesant Road, and Lone Pine Road this summer. As of May 20, work has officially begun on the project! The purpose of the $1.2 million-dollar, 3,630 linear foot long project is to improve significant flooding issues in the intersection of Vanderbilt, Stuyvesant, and Lone Pine Roads.

The Town's Contractor, Hyatt Pipeline, LLC from Canton have begun staging materials and equipment in the lower end of Rosebank Park. Ultimately their staging and construction areas will be enclosed, and access will be limited to those sections not being utilized by the Contractor. Please be aware that Rosebank Park may be partially or temporarily closed periodically while construction is active. However, the Contractor is aware that the Park is required to be open for the annual Town-wide Independence Day celebration on July 4th and will be accommodating our use of as much of the park property as possible for that event.

Work will begin in the southernmost section of the park and will move northward through the park toward the intersection of Park and Vanderbilt Roads. Once the construction activities move beyond the park and along the road shoulders, likely in July, productivity will necessarily slow down due to required traffic control and extended single lane closures for the remainder of the summer and through October.

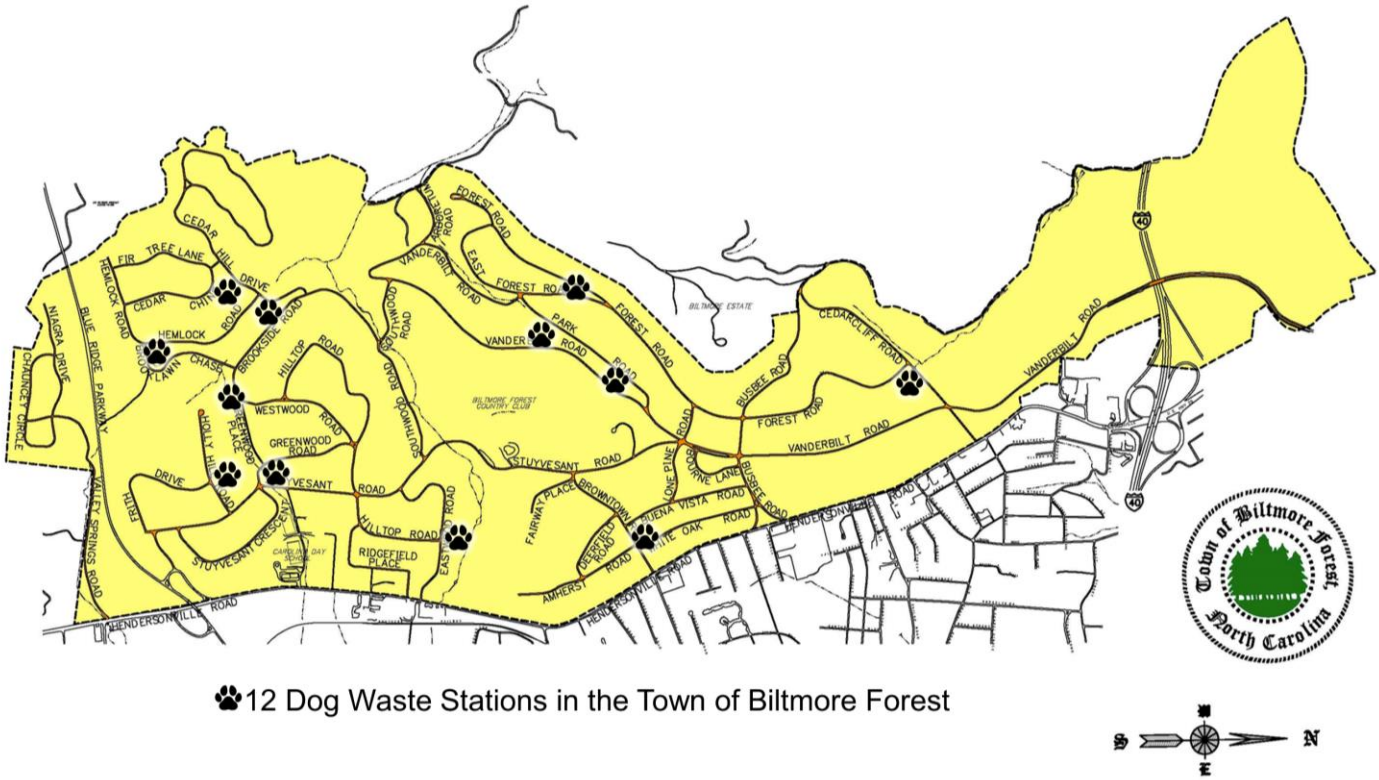
After the installation of the new piping, the Contractor will complete final repairs to the roads along the project area. We are aware that the current temporary patch along the sewer line replacement on Vanderbilt Road does not meet our current standards. Our contractor will be milling and overlaying affected roadways with new asphalt, effectively restoring the driving surface to a new condition.

We ask that residents please be patient and mindful of possible delays in this area and to watch carefully for construction workers and vehicles. The safety of our residents and our workers is a primary goal.

If at any time you have questions or concerns about this project or its related work, please contact the Public Works department at 828-274-3919. Our department looks forward to seeing everyone at the Independence Day celebration on July 4th!

Help Keep our Creeks and Streams Clean – Pick Up After your Dog!

Did you know dog and pet waste is a major contributor to stormwater pollution? Pets and urban wildlife are major sources of contamination because pet waste contains harmful bacteria and parasites. You can make a difference by being a responsible pet owner and carrying bags with you to pick up pet waste. The Town provides bags at **12** different locations within The Forest. When walking, please pick up after your dog and DO NOT leave the bags on the ground. Dog waste and bags should not be left on the tops of brush and leaf piles either, as these piles get put into mulch yards and ends up running downstream and contaminating stormwater. Do your part to help maintain the beauty of our Town and the health of our creeks and streams. Please pick up after your pet!



12 Dog Waste Stations in the Town of Biltmore Forest

The Blood Drive with The Blood Connection was a Success!!

Thank you to everyone who took the time to donate!

THE BLOOD® CONNECTION
Your Community Blood Center

Here are the stats from the blood drive:

27 units of blood connected

Thank you for helping contribute to the overall health of the community! We hope to bring The Blood Connection back again for another successful drive in the future.

Chief's Corner

Summer is here and with warmer weather comes much more interaction with wildlife. We have received numerous bear sightings and complaint calls recently. The key thing to remember is that the bears are either searching for food or traveling to and from habitat. Most of the time the bear will avoid you just by your presence, but proactive prevention goes a long way.

- Make sure all bird feeders are put away during this time of year.
- Keep your trash put up until it is ready to be picked up. There are also bear resistant trash cans and other devices available that keep the bears moving along.
- Keeping your grill clean and stored securely will also help.
- Obviously, if a bear is acting aggressively or traveling with a cub or cubs avoid them if possible.

There are so many thoughts on what to do if attacked by a bear. Many experts suggest using bear spray, make no sudden movements, or even play dead. The easiest way is to be proactive and eliminate their food source, and you should have no problems with the bears in the area.

Here are some summer crime prevention tips that we should practice year-round:

- Always be aware of your surroundings.
    - We are all in hurry with the hustle and bustle of life but do not let your guard down. Focusing on your surroundings and staying alert will reduce your chances of becoming a victim.
- Be aware of solicitation scams both online and over the phone.
    - If something seems too good to be true, then it probably is. Anyone that contacts you asking for personal, or banking information should be verified prior to giving any information. If it is a legitimate call, they will have no problem with you calling them back or making some verification. Scammers will try to make you feel pressured or hurried into giving this information. Do not fall into their trap!
- Always remove your valuables and secure your vehicle at night.
    - Even if your car is in your driveway, it is a prime target to be rummaged through by a criminal looking to score. Most of the time, if the door is locked and there are no valuable items in sight, the thief will move on looking for an easier target. Investigate the feasibility of a security camera or alarm system. Prices have come down recently and these systems are very inexpensive for the returned amount of protection. No system is 100% guaranteed to prevent a crime but we have solved many incidents by starting with camera footage or a picture of the suspect.

Remember, if you see something say something! Please call the Police Department regarding any suspicious activity you might observe. It is always better to be safe than sorry and many times your call might prevent someone from becoming a victim.

As always feel free to contact the police department for any need that you might have. Please download the Biltmore Forest Police Department app for constant updates and information.

Thanks,

Chief Chris Beddingfield
Email: cbeddingfield@biltmoreforest.org



Employee Spotlight

Chief Chris Beddingfield has been selected as the Outstanding Law Enforcement Executive of the Year! Chief Beddingfield will be formally recognized on this fantastic achievement on Wednesday, June 12 by the NC Department of Health and Human Services in Raleigh, NC.

We are all so proud of our Chief of Police! Thank you for all that you do to keep our community safe. Keep up the great work!

Employee Anniversaries

Eric Anderson – 5 Years

Gabriel Crespo – 19 Years

Jess Hedrick – 1 Year

Debbie Hill – 4 Years

Laura Jacobs – 15 Years

Jonathan Kanipe – 10 Years

Employee Birthdays

June

Chris Beddingfield

Harry Buckner

July

Gabriel Crespo

Matt Kelly

Joe Zub

August

Michael Anton

Wayne Husko

Laura Jacobs

Kenny Merritt

Remember to call or email The Town Planner, Tony Williams, with any questions or news of a potential project. You can reach him at: twilliams@biltmoreforest.org

Important Information for Residents

Each year, the Town prepares and adopts an annual budget that governs spending and forecasts revenues for the fiscal year. Part of this process includes setting water rates for residents and determining what rates are needed to meet the Town's projected expenditures. This coming fiscal year, beginning July 1, 2024, presents a more difficult challenge for the Town than previous years.

The Town purchases water at a wholesale rate from the City of Asheville. We maintain, operate, and bill for the water within the Town, but the actual water comes through master meters from the City of Asheville. The city conducted a study of their water system and fiscal needs last year that resulted in sizable changes to their overall water rate structure and increasing water rate charges to the Town. These changes will begin in July 1, 2024 and result in wholesale customers (like the Town) and other large-scale users paying more. The rates charged by the City of Asheville to the Town will increase by 33 percent for each of the next three years, and likely continue to increase thereafter.

Important Information for Residents - Continued

Town Water Rate Study

With such dramatic increases looming, the Town enlisted a consultant to perform a water rate study to review our rate structure and ensure the water fund operated in a fiscally responsible manner. The water rate study was presented to the Board of Commissioners in May 2024. The Board adopted the recommended rate structure on June 4, 2024 as part of the regular budget adoption process. Changes to the Town's water rate structure are substantive but for users based on meter size and water availability.

Upcoming Water Rate Changes

Changes for water rates in the coming year will be effective on the August 2024 bill. The Town's current water rates are broken down into two categories, and each will be discussed in detail below: base unit charges and volumetric charges.

Base Unit Charges

The Town has approximately 807 water customers; of those, 651 customers have either a 5/8" or 1" meter. The base rate fee for these customers (i.e. the bi-monthly availability charge) will increase by $15.00 every two months for most customers. Customers with larger meter sizes, classified as commercial users, will see more dramatic increases.

Volumetric Charges

Volumetric charges are what customers pay for their actual water usage. The proposed changes for the volumetric rate are not as significant as base unit increases for the average user, and in fact, the per gallon charge is dropped by one penny for users who use less than 5,000 gallons every two months. The new rate structure for volumetric charges is as follows:

Volume (Gallons)	Rate (per thousand gallons)
0-5,000	$10.00
5,001 – 40,000	$9.00
>40,000	$8.00

The Town understands that these are high percentage increases and does not make this decision lightly. These revenue increases allow the Town to compensate for the wholesale increases from the City of Asheville and fund the Town's needs the water system. In short, this rate structure change solidifies the Town's water system from a fiscal perspective and ensure its continued viability.

For more information, including a copy of the water rate study and FY25 budget and schedule of fees, please visit the Town's website at biltmoreforest.org.

Town of Biltmore Forest
P.O. Box 5352
Asheville, NC 28813



The Town's Annual Independence Day picnic and celebration will take place Thursday, July 4th from 10am-12pm at Rosebank Park. The annual Children's Parade will begin promptly at 10 a.m. and depart from Vanderbilt Road in front of the Town Hall. The Mayor will welcome the crowd at 9:50 followed by Chief Chris Beddingfield leading the crowd in the Pledge of Allegiance. From there, Skyland Fire Department and the Biltmore Forest Police Department will lead the procession down Vanderbilt Road to the park. For those who want to begin at the park, please feel free to join us beginning at 10am! The Town will serve its customary hot dogs with all the trimmings, chips, watermelon, ice cream, sno-cones, cotton candy, and water/juice will be served. We will have a bouncy obstacle course and slide for children, and there will also be face painting and balloon animal twisting! The Well Drinkers will be performing starting at 10am until early afternoon. The Well Drinkers are a progressive, original bluegrass band based out of Western North Carolina. We look forward to seeing everyone on Thursday, July 4th at Rosebank Park!

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Doris P. Loomis – Mayor Pro-Tem
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E. Glenn Kelly

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