



Winter 2023 Edition

ONWARD OXFORD

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE RESIDENTS OF OXFORD

NEW



MESSAGE FROM MANAGER

Jennifer M. Callahan, Town Manager



Welcome to the latest edition of Onward Oxford! This newsletter is provided to deliver important information, project updates, past and future events, departmental services, and achievements all about the Town of Oxford. We have a many exciting projects and events to share with you in this latest edition!

Grants have been an important funding source for many of the projects we do here in Oxford. One of the major grants we were recently awarded was **\$182,000** for additional ADA Improvements in and around Joslin Park! We are extremely excited about this welcomed funding as it is intended to fund a walkway around the bandstand, pedestrian safety lighting at Joslin Park and Oxford Center, and the construction of handicap bathrooms at Joslin Park. Keep an eye out for more information as this project develops! We are honored with the grant awards we have received that allow the Town to accomplish important projects with minimal impact on the taxpayer.

In addition to this grant, we also received word the Town of Oxford is being awarded a **\$45,325** Community Compact Grant to update our 1994 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan! The document is an evaluation of municipal facilities, policies, practices, and programs. The updated plan will make recommendations and identify strategies to ensure equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities which is a fundamental goal of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). As a requirement of the award, the Town will hire a consultant to work with our Disability Commission to develop a clear understanding of ADA regulations to facilitate the creation and adoption of the new plan.

--Continued on next page

As Town Manager, I have been making accessibility a major priority from the formation of Oxford's first Disability Committee to the supporting the formal adoption of an actual Disability Commission. Under the leadership of the Commission and in conjunction with my office, it has been a mutual goal to promote access and inclusion for those with disabilities. Together we have been able to make significant progress in a relatively short time. At the Fall Town Meeting, residents adopted a state law to provide for the allocation of funds received from fines assessed for handicap parking violations to the Disability Commission. Funds received from such will be used solely for the benefit of programs and outreach focused on persons with disabilities through various initiatives developed by the Commission.

Without question 2023 will be a major year toward advancing accessibility throughout our community. As we continue to do great things in this Town it is important for us to remember Onward Oxford!



DPW REVEALS NEW 3-YEAR PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Oxford Department of Public Works and Town Manager are pleased to announce Oxford's next 3-year Pavement Management Plan is finalized. Since the robust bonding plan failed at the ballot box last year, the DPW has been working diligently to update its Pavement Management Plan assuming level funding. However, the DPW is also rethinking its strategy to stretch its budget as far as possible. Before getting into the details, please note the plan is just that, and while all plans begin with the best intentions, we all know things do not always go according to plan. There are always numerous factors impacting what can be accomplished each year, including but not limited to funding, grant outcomes, and construction market conditions. So, while the new plan serves as our road map over the next few years for pavement repairs, the plan is subject to change based on numerous factors that often are outside the Town's control.

The DPW uses a data-driven approach to objectively prioritize annual roadway repairs based on various funding scenarios. The analysis starts by surveying roadway conditions on an annual basis, collecting pavement distress data, and entering it into the data management software that generates various repair scenarios. The software then assigns a Pavement Condition Index (PCI) from 0-100 to each roadway segment; 0 indicative of an impassible street and 100 representing a newly paved road. Assuming level-funding, currently \$1,000,000 per year (\$500k Ch.90, \$500k local capital appropriation), roads are then programmed for repair based on a variety of factors - most notably PCI and roadway type (i.e. arterial, collector, local). For example, an arterial street with a fairly low PCI will be weighed far more heavily in the analysis than a local street with the same PCI due to traffic volumes and public safety implications.

Oxford's new 3-year plan is unique from previous ones in that it uses far more repair alternatives than in past plans to address the Town's deteriorating pavement network. The revamped strategy includes "new" interventions at various stages of a pavement's lifecycle, such as rubber chipseal, ultra-thin bonded wearing course (BWC), stabilized full-depth reclamation, and cold-in-place (CIP) recycling. The overarching goal of the new plan is to prioritize preventive maintenance activities to keep Oxford's good streets in good condition, thereby protecting the Town's investments. A summary of our 3-year plan by repair alternative is provided on the right:

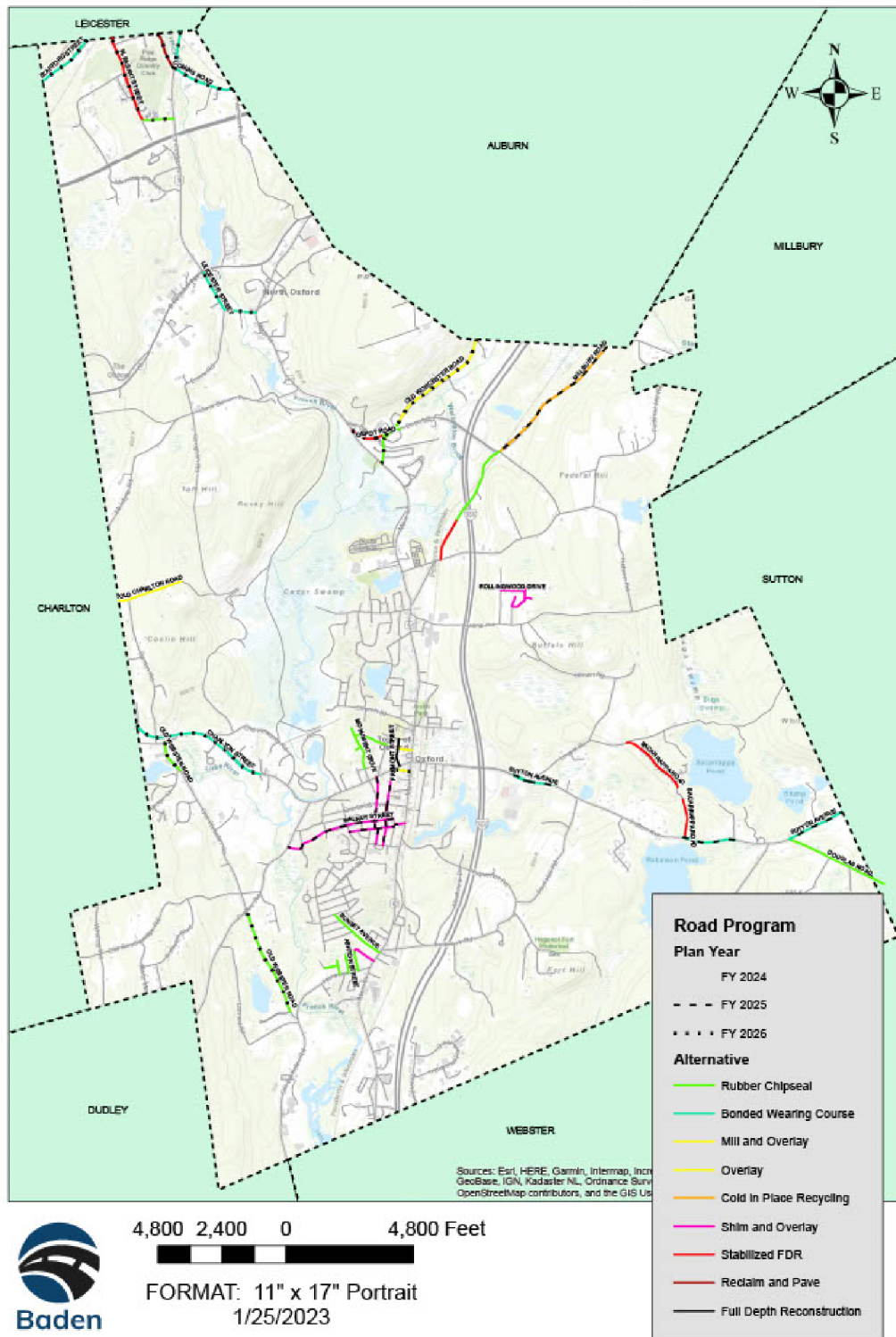
Repair Alternative	Length (ft)	
Rubber Chipseal	28,706	
Bonded Wearing Course	15,393	
Mill & Overlay	5,109	
Overlay	2,488	
Cold-In-Place Recycling	5,699	
Shim & Overlay	16,217	
Stabilized FDR	10,629	
Traditional FDR	1,445	
Full-Depth Reconstruction	1,050	
TOTAL:	86,736 ft	16.43 Miles

--Continued on next page



TOWN OF OXFORD
DPW
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Town of Oxford FY24-FY26 Pavement Management Plan



To view the above map in greater detail and learn more about the DPW's Pavement Management Program, including an explanation of each repair alternative, please visit our new pavement management webpage on our website at:

oxfordma.us/departments-public-works/pages/pavement-management-program



Chief McDonald wants to remind residents that when you “Change Your Clocks, Change Your Smoke Alarm Batteries” as well!

Daylight Saving Time
March 12, 2023



IMPORTANT DATES!

APRIL 3: REAL ESTATE & PERSONAL PROPERTY BILLS DUE

APRIL 15: TOWN-WIDE YARD SALE

APRIL 22: VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINE (FOR TOWN MEETING)

MAY 3: ANNUAL TOWN MEETING (OXFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL)

MAY 6: VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINE (FOR TOWN ELECTION)

MAY 16: ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION

RECENT GRANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

\$25,000 Housing Production Plan
\$43,030 Library Cultural Sector
\$22,265 Road Safety Program
\$51,570 State 911 Support
\$182,000 Municipal ADA Projects
\$12,000 Downtown Accessibility
\$26,000 Foodborne Illness Plan
\$19,000 Fire Equipment Grant
\$45,325 New ADA Transition Plan
\$38,000 Website Redesign
\$224,000 Complete Streets
\$301,888 Roadway Winter Recovery
\$198,000 Church St. Improvements

NOW ACCEPTING APPLICANTS!

**DUE MONDAY
APRIL 3 BY 4PM**

HANNAH HARWOOD FUND SCHOLARSHIP

PICK UP AN APPLICATION AT THE BOS
OFFICE OR ONLINE AT
[OXFORDMA.US/BOARD-SELECTMEN](https://oxfordma.us/board-selectmen)

HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS AT OXFORD PD

Anthony Saad, Police Chief

For the past 20 years, the Oxford Police Department has been helping local families at Christmas time with its Operation Santa Program. Pictured is Mr. & Mrs. Clause being assisted by OPD elves. This year, eighty-four (84) families received gifts which benefited one hundred thirty-eight (138) children. In addition, the department directly assisted nine (9) families to the benefit of twenty-seven (27) children. We wish to thank all the residents who drop off gifts and assist us in many ways by making this event an annual success story.



We welcome Amanda Cyr as our newest full-time EMS Dispatcher (photo). Amanda comes to us with nearly two years of experience working for the Worcester Police Department as an emergency dispatcher. Hiring Amanda keeps our roster of full-time dispatchers at six (6), allowing us the ability to maintain two (2) dispatchers on shift during peak periods of activity. Amanda replaces dispatcher Brianna Parker who is now with the Auburn Police Department. However, Brianna is still with us in a part time capacity.



As you know, our dispatchers play an extremely important role in bringing emergency services to your door! They all do a fine job, and we appreciate them for the difficult job that they have.

2022 VETERANS APPRECIATION LUNCHEON



The Veterans Appreciation Luncheon was held on November 9, 2022 at the Oxford Senior Center. The 2022 luncheon was an overwhelming success thanks to Veterans Services Agent, Dave Adams, Senior Center Director, Laura Wilson, and Superintendent, Mike Lucas! Music was provided by the Oxford High School band, while the NJROTC was in attendance to provide the national anthem and present the colors. State Representatives Paul Frost and Joe McKenna as well as Senator Ryan Fattman brought greetings and official proclamations to more than 180 attendees and volunteers at the Oxford Senior Center. Thank you to all who attended!

UPCOMING PROGRAMS AT OXFORD FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Brittany McDougal Bialy, Library Director



The Oxford Public Library is always striving to improve our program offerings. Being located at the heart of the Village Center, we have expanded the number of cultural events and program offerings during all seasons in an effort to bring residents and visitors to the Library. I am thrilled to announce that the Library is being awarded a significant Cultural Sector Recovery Grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC) in the amount of **\$43,030!**

In December 2021, a \$4 billion pandemic recovery package was approved by the Legislature and signed into law. This legislative act directed the MCC to develop and administer grant programs to assist cultural organizations and artists recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and operate more efficiently moving forward. The MCC received \$60.1 million in surplus state revenue funds to support this effort and make a huge public investment in the Commonwealth's creative and cultural sector organizations impacted by the COVID -19 pandemic.

This grant funding will greatly assist the Library with its ongoing efforts to enhance cultural programming and outreach post-pandemic! We are in the planning phase for a number of events that will help us usher in the Spring and Summer seasons. So please frequently visit our webpage and communications board to see the latest happenings we are offering. For the immediate future, we have some of the following upcoming programs to check out!



Charles Larned

IN 1902, THE TOWN OF OXFORD WAS GRANTED CASH FROM FORMER OXFORD RESIDENT, CHARLES LARNED, IN HOPES OF BUILDING A FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY IN MEMORY OF HIS MOTHER, CLARISSA LARNED. THUS, BUILDING BEGAN OF THE CHARLES LARNED MEMORIAL LIBRARY ON THE FORMER HYDE LOT, A PIECE OF LAND VOTED ON BY THE CITIZEN'S OF OXFORD. CONSTRUCTION OF THE BUILDING WAS COMPLETED IN 1903 AND THE LIBRARY WAS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.



DPW'S SNOW & ICE OPERATIONS

Jared M. Duval, P.E., Director of Public Works

The Oxford Department of Public Works prides itself on its snow and ice operations. One of our primary duties is to keep Oxford's streets open and safe for the traveling public and other public safety departments during the winter months. The DPW's snow and ice fighting capabilities are the result of years of staff experience, fine-tuning, evolving with the times, and of course the hard work and grit of our team members. We are responsible for snow and ice removal on 90 miles of public roadways, 13 miles of sidewalk, and approximately 5 miles of private ways approved by the Board of Selectmen to receive snow and ice control services.

Every year, prior to winter, DPW's administrative staff begins planning in concert with the DPW operations team. We start by developing our rotating on-call schedule and teams for off-hours response (3:30pm to 7am Mon. - Fri. & around the clock Sat./Sun.). Our on-call rotation is just one of our response procedures for adverse weather and/or roadway conditions during winter. Our on-call rotation is categorized by 3-color teams (blue, yellow, & green) and marked on an electronic calendar accordingly which is shared with the Police Department. The on-call teams rotate onto the schedule every 3 days (e.g. Mon.-Blue, Tues.-Yellow, Wed.-Green, Thurs.-Blue, etc.). Each team consists of 5-6 team members. Each team roster also rotates each time they are on the schedule so there is a different team lead responsible for coordinating the response effort with the rest of the team. Our on-call operation works in conjunction with the Police Department, who are our eyes on the road during off-hours. If during their patrols officers witness icy conditions, then they contact the team lead according to the provided schedule and the remainder of the crew is contacted as necessary to salt the problem areas.

Our team is constantly monitoring daily weather conditions and extended forecasts to plan our response efforts. When the forecast predicts snowfall in excess of 2.5"-3" we anticipate an 'all-hands-on-deck' event that includes the entirety of our operations staff, as well as our private contractors. A typical 'plowable' event includes 12 of DPW's internal trucks and operators covering 12 designated plow routes plus DPW equipment dedicated to public parking lots and sidewalks. We also have 10 routes covered by private contractors. We typically have 30+ total pieces of equipment deployed during a plowable event. DPW's trucks are outfitted with plows and spreader bodies to apply salt to the streets during a storm. The private contractors only plow and do not apply salt.

For the past several years the DPW has used a treated salt product lauded for its deicing capabilities while remaining environmentally sustainable. Treated salt is purchased through a cooperative bid for economy of scale, which has grown to 25 member communities in Worcester County totaling 72,500 tons of salt.

Oxford DPW administrative staff administers the bid and manages the annual contract on behalf of the entire consortium to ensure all member communities are receiving the best value. DPW's trucks are equipped with industry leading technology called ground speed controllers that regulate salt application based on pre-calibrated rates. This technology allows us to know exactly how much salt we are putting out on Oxford's streets and allows us to change application rates on the fly as weather conditions dictate. Trucks are also outfitted with roadway temperature gauges to further direct proper deployment of our salt. On average it takes approximately 70 tons of salt to go through each of our routes once. In an average year the DPW uses approximately 2,400 tons of treated salt.



A seamless operation during adverse winter weather begins and ends with DPW's internal team members, starting with Operations Manager, Steve Esposito. Steve, or Oxford's very own "Superman," as he humbly refers to himself, has nearly 25 years' experience with the Oxford DPW fighting some of New England's harshest winter weather during his tenure. Through his leadership, planning, and coordination with our operations staff ahead of, and during winter storms, the general public can rest assured they will be able to get where they need to go safely.

--Continued on next page

WINTER PARKING BAN

The Town of Oxford's Winter Parking Ban will be in effect from November 15, 2022 through April 1, 2023. On-street parking is prohibited between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. The Parking Ban will also take effect when there is an accumulation of three (3) or more inches of snow, day or night. Fifteen (15) minute parking is allowed for postal and package delivery.



OXFORD BOARD OF SELECTMEN

SNOW & ICE OPERATIONS CONTINUED...

While biased in saying so, Oxford is fortunate to have such a finely tuned winter operation, but there is always room for improvement and technology is constantly changing. Moving forward the DPW is considering program enhancements such as liquid brine application in an effort to cut down on treated rock salt. We are also considering installing streetlight-mounted cameras at various locations across town to monitor roadway conditions more efficiently during storms. The DPW is also considering establishing a storm classification system based on various temperature ranges that includes tiered salt application rates – i.e. lower temperature storms would call for higher application rates and more salt deployed vs. higher temperature storms calling for a lower application rate and less overall salt deployed. We may refine the application rates even further depending on roadway classification (i.e. arterial vs. rural/local roads), given traffic volume effects on deicing efficiency and public safety implications. Finally, we are evaluating route optimization software that will analyze our current routes and recommend improvements for greater efficiency.

For more snow and ice related information please visit the DPW's webpage at <https://www.oxfordma.us/departments-public-works/pages/snow-ice-information>.

In closing, I want to thank the men and women of the DPW for their tireless commitment to keeping Oxford's streets safe during the winter, oftentimes at the expense of missed holidays and enduring long hours away from their loved ones. Our winter program would not be what it is without their dedication and hard work.



We have decided to make Oxford's Town-wide Yard Sale a bi-annual event!
The Spring Yard Sale will take place on April 15, 2023 with a rain date of April 22, 2023.

Rental space is available on the Town Common for a small fee.



If selling from your home, you **must** obtain a FREE Yard Sale Permit from the BOS office -
Yard Sales | Oxford, MA
([oxfordma.us](https://www.oxfordma.us))

To have your address listed on the OCC map, register here:
Oxford Community Center:
Register for Activity
(myrec.com)



WINTER STORM AND EXTREME COLD SAFETY TIPS

Rike Sterrett, Director of Public Health Services

The Oxford Board of Health's mission is to protect and promote the physical, mental, and environmental health of the Oxford Community, reduce health inequities, and respond to and prepare for public health concerns. Therefore, we want to pass along a few winter storm and extreme cold safety tips.

Before a Winter Storm:

- 1) Be informed.
- 2) Create and review your family emergency plan.
- 3) Assemble an emergency kit. Make sure to add seasonal supplies to your kit.
- 4) Follow instructions from public safety officials.
- 5) Prepare for possible power outages.
- 6) Ensure your vehicle is ready for safe winter driving.

During a Winter Storm:

- 1) Minimize outdoor activities.
- 2) Keep your pets safe.
- 3) Dress for the season to protect against the elements.
- 6) Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia.

After a Winter Storm:

- 1) Continue to stay informed and follow instructions from public safety officials.
- 2) Check with your local authorities or call 2-1-1 to find locations of warming centers or shelters.
- 3) Stay off streets and roads until they are clear of snow.
- 4) Be a good neighbor. Check on family, friends, and neighbors.
- 5) Teach Youth About Preparedness.



Extreme Cold Weather Tips:

- 1) Check the media for emergency information.
- 2) Follow instructions from public safety officials.
- 3) Reduce outdoor activities for the whole family, including pets.
- 4) Dress in several layers of loose-fitting, lightweight clothing instead of single heavy layer. Outer garment should be tightly woven and water repellent.
- 5) Follow safety precautions if using space heaters, a fireplace, or a woodstove.
- 6) Wrap pipes in insulation or layers of newspapers covered in plastic to prevent them from freezing.
- 7) Check with your local authorities or call 2-1-1 to find locations of warming centers or shelters.



And as long as we're prepared and safe, remember the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson who said, "The hard soil and four months of snow make the inhabitants of the northern temperate zone wiser and abler than his fellow who enjoys the fixed smile of the tropics."

Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/OxfordBOH to get updates and for good public health practices.

For more winter safety information visit: <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-emergency-management-agency>.



OXFORD'S ANNUAL TREE LIGHTING & LIGHTS PARADE

Shelley Lambert, Community Center Director

Oxford's Annual Holiday Tree Lighting was held on December 4th, following the Holiday Lights Parade. Many town departments and community groups were involved in both the parade and the tree lighting including DPW, Community Center, OFD-EMS, Police Dept, OHS Band, Town Manager's Office, and Boy Scout Troop 147. Oak Hill Bible Church volunteers donated their time and hot chocolate, Jess' Sweets & Treats donated 300 beautiful cookies, and Robbins Garden Center once again donated the tree. Several hundred residents lined the Common and Main St. to watch the Parade and enjoy hot chocolate, cookies, holiday spirit, and community pride. What a wonderful holiday tradition!

Sponsored by the Smolenski/Millette Charitable Trust, Jess' Sweets & Treats, Oak Hill Bible Church



Fun, Frost & Family

WINTER FESTIVAL



On January 21 the Oxford Community Center hosted the town's Second Annual Fun, Frost & Family Winter Festival. The day started with a Polar Plunge into Carbuncle Pond, in support of Special Olympics of Massachusetts. The fun continued onto Joslin Park and the Town Common where visitors could enjoy music, children's ice games, s'mores making over the fire pits, snacks and warm beverages, watch an ice sculpture demonstration, and get some information about Oxford Little League and Oxford Webster Youth Football and Cheer. Free horse and wagon rides were enjoyed by all ages. Inside the Community Center, people could shop from our vendor fair while enjoying live music, children could flex their creativity making crafts, and adults enjoyed their own craft workshop. The Oxford Free Public Library hosted a "non-snow"-man contest on the front lawn, and showed Happy Feet inside.

This community event was made possible through the hard work of OCC staff, a strong and dedicated group of volunteers, funding provided by the Smolenski Millette Charitable Trust and the Mass Cultural Council, the support of other Town departments, and the generosity of several local businesses – P&D Oxford House of Pizza, N&J Donuts, Oxford McDonalds, Oxford Dunkin, BK Tree Service, Dippin Donuts of Dudley, Polar Beverages, XLO 104-5, Aquarion Water Company, Worcester Railers, and the Worcester Red Sox.





PERMIT REQUIRED

*Burning Season is
January 15, 2023
through April 30, 2023*

*Open Burning hours are
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.*

What Times are Best for Open Burning?

You can help prevent wildland fires by burning early in the season. Wet and snowy winter conditions help hinder the rapid spread of fire on or under the ground.

Changing weather conditions and increased fire danger in spring can lead to many days when open burning is not allowed.

April is usually the worst month for brush fires. When snow recedes, but before new growth emerges, last year's dead grass, leaves and wood are dangerous tinder. Winds also tend to be strong and unpredictable in April.

OPEN BURN SEASON FAQ

Laurent McDonald, Fire Chief

What Can I Burn?

You are allowed to burn:

- Brush, cane, driftwood and forestry debris (but not from commercial or industrial land clearing)
- Agricultural materials including fruit tree and bush prunings, raspberry stalks, and infected bee hives for disease control.
- Trees and brush from agricultural land clearing
- Fungus-infected elm wood, if no other acceptable means of disposal is available

You may not burn:

- Leaves
- Brush, trees, cane or driftwood from commercial or industrial land clearing
- Grass, hay, leaves, stumps or tires
- Construction materials or demolition debris
- Household trash

How Do I Safely Start & Tend a Fire?

- An adult should always be present and attend the fire until it is completely extinguished.
- Keep children and pets a safe distance away.
- Burn away from any utility lines.

- Use paper and kindling to start the fire and add progressively larger pieces of wood. Pieces of a discarded Christmas tree make good kindling. To avoid the risk of personal injury, never use gasoline, kerosene or other flammable liquid as a fire starter.
- Burn one small pile of material at a time and slowly add to it. This helps keep the fire from getting out of control.
- Keep fire extinguishing materials handy. These should include a water supply, shovels and rakes. The water supply can be a pressurized water fire extinguisher, pump can, or garden hose. Test the water source before lighting the fire.
- Put the fire out if winds pick up or the weather changes. Use common sense. Don't wait for the fire department to tell you that it has become unsafe to burn. Most fires get out of control during sudden wind changes.
- If the fire gets out of control, call the fire local department right away to prevent personal injury and property damage.
- You could be held liable for firefighting costs, as well as face fines or jail time, if you burn illegally or allow a fire to get out of control (see M.G.L. c.48, s.13).

What are the Alternatives to Open Burning?

While still allowed in most Massachusetts towns and cities, open burning has disadvantages.

The combustion process releases carbon dioxide, other gases, and solid substances directly into the air. This can make it difficult for people with respiratory problems to breathe. It can also cause smoke and odor nuisance conditions for neighbors.

Disposing of natural materials is never as good for the environment as recycling them. Ask your public works or solid waste department if your community chips or composts natural debris into landscaping material.

OCA



DOWNLOAD THE APP!

- APPLE TV
- ROKU
- FIRE TV
- IOS
- ANDROID

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR SUCCESS!

Town Manager Callahan is pleased to announce Jillian K. Patch, Treasurer/Collector of the Town of Oxford, was recently awarded a Certificate designating her as a Certified Massachusetts Municipal Treasurer. This is in addition to the Certificate for Massachusetts Municipal Collector she received in 2018. Cheyenne Cusson, Assistant Treasurer/Collector of the Town of Oxford, was also recently awarded a Certificate designating her as a Certified Massachusetts Municipal Assistant Collector.

This certification was conferred by the Board of Certification of the state-wide organization of local Tax Collectors and Treasurers, the Massachusetts Collectors and Treasurers Association. Certification is awarded only after candidates have been in the office a minimum of three years. They must attend for a minimum of three years, the Association's Annual School at UMass Amherst in August, and complete a rigorous schedule of required courses. Lastly, they must successfully pass their Certification Board's examination, covering subjects such as municipal finance law, property and motor vehicle tax laws and collections, cash management and numerous other subjects, which are of concern to public finance officials.

Jillian and Cheyenne both received their Certificates on November 17th at the Devens Common Center in Devens, MA during luncheon ceremonies. Congratulations on reaching these important professional milestones!



*Oxford Treasurer/Collector Jillian Patch
(pictured sixth from left)*



*Asst. Treasurer/Collector Cheyenne Cusson
(pictured second from left)*

HAVE MEDICARE QUESTIONS? SHINE CAN HELP!!!

Laura Wilson, Senior Center Director

When you turn 65, you need to make some decisions about enrolling in or delaying Medicare coverage.

Did you know you can meet with a SHINE (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone) Representative at the Oxford Senior Center?

SHINE can help you with decisions that you need to make about Medicare. Avoid delays in coverage or financial penalties for not enrolling on time.

SHINE provides unbiased Medicare information and education - at no cost to Massachusetts residents.

**Call the Oxford Senior Center at 508-987-6000
to make an appointment today!**



Initial Enrollment Period
first time you can sign up for Medicare

7-month period surrounding
the month of your 65th birthday



You can sign-up for:



THE BUZZ ON OXFORD'S NEW GROW NATIVE FOR POLLINATORS CAMPAIGN



Judy Lochner, Conservation Agent

The Grow Native for Pollinators Campaign is a joint effort among several partnering organizations, schools and volunteers who are passionate about promoting the significance of pollinators, like bees, butterflies and hummingbirds, and creating natural habitats for growing their populations. Recent news articles have highlighted the decline in honeybees and how that can affect our future food supply. Another major devastating effect from pollinator decline would be on plant biodiversity and ecosystem health due to increasing plant competition. But the good news is that we can make a difference by growing native pollen and nectar-rich flowers for these little pollinator friends to feed on. In return, they will transfer pollen among the flowers which starts the plants' reproduction process.

The main mission of the Campaign is to encourage the use of native plants in existing and new landscapes. This will be accomplished by holding community informational sessions, providing opportunities for residents to obtain native plants, setting an example by introducing native plantings on municipal properties, and most importantly is to involve our youth in this campaign to ensure future stewardship of our environment.

The current Grow Native for Pollinators Campaign Partners include the Oxford Conservation Commission, Oxford Public Library, Community Center, Senior Center, Oxford School Department, Army Corps of Engineers, Worcester State University Students and Faculty, local Girl Scout troops, St. Roch's Church, and individual volunteers. Members from these partnering organization make up the Pollinator Team. After just one meeting of the Pollinator Team, over a dozen initiatives were formulated.

The first introduction of the Grow Native for Pollinators Campaign will be a public forum hosted by the Conservation Commission on March 29th, 6-8 pm, at the Oxford Senior Center. A guest speaker will provide the 'whys and hows' to be pollinator-friendly in your own yards. The Pollinator Team will then present various campaign initiatives at interactive stations set up around the center. This will be an opportune time for community members to learn about the team's efforts, offer new ideas and sign up for a volunteer project.

One of the Campaign's most exciting initiative is the creation of a pollinator-friendly garden on Main Street in front of the DPW Headquarters. The design, preparation, planting and maintenance of the garden is being accomplished through all volunteer efforts of the Girl Scouts, Worcester State University students and other community volunteers. The Pollinator Team is planning other community events for this spring and summer to include a book reading by a local author, milkweed seedling give-away, family movie night, nature walk, adult paint night and the first annual Celebrate Pollinators Day! Besides assisting with the pollinator-friendly garden, students from Worcester State University will be analyzing municipal property for potential pollinator habitats, conducting a pollinator attitude survey/report and promoting the Grow Native Pollinator Campaign through a Communications Capstone Project.

Anyone interested in joining the Campaign as either an organizational partner or volunteer should send an email to Judy Lochner, Team Lead at jlochner@oxfordma.us. To find out about upcoming Campaign events, visit: <https://www.oxfordma.us/conservation-commission/pages/grow-native-pollinators-campaign>.

2023 Dog and Cat Licenses Now Available

Please be advised that as of January 1st, 2023, the new cat and dog licensing fees are as follows:

- Spayed/Neutered - \$10.00 per animal
- Unaltered - \$15.00 per animal

A current rabies certificate will need to be included if a new vaccine was recently administered. In addition, if an animal was recently altered, a certificate will be required.



**Please contact the Town Clerk's Office at
508-987-6030 for more information.**

EXCITING PROGRAMS AT OXFORD HIGH



Rebecca Czernicki, High School Principal

CNA PROGRAM For the 2022-2023 school year, Oxford High School began offering a Certified Nursing Assistant Program. This program, taught by School Nurse Amy Grniet, introduces students to the medical field and provides them with the opportunity to become a Certified Nursing Assistant. Our students use the skills learned in a local nursing home and have been very successful in the program so far. This program was made possible through grant funding and generous donations made by local organizations.



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM Also starting in the 2022-2023 school year, Oxford High School introduced an Early Childhood Education Program. This program teaches students about child growth and development, preschool learning standards, classroom design and layout, positive classroom management, lesson planning, and so much more!! Students have started to visit the Chaffee and Barton Elementary Schools to observe the classroom teachers in action!



NJROTC - DISTINGUISHED UNIT WITH HONORS We are very proud to announce that our NJROTC students recently went through their Formal Area Manager Inspection and Pass in Review Ceremony. They did extremely well, and the Naval Commander was extremely pleased with everything we are doing at OHS.

The unit was designated as a Distinguished Unit with Honors for the 2022-2023 school year. This is a highly regarded distinction in recognition of the exceptional achievement of our students, and is based upon the excellence attained in administration, academic performance, military proficiency, and host school support. **Hooyah!**

The MassDOT is well underway in the redesigning and soon to be reconstruction of Route 20 in Charlton and Oxford to improve safety and traffic operations. It is a \$106 Million construction project to make improvements from the Auburn border to the Charlton border along the Route 20 Corridor. It is a 3.2 mile stretch that goes directly through Oxford. The changes the State is seeking to make include the following:

- Roadway widening
- Introduction of sidewalks and shared use paths
- Implementation of a median barrier separating opposing directions of travel
- Enhanced traffic operations at intersections
- Replacement of bridges over the Little River in Charlton and the French River in Oxford
- Introduction of Best Management Practices to enhance stormwater treatment



Additionally, the design will include considerations for bicycle and pedestrian accommodations, signage, pavement markings, guardrails, retaining walls, storm drainage, and overhead and underground utility relocations. MassDOT has selected a Design-Build Team, D.W. White Construction Inc. and TranSystems who will handle both the design and construction. This reduces the time needed to complete the project and promotes collaboration among the engineers, contractor, and MassDOT staff. The project is now at 75% design phase and local travelers will start to see more preparation for future active construction activity along this section of roadway. It is anticipated the project will be at 100% design by the Summer of 2023 and MassDOT will be holding Public Information Updates on construction status in the Fall of 2023.

For more detailed information please visit mass.gov/route-20-reconstruction-project-in-charlton-oxford.



TOWN OF OXFORD OPEN SPACE & RECREATION SURVEY

The Town of Oxford is in the process of updating our **Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP)**! Help us update our plan by sharing your suggestions and vision for the future of open space and recreation opportunities in Oxford!



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/858PMPN>

Please scan the QR Code to the right or visit the URL listed above to participate in the Town's Open Space and Recreation Survey.

