



The citizen's source of information about the City of Ashland

**THE LAST STRAW—OREGON BANS DRINKING STRAW DISTRIBUTION**

You may have heard that beginning on January 1, 2020, food and beverage providers in Oregon will be prohibited from providing single-use straws to any customer unless the customer has specifically requested one. This bill resulted in part due to the widely shared 2015 video showing a sea turtle in distress as scientists removed a plastic straw stuck up its nose. The video led to worldwide public outcry and moved cities and big companies to eliminate their use of straws. The goal of Senate Bill 90 is to get us one step closer in our statewide effort to cut down single-use waste in Oregon.

Through their participation in the City’s voluntary Straws on Demand Pilot Program, local eateries have already embraced the decision to only provide straws when requested. Some of these businesses include: Louie’s, Greenleaf, The Standing Stone, SOU Dining, Falafel Republic, Sesame, and the Ashland Food Coop. While the elimination of straws may seem like a minuscule step toward reducing the world’s abundance of plastic waste, the National Park Service estimates that Americans use 500 million plastic straws each day, which is enough to fill 125 school buses full of them. Ultimately what’s most important is that we start somewhere, with the eventual goal being to eliminate our needless dependence on all single-use waste.

Few people realize that straws are among the top ten items found during beach clean ups and that they can harm seabirds, turtles and marine creatures. Straws are found on ocean beaches usually because they are either left in coastal communities and seaside resorts around the globe, littered, or blown out of trash cans, transport boats, or vehicles. While some city’s waste management infrastructure is sound (like Ashland, for instance), not all communities have the same level of accountability.

When plastic does make it into the ocean it breaks down into smaller and smaller pieces known as micro plastics rather than biodegrading or dissolving, which poses great threats to marine life including fish. The World Economic Forum projected that by 2050, 99% of all sea bird species will have ingested plastic.

Research has also shown plastic in sea salt, 94% of U.S. tap water, and shellfish. Scientists at the UGA New Materials Institute conducted a new study which discovered micro plastics particles smaller than dust or powdered sugar inside baby sea turtles. Of the turtle studies in this research, 100% were found to have eaten plastic. These baby sea turtles were likely dying due to ingested plastic pollution, which threatens the species’ survival.

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**CITY OF ASHLAND APP**

A quick reminder that the City has its own app that has some quick and easy shortcuts to the most often used content from the City website.

Upcoming meeting agendas, news items and contact info is easily accessible. A very handy tool is the “Report an Issue” tool that allows anyone to quickly inform the City of an issue that you may encounter in our community for City staff to respond to (not for emergency use).

The tool grabs your location or you can input a location, attach a photo or two and a quick description of the issue and hit submit. The app can be found in the Apple App Store or Google Play store by searching for “myAshland”.



## THE LAST STRAW OREGON BANS DRINKING STRAW DISTRIBUTION WITH NEW BILL

(Continued from page 1)

For people with disabilities, straws are essential and should always be available; ideally in the reusable form. But for most of the public, straws are a convenience. Although many of us have become accustomed to using straws, cutting them from our lives won't likely require any extreme changes. Let's commit to reducing our plastic waste by skipping straws altogether, or taking advantage of reusable straw options, and by supporting the businesses striving to be in accordance with newly passed Senate Bill 90. For more information on Senate Bill 90, visit this web link (<https://static.votesmart.org/static/billtext/66891.pdf>).

### COMMERCIAL CHARGING INCENTIVE

This program offers a financial incentive to businesses within Ashland who install electric vehicle chargers for use by their fleet, employees, or customers. Any Commercial electric account may apply for a \$500 incentive for each charger installed ([ashland.or.us/chargeatwork](http://ashland.or.us/chargeatwork)).

### IT'S EASY TO SAVE WATER INDOORS

Looking for quick and easy ways to save water? Simple, minor adjustments to your habits and the hardware around your house can work wonders when it comes to water conservation. A family of four could reduce their indoor water use by 30 to 60 percent when replacing old toilets, showerheads, bathroom aerators and washing machines.

How much can you save? It all depends on how much you're using right now. Did you know the City offers a FREE indoor water evaluation for your home? Please call to schedule your appointment today at (541) 552-2062 and be on your way to saving water. Visit the Alliance for Water Efficiency's Home Water Works Calculator at [www.home-water-works.org](http://www.home-water-works.org) for a fun way to estimate your water use and potential savings. The results may surprise you.

By choosing WaterSense and Energy Star labeled products in your home or business you can attain the same performance and quality you've come to expect, but with the added benefit of water and energy savings. Look for the WaterSense and Energy Star labels to help you identify high-efficiency products. Remember, when you conserve water, you also conserve energy. Here are some ways you can save water inside your home this winter.

#### Hardware changes:

- Check for leaks and fix them promptly.
- Replace a high flush volume toilet.
- Replace inefficient showerheads.
- Replace old inefficient washing machines.

#### Habit Changes:

- Take shorter showers or only fill up the bathtub half way.
- Turn off the faucet when shaving or brushing your teeth.
- Wash full loads of dishes and laundry.
- Track your water use by reading your water meter.

In addition, sewer rates for most single-family and multi-family homes are established based on the average water usage in the months of January, February, and March. So, by reducing your water usage in the winter months, you could lower your sewer bills for the rest of the year. Contact the City of Ashland's Conservation Division at (541) 552-2062 or visit our website at [www.ashlandsaveswater.org](http://www.ashlandsaveswater.org) for more information about rebates and resources.

The Ashland Forest Resiliency Stewardship Project (AFR) is a collaborative forest restoration project that reduces the risk of severe wildfire across public and private land in and around the Ashland Watershed.

We work to protect old trees, wildlife habitat, homes, trails and our water source by thinning overcrowded forests and conducting controlled burns.



AFR.project



@ashlandforest

#### Get Connected

Receive controlled burn notifications by text message! Text WATERSHED (message line) to 888777 (recipient)

Sign up for emails at [ashlandwatershed.org](http://ashlandwatershed.org)

Find health recommendations at [smokewiseashland.org](http://smokewiseashland.org)



Ashland  
Forest  
Resiliency

[ashlandwatershed.org](http://ashlandwatershed.org)

### WHAT NOT TO FLUSH

Every property owner connected to the City sewer system can be a potential contributor to sewer problems, including sewer back ups in your own home and unintended sewer spills. In the same vein, every property owner can be part of the solution, too.

Wet wipes are one of the worst problems in modern sanitary systems. They are responsible for causing half of the total blockages that lead to build-ups of fat, also known as "fatbergs." Cosmetic wipes do not dissolve in water and have a very negative impact on the sewage treatment process. Likewise, baby wipes are not decomposable, so they shouldn't be flushed, even if the product claims to be flushable.

Basically, there are only three things you should ever flush down a toilet—human waste (urine and feces) and toilet paper. Just remember the three Ps: pee, poo, and paper.

## HEATING SEASON

As the heating season approaches here are some low cost no cost tips to help reduce your energy bill:

- **Seal drafts.** Keep doors and windows closed and block all gaps, cracks and openings to the outdoors. Keep woodstove and fireplace dampers and fireplace doors closed when not in use.
- **Turn down the thermostat.** Set your thermostat to 68 degrees or lower to heat your home. Each degree that you lower the thermostat can reduce your heating costs by as much as three percent.
- **Set your thermostat at 55 or 60 degrees** when you are away for an extended time.
- **Heat only when at home and awake.** If you have resistance heat such as ceiling heat, wall heaters or baseboards, turn down the thermostat before you go to bed at night and when you are away from home.
- **Clean heat sources.** Clean furnace filters regularly during the heating season and follow manufacturers' recommendations for replacing filters. Forced-air furnace filters trap dirt and dust, clean the air you breathe, and help the furnace operate more safely and efficiently.
- **Maximize warm air flow to improve comfort and efficiency.** Make sure that furniture and window coverings are not blocking the flow of heat.
- If you have **storm windows**, now is the time to make sure they are all closed.
- **Insulate exposed water pipes**, it's easier to do this now before it freezes and possibly reduce broken lines come spring time.
- **Walk around the perimeter of your home and seal** any penetrations to keep those pesky rodents out!
- **Use zonal heat efficiently.** Only heat rooms in use if you have baseboard, ceiling or wall heat.
- **If you have a heat pump**, ensure thermostat is set to "heat" mode, not "Em Heat".
- **Install programmable digital thermostats** for zonal heating systems such as ceiling, wall, and baseboard heating. This allows you to control the temperature to correspond with your schedule and avoid unnecessary heating and cost better yet consider upgrading to a ductless heat pump.

One of the many great things about the City of Ashland is for electrically heated homes, the Conservation Department provides a free energy audit. Give Dan Cunningham a call at 541-552-2063 or email [Dan.Cunningham@ashland.or.us](mailto:Dan.Cunningham@ashland.or.us) to set up a residential energy audit.



### ANNUAL CHRISTMAS TREE-CYCLING DAY

Ashland Scout Troop 112's 34th Annual Christmas Tree-Cycling Day is Saturday, January 4th. Please have your trees at the curb in front of your house for pick up by Friday evening, January 3rd. Troop 112 and its charter organization, the Ashland Lions Club, will collect trees to be chipped by Ashland Parks and Recreation crew and used as mulch in City of Ashland parks.

Donations for this service will be accepted and checks should be made out to Troop 112 (P.O. Box 839, Ashland, OR). This project benefits the citizens of Ashland, the Scouts of Troop 112 and the environment.

Additionally, turning thousands of trees into mulch enhances our parks while sparing our landfills. This service is for the City of Ashland only. For updates in case of inclement weather, or for information on Troop 112, please visit [troop112.com](http://troop112.com). If we miss your tree, please call John Ourant at (541) 708-3942.



## Ashland Senior Volunteer Fair

Wednesday, January 22, 2:00-4:00 pm

Ashland Senior Center

1699 Homes Avenue, Ashland

### Resolve to Get Involved in the New Year!

- ★ Meet New People
- ★ Make a Difference
- ★ Learn New Skills

Come connect with 20 local organizations and find your next rewarding adventure!

Free admission.  
Refreshments provided.



Sponsored by:

Community Volunteer Network

A PRS Organization

ASANTE<sup>®</sup>  
Ashland Community Hospital



Senior Services Division

City offices will be closed on Monday, January 20 in observance for Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

## SPONSOR THE ASHLAND WORLD MUSIC FESTIVAL

The Ashland World Music Festival is a family-friendly event full of music, dance, food and fun from cultures near and far. Taking place Memorial Day weekend in beautiful Lithia Park, this free festival is produced by Rogue World Music and Ashland Parks & Recreation with support from generous local sponsors.

Are you interested in sponsoring the 2020 event? Learn more at [rogueworldmusic.com/concerts/ashland-world-music-festival](http://rogueworldmusic.com/concerts/ashland-world-music-festival). Join the party and get your global groove on at the Ashland World Music Festival!

## EVENTS

### *Project FeederWatch*

Help count birds that visit the feeders at North Mountain Park, while learning to identify species with expert birders. The information collected will be submitted to Cornell University's FeederWatch project, a nationwide citizen science bird monitoring effort. Pre-registration is not required for this free program.

AGES 10 & up  
DAY Alternate Saturdays  
DATE Dec 7, 21; Jan 4, 18; Feb 1, 15 29; Mar 14  
TIME 9 to 10 AM  
PLACE North Mountain Park Pavilion, 620 N Mountain Avenue

### *Ashland Rotary Centennial Ice Rink*

Our skate rentals accommodate toddler size 9-up to men's size 15. Please come prepared to skate, as changing rooms are not available. Hot chocolate, coffee and a variety of snacks will be available for purchase. For more information on prices, schedules, lessons, hockey and all we have to offer you, please visit [ashland.or.us/icerink](http://ashland.or.us/icerink) or call the ice rink directly at (541) 488-9189.

DATE November 21, 2019 until February 17, 2020  
PLACE 95 Winburn Way

### *AARP Smart Driver Course*

A refresher course specifically designed for drivers age 50 and older. After completion of this course, you may be eligible for a discount on your auto insurance; check with your insurance agent. Pre-registration is required as space is limited. Please register by calling the Senior Center at (541) 488-5342 or emailing [seniorinfo@ashland.or.us](mailto:seniorinfo@ashland.or.us).

DATE January 29 & January 30  
TIME 1 to 4:15 PM  
PLACE Ashland Senior Center, 1699 Homes Avenue  
COST \$15/AARP members, \$20/non-members

Check out how Ashland connects at

[www.ashlandfiber.net](http://www.ashlandfiber.net)



## JANUARY CITY CALENDAR

### City Council

Business Meeting: Jan. 7 & 21 | 6 p.m.  
Study Sessions: Jan. 6 | 5:30 p.m.

### Airport Commission

January 7 | 9:30 a.m.

### Conservation & Climate Outreach Commission

January 22 | 6 p.m.

### Climate Policy Commission

January 9 | 4 p.m.

### Forest Lands Commission

January 14 | 5:30 p.m.

Fire Station #2, 1860 Ashland Street

### Historic Commission

TBD | 6 p.m.

### Housing and Human Services Commission

January 23 | 4 p.m.

### Parks and Recreation Commission

Business Meeting: January 27 | 7 p.m.

Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main Street

Study Session: TBD | 5:30 p.m.

NMP Nature Center, 620 N. Mountain Avenue

### Planning Commission

Business Meeting: January 14 | 7 p.m.

Study Session: January 28 | 7 p.m.

### Public Art Commission

January 17 | 8:30 a.m.

### Transportation Commission

January 16 | 6 p.m.

### Tree Commission

January 9 | 6 p.m.

### Wildfire Safety Commission

January 15 | 11 a.m.

Fire Station #1, 455 Siskiyou Boulevard

▲ TTY 1-800-735-2900 ▲ Meetings are held in the Council Chambers (1175 E Main Street) or the Siskiyou Room (51 Winburn Way) unless otherwise noted. ▲ City Council and many other City meetings are broadcast live on channel 9. Charter Communications customers will find city meetings on channels 180 and 181. Meetings also stream live on the internet at [rvtv.sou.edu](http://rvtv.sou.edu) select channel RVTV Prime.

CITY OF  
**ASHLAND**

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