



September 21, 2007

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Arsenic cleanup area declared EPA Superfund site

This week the Environmental Protection Agency added the arsenic cleanup site in south Minneapolis to the [Superfund National Priorities List](#). "This is what we have been waiting for," Council Member Schiff said. "This designation will release more funds, and now more properties can be cleaned up to eliminate arsenic contamination in our neighborhoods and protect children."

Corcoran, Phillips, Longfellow, Seward and Powderhorn neighborhoods have been affected from arsenic that blew from the [CMC Heartland Lite Yard](#). The company used arsenic to manufacture pesticides for thirty years until 1968. Since 2004, the EPA has collected soil samples from more than 3,000 properties in the area. To date, nearly 200 properties have shown very high arsenic contamination levels, requiring emergency cleanup. Of these, about 160 will be cleaned up by late October.



The top twelve inches of contaminated soil are replaced with clean soil during residential cleanups.

The EPA is completing a health risk assessment of the affected neighborhoods this year, and will set a final cleanup goal. Superfund money will be made available for cleanup of residential properties that are below an arsenic concentration of 95 parts per million, but the final level of cleanup remains undetermined. Community input will be sought throughout the process. [Click here](#) for more information on the EPA's activities.

Cold weather rule to take effect October 15

Minnesota's cold weather rule goes into effect in three weeks, protecting residents from heat shut-offs in apartment buildings between October 15 and April 15, when extreme cold temperatures pose a safety threat. Renters without heat on October 15 are urged to call 311 or 911.

Unless the correct steps are taken under the cold weather rule, the heat may still be shut-off if energy bills remain overdue. To prevent a shut-off stemming from unpaid bills, contact CenterPoint at (612) 372-4727 to apply for protection. [Click here](#) for more information on the cold weather rule.

Community Action's [Energy Services Program](#) assists households with affordable and safe home energy, while lowering their energy burdens. The program provides several energy-related services such as direct payment to energy suppliers, customer education on energy efficiency and safety, crisis intervention for no heat situations and energy related repair for home heating systems. For more information about Community Actions programs, [click here](#) or call 612-335-5837.

September Breakfast with Gary: An Inconvenient Truth



Al Gore with Diana McKeown

On Friday September 28th, join Council Member Schiff and Diana McKeown for a discussion on global warming, featuring the original powerpoint presentation that was the basis of the Academy Award winning movie *An Inconvenient Truth*.

Diana McKeown spent years at Clean Water Action Alliance of Minnesota, and was recently trained by former Vice President Al Gore to spread the message about the threat of global warming. She took part in an intensive tutorial this summer regarding global warming with a team of renowned scientists and educators. The presentation includes breathtaking

historical photos of climate change as well as research on carbon emissions and human impacts on the environment.

Breakfast with Gary is a monthly event held 7:30 to 9:00 a.m. the final Friday of the month at Mercado Central, 3016 Bloomington Avenue South on the southwest corner of Lake Street and Bloomington Avenue. Please contact [Heidi Quezada](#) with questions.

Corcoran murals helps fight graffiti

The Corcoran Neighborhood Organization has kicked off a new mural program, transforming graffiti-plagued buildings with art. This weekend at Salon Belleza, 1837 East Lake Street, the latest mural will take shape. Volunteers are sought Saturday and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., with a celebration after.



Corcoran residents pose in front of one of several new murals that cover locations hit with gang graffiti.

According to CNO director Amy Arcand, the mural project aims to demonstrate “the transformative power of art, and to replace destructive graffiti with authentic expressions of identity.” Muralist Elise Kylo will be leading painting and design activities. A long-time volunteer at In the Heart of the Beast Theater and its May Day Parade, Elise brings over eight years experience working with young people to the project. In 2006, she led the efforts of 40 neighbors to mural the 34th and Cedar Shell gas station.

The project is organized by the Corcoran Neighborhood Organization (CNO) and everyone is invited to participate. To learn about future murals, [sign up for Corcoran's free e-mail newsletter](#).

City Council begins work on 2008 budget

Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak will deliver his 2008 budget address on Monday, kicking off a twelve-week process that will determine the 2008 tax levy and department staffing levels. Originally slated for September, the budget address was delayed with hope that a special Legislative session would restore State aide cuts to Minneapolis. However, that session only addressed flood relief.

Council Member Gary Schiff will review department budget requests as a member of the Ways and Means Committee, and says he will be looking at several priorities. “Police staffing and public safety resources remain our number one need, particularly in high crime neighborhoods, and the ongoing mortgage foreclosure crises is adding burdens to many city departments,” Schiff said. “Adequate staff resources to be able to address the soaring number of boarded buildings are crucial and we must also adjust our housing development strategies to address the reality of a flat housing market.” Additionally,

Schiff says he will work for full funding of the East Phillips Cultural and Community Center, a park and recreational building that will augment youth and gang prevention programs in one of the cities most challenged neighborhoods.

The budget process wraps up with a truth in taxation hearing December 11th and the final budget adoption on December 12th.

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