

Open Line

A Monthly Newsletter for City of Auburn Citizens

October 2019

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City of Auburn

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day

Our Environmental Services Department will host its biannual Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day on Saturday, Oct. 12. Auburn residents are invited to drop off materials from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Environmental Services Complex at 365-A N. Donahue Drive.

During the event, the department will accept hazardous waste not accepted in regular garbage and trash collection. Computers and electronics will be accepted as well as paper documents for secure, on-site shredding. Residents may bring up to 20 pounds of material per household for disposal at no charge.

Participation is limited to Auburn residents, and proof of residency can be shown by bringing a recent water bill. A list of acceptable materials can be found at auburnalabama.org/environmental-services/household-hazardous-waste-collection-day.



City Market begins this fall

Auburn Parks and Recreation is excited to host the City Market this October! Join us at Town Creek Park, 1150 S. Gay Street, from 8 a.m. till noon every Saturday in October.

City Market's focus is on local growers, but there will also be opportunities for bakers, food trucks, specialty food makers, handmade arts and craft producers and performance artists. This FREE event will be held rain or shine.

If you are interested in becoming a vendor, you can download a vendor application at auburnalabama.org/citymarket. For up-to-date information, join the City Market Facebook event on the City of Auburn's Facebook page, facebook.com/CityofAuburnAL.

City of Auburn Flood Protection & Preparation Information

In May 2014, the City of Auburn was accepted into the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS). Even though everyone doesn't own or live on property in a floodplain, this program benefits the community by protecting the environment, making people safer and saving everyone money. The City has received a Class 7 score for our CRS application, giving the citizens' of Auburn a 15% discount on their flood insurance for those in the Special Flood Hazard Area and a 5% discount for those in the Non-Special Flood Hazard Area. The following is some information you might find helpful regarding floodplains in the City of Auburn.

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Local Flood Hazards



The City of Auburn has an annual precipitation of 52.6 inches and has a history of major rainstorm events. Over the last 10 years, our biggest rain events occurred in February 2009, November 2009, July 2011, February 2012, February 2013, August 2013 and December 2015. During these major storm events, flooding can occur when drainage courses, such as stormwater systems and natural ditches, overflow. Local bodies of water and roadways subject to flooding include:

Local Water Bodies: Choctafaula Creek, Parkerson Mill Creek, Town Creek, Moore's Mill Creek, Chewacla Creek, Lake Chewacla, Lake Ogletree, Saugahatchee Creek and Little Loblockee Creek.

Roadways: North Donahue Drive Bridge, Water Crest Drive Bridge, East University Drive Bridge at Summertrees Drive, Moores Mill Road Bridge at Forestdale Drive, Windway Road Bridge and Ogletree Road Bridge north of Oak Knoll Circle.

Know Your Flood Hazards

The City of Auburn is available to provide more information on whether a property is in a Special Flood Hazard Area. Find out if your property is in the regulated floodplain by calling Development Services at (334) 501-7380. For more general information, you can view your property in relation to the regulated floodplain online using the City's interactive map at auburnalabama.org/maps. Select the COA Map then turn on the "Natural Features" layer and the "Flood Plain" sublayer. The following Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) information can also be provided upon request: the community number, the map panel number and suffix, the date of the FIRM's Index, the Base Flood Elevation shown on the FIRM, the elevation datum used on the FIRM and the availability of Elevation Certificates for review.

Insure Your Property for Your Flood Hazard

The City encourages all citizens to purchase flood insurance. Even if your property is not located in a high-risk flood area, it's a good idea to buy flood insurance because almost 25% of all flood insurance claims come

from areas with minimal flood risk. Here are some important facts you should know:

- Homeowner's insurance policies DO NOT cover flood damages or losses.
- Flood insurance policies have a 30-day waiting period before coverage goes into effect.
- Renters are able to buy flood insurance for the contents of their homes.

Contact your insurance agent to see if your property is covered for flood damage. Additional information on flood insurance can be found at auburnalabama.org/engineering-services/flood-protection.

Flood Safety

Safety is a must when it comes to possible flooding in our area. The following tips can keep you and your family from harm during flooding:

- Do not walk through flowing waters.
- Do not drive through a flooded area.
- Stay away from power and electrical lines.
- Shut off all gas and water valves.
- Have a departure plan in case of emergency.

Flood Warning

The City of Auburn works with the Lee County Emergency Management Agency to give citizens ample warning in cases of a flooding event. Emergency messages are broadcast through local radio and TV stations. In the event of heavy rains, it is essential to monitor TV and/or radio weather broadcasts for up-to-date forecasts on tornadoes, hurricanes or flash floods. Please call 911 for any emergencies and (334) 501-3110 for any non-emergencies.

Property Protection Measures

In the past 100 years, flooding has been the number one cause of property damage in North America each year. If you own property, you can apply permanent retrofitting techniques that can help to eliminate or reduce flood damage:

- Elevating your house 1 foot above the base flood elevation.
- Flood proofing your house to make the walls and flooring watertight so that water cannot enter.
- If you know you are in the flood prone area, flood vent the crawl space under your home so that water can flow through.

Employees from the City of Auburn are available for site visits to review flooding, drainage and sewage issues and provide one-on-one advice to property owners on appropriate flood protection measures. We are also

available to assist you with reviewing and critiquing retrofit plans for flood-prone residences and buildings. Contact our Inspection Services Department at (334) 501-3170 or webcodes@auburnalabama.org about protecting your home or business from flooding.

Floodplain Development Permit Requirements

To ensure the highest degree of safety and to protect your property from flood damage the Inspection Services Department enforces the Building Code for the City of Auburn. Check with them before you build on, alter, grade or fill on your property. A permit is required for all construction in the City of Auburn to ensure that a project is compliant with all regulations.

Any development without a permit is non-compliant and may result in fines. If you know of any development taking place without the required permits or would like to verify a contractor's license, please contact the City of Auburn Inspection Services Department at (334) 501-3170 or webcodes@auburnalabama.org. They are located at 171 N. Ross St.

Substantial Improvement Requirements

For the City of Auburn to participate in the NFIP, we adopted regulations and codes that apply to new developments in the floodplains. Local floodplain management regulations and codes contain minimum NFIP requirements that apply to new and existing structures that are "substantially improved" or "substantially damaged."

"Substantially damaged" means damage of any origin sustained by a structure whereby the cost of restoring the structure to its before-damaged condition would equal or exceed 50% of the market value of the structure before damage occurred.

"Substantially improved" means any reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition or other improvements of a structure, the cost of which equals or exceeds 50% of the market value of the structure before the "start of construction" of the improvement. This term includes structures that have incurred "substantial damage" regardless of the actual repair work performed.

The City of Auburn requires an elevation of 1 foot above the base flood elevation for new construction and for existing structures before they are repaired.

Protect Natural Floodplain Functions

Floodplain areas and wetlands provide a wide range of benefits to both human and natural systems. Wetlands in and around the City of Auburn are a valuable asset, flood control and water quality being the two most important aspects of our local floodplain.

One of the ways you can help prevent flooding is to make sure you don't dump pollutants or debris into our storm

drains. These debris drain into our natural drainage systems and wetlands. For the natural drainage system to operate efficiently, our ditches, streams and channels must remain clean. Debris, even leaves and grass clippings, can obstruct the flow of water and cause overflow onto streets and yards. Wetlands absorb water during heavy rainfall or flooding and slowly release the waters downstream, reducing flood damage. Wetlands and wetland plants help to absorb and filter potentially harmful chemicals and pollutants before they get into our waterways. The City of Auburn is home to several identified undeveloped floodplain areas that are vital for several endangered or threatened species unique to this area. These areas also provide recreation, education and research opportunities important to our local economy.



Residents, business and property owners play a huge role in maintaining the ditches and streams on their property. They should notify the City when maintenance is needed on the right of way. City Code prohibits taking any action that can impede the flow of water in ditches and waterways. If you know of any illegal dumping of debris or any action that could affect the drainage system, please contact the Public Works Department at (334) 501-3000 or webpw@auburnalabama.org.

For more information regarding the National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System, please contact the Engineering Services Department at 171 N. Ross St., (334) 501-3000, webengineering@auburnalabama.org or visit our website at auburnalabama.org/engineering-services.

Board Vacancies

Three vacancies on the Building Board of Adjustments, three vacancies on the Tree Commission and one vacancy on the Educational Building Authority will be announced at the Sept. 17 Auburn City Council meeting and filled at the Oct. 15 meeting. Applications will be due on Oct. 7 at 5 p.m.

Visit auburnalabama.org/boards to apply or find more information about volunteering for one of our boards and commissions.

