



Town of Westford Massachusetts

Town Manager's Newsletter

April 2024



Kristen Las
Town
Manager

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978-692-5500

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Annual Town Meeting
Westford Academy Field
Saturday, April 27
Check in Begins 8:00AM

Town Election
Tuesday, May 7
(See page 4)

Brush Chipping
Highway Department
28 North St
Saturday, April 20
10:30AM - 4:30PM
(See Page 20)



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Dear Westford residents,

As many enjoy this April school break, the Town staff are diligently getting ready to execute our annual Town Meeting on April 27, 2024. Our annual Town Meeting, originally scheduled for March 23, 2024, was postponed due to greater than expected turnout. I would like to thank voters for coming to Westford Academy on March 23rd and for their interest in town government. The Town Meeting has been moved to the Westford Academy field where we will have unlimited capacity for voters to attend. You should have received a second Town Meeting postcard (blue paper) in the mail. If you plan to attend, please let us know by taking this short online [survey](#).

For all the details, please visit our Town Meeting [website](#). Town meeting will begin at 9AM and registration begins at 8AM. When the WA parking lot is full, free transportation will be provided from the off-site parking lots at Abbot, Robinson and Crisafulli schools. If you would like to use free transportation to and from Town Meeting from your home, please sign up through this [website](#) or call the Cameron Senior Center. If you would like to bring your children to Town Meeting and enroll them in free childcare, please register [here](#). Please note that registration closes for both on April 25th. The cellular service at WA may be limited, so please plan on downloading any documents you would like to use. We will not have a food truck on-site this year, but will be offering pizza for sale for those who choose not to bring their own lunch. Please bring cash as we cannot accept electronic forms of payment (credit cards/Venmo/etc.). The budgets under Articles 1-4 will be discussed close to 9AM. The zoning bylaws under Articles 17-18 will be discussed around 12:45PM.

More information on the budget can be found on the [budget website](#). An updated video has been prepared and can be viewed [here](#). The Chairs of the Select Board, Finance Committee and School Committee will be hosting a final budget [open forum](#) on Wednesday April 24th at 7PM at Millenium and via [Zoom](#). The final approval of the town budget takes place at Town Meeting. If an override is approved at Town Meeting it must also be passed via ballot question on the townwide election day, May 7, 2024. The last day to register to vote in the local election is April 26, 2024. Early voting will occur at the Town Clerk's office starting the week of April 29th. Residents who filled out the state postcard to receive mail ballots will receive them and will be able to return them via mail or in person by May 7th. The polls will be open May 7th from 7AM-8PM at WA and Stonybrook.

Last week, S&P Global Ratings has once again assigned its 'AAA' credit rating to the Town of Westford, the highest rating level that it assigns, citing the Town's pending Town Meeting approval of a large multifamily housing district, proactive management and interdepartmental coordination to address the fiscal 2025 fiscal gap, and multi-year financial planning among other key factors. I would like to thank the Select Board and Finance Committee for their support of our financial policies and our financial team who manages our processes on a day-to-day basis. You can read more about this rating [here](#).

(Continued on next page)

WWW.WESTFORDMA.GOV

The Town welcomed Mike Edwards, Assistant Town Manager – Strategic Operations on March 25, 2024. Mike will be supporting the Town Manager’s office in the management of the Veteran’s Agent, Animal Control Officers, and Sustainability Coordinator. He will be the lead on general insurance, procurement, solid waste and recycling, as well as liaison with Public Facilities (buildings). Mike’s office is located in the Town Manager’s suite.

I would also like to congratulate Jeff Morrissette on his promotion from Director of Land Use Management to Assistant Town Manager – Land Use & Economic Development. Jeff will continue to manage the Land Use Management department and will additionally support the Town Manager’s office in economic development effort. Jeff’s office will remain in the Land Use Management Department in Town Hall. I will not be backfilling the Director of Land Use Management position.

Both positions will assist with business and labor contracts, town meeting preparations, special projects, budget creation and management, and other matters as they come up.

Construction season is upon us and several large projects have gotten underway throughout Westford.

National Grid will be working on Old Lowell Road near South Chelmsford Road to replace utilities in advance of the Blue Brook Culvert Project. Please allow for additional commuting time, detours and delays beginning Tuesday, April 16th. The work should be completed within two weeks. Road users are reminded to slow down and pay attention in work zones.

Contractors working for the Town are expected to begin work on the Carlisle Road Sidewalk Project on Tuesday, April 16th. The work zone will be between Littleton Road and Applewood Drive and is expected to last for approximately 6-8 weeks. Please allow for additional commuting time, detours and delays.

Please see below for matters that were discussed or acted upon by the Select Board in the past month.

At their meeting on March 26, 2024, the Select Board set a new date for Annual Town Meeting which will be held on April 27, 2024 at 9:00AM at Westford Academy’s Alumni Field.

The Select Board reviewed the ballot question on the May 7, 2024 Annual Town Election ballot and approved in a 5-0 vote that it be broken out into two separate questions.

Question 1: Shall the Town of Westford be allowed to assess an additional \$4,200,000 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purposes of funding municipal and school operating expenses for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024?

Yes _____ *No* _____

Question 2: Shall the Town of Westford be allowed to assess an additional \$2,600,000 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of funding the Override Stabilization Fund for the fiscal year beginning July first, two thousand twenty four?

Yes _____ *No* _____

At their meeting on April 9, 2024 the Select Board recognized Captain David O’Keefe who retired from the Fire Department after 40 years of service. The Town of Westford was also recognized for winning the ACEC Bronze Excellence Award for the Beaver Brook Bridge Project. Tom Clay reminded residents that Annual Town Meeting would be held April 27, 2024 at 9AM at Westford Academy Alumni Field, and the Select Board approved to re-sign the warrant.

The Select Board approved the proclamation request from the Community Behavioral and Mental Health Committee to designate May as “Mental Health Awareness Month.”

(Continued on next page)

The Select Board accepted a \$2,500 donation from the "Westford MA LGBTQ+ Friends and Allies" to support the Town Of Acton in the execution of the Acton-Westford Pride Event. This will be held on June 15, 2024 at NARA Park in Acton from 12-3PM.

The Select Board approved the request to sign the May 7, 2024 Town Election Warrant, as well as approve the over-the-counter early voting (at the Town Clerk's Office) schedule, which is as follows:

- Monday, April 29, 2024 9AM - 5PM
- Tuesday, April 30, 2024 9AM - 5PM
- Wednesday, May 1, 2024 9AM - 5PM
- Thursday, May 2, 2024 9AM - 7PM
- Friday, May 3, 2024 10AM - 2PM

The Select Board also began discussions on pending state bills that would allow hybrid meetings and will be continued to the April 23, 2024 meeting.

There are several openings on our local boards and committees, including:

- | | |
|--|--|
| Affordable Housing Trust | Healthy Westford Committee |
| Board of Assessors | Historical Commission |
| Bylaw Review Committee | MBTA Communities Multi-Family Housing |
| Capital Planning Committee | Northern Middlesex Stormwater Collaborative |
| Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee | Parks and Recreation Commission |
| Community Preservation Committee | Pedestrian Safety Committee |
| Cultural Council | Permanent Town Building Committee |
| Diversity, Equity and Inclusion | Recycling Commission |
| Dog Park Task Force | Scholarship and Grant Committee |
| Economic Development Committee | Selectmen Policies & Procedures Sub Committee |
| | Tax Possession Disposition Committee |

I urge you to peruse our website for information about the work of these committees; and if you have interest, please complete and submit a Citizen's Activity form at this link: [Citizen Activity Form](#).

Would you like more detailed information on the Select Board's meetings? Click the following links to access: [Select Board Documents](#) & [Select Board Meeting Videos](#).

If you have any suggestions for articles or added features in future newsletters, please do not hesitate to reach out to the Town Manager's office at (978)-692-5501 or email at klas@westfordma.gov.

Sincerely,



Kristen Las, Town Manager

Town Clerk's Corner



Annual Town Meeting	Saturday, April 27, 2024 (April 28 rain date)
Town Election	Tuesday, May 7, 2024
State Primary	Tuesday, September 3, 2024
Special Town Meeting	October, 2024
General Election	Tuesday, November 5, 2024

Over the Counter Early Voting in Clerks Office for May 7, 2024 Election

Monday, April 29 th , 2024	9am-5pm
Tuesday, April 30, 2024	9am-5pm
Wednesday, May 1, 2024	9am-5pm
Thursday, May 2, 2024	9am-7pm
Friday, May 3, 2024	10am-2pm

Deadline to register to vote for May 7th 2024 election is April 26, 2024

Not registered as a voter in Westford yet?

It's easier than ever ... just go online! www.sec.state.ma.us/



When you register to vote, you may

- Register in a POLITICAL PARTY by selecting one of the listed parties (currently Democratic or Republican) OR
- Register in a political designation, OR
- Register with no party affiliation by selecting "NO PARTY (unenrolled)," which is commonly referred to as "independent" meaning that you do not have a party designation

If you do not enroll in a party (i.e., choose unenrolled or a political designation), you may still vote in state and presidential primaries by choosing a party ballot and will remain unenrolled. If you enroll in one of the parties listed above, you may vote only in that party's primary. In a general election, all voters receive the same ballot regardless of party enrollment.

A reminder - We have a drop box for ballots, dog license requests, census forms and any other items for the Town Clerk's Office. It is located at the back door to Town Hall on the sidewalk leading to the Police Station. Access is available 24 hours a day. The box is securely locked and tamperproof.



Westford Water Department

2024 Annual Town Meeting Article 9 Construction of PFAS Treatment Plants - Q&A

What are PFAS? PFAS stands for per and polyfluoroalkyl substances. These are a class of over 5,000 fluorinated synthetic chemicals. Due to their resistance to breakdown in the environment they have been referred to as “forever chemicals”. PFAS have been in use since the 1940's and have many industrial and commercial applications. They are known for their water and grease resistant properties.

Where are PFAS found? PFAS have been used in fire fighting foams (AFFF), and numerous consumer products including, carpeting, non-stick cookware, food packaging, clothing, upholstery, detergents, stains, waxes, personal products, toilet paper, and more. They've been detected in soil, groundwater, surface water, wastewater, and precipitation.

Why are PFAS significant? PFAS have been linked to several negative health effects including high cholesterol, obesity, immune, developmental, and reproductive effects, and cancer.

What is the PFAS drinking water standard? The drinking water standard in Massachusetts (maximum contaminant level - or MCL) for the total of 6 PFAS compounds (PFAS6) is 20 parts per trillion (ppt). The MCL is determined based on the quarterly average of monthly sampling from our 2 water treatment plants (WTPs).

What are Westford's PFAS levels? The quarterly average range from the Forge WTP is: 3.87—15.0 ppt; the quarterly average range from the Nutting Road WTP is: 14.8—17.3 ppt. We've been in compliance with the Massachusetts MCLs since their promulgation into law.

Why do we have to treat for PFAS? The US EPA's draft drinking water standards (MCLs) for PFOA and PFAS is 4.0 ppt. Once the EPA standards are finalized the state will be obligated to meet the lower standards. We can meet the state standards, but cannot meet the EPA standards. **To be in compliance with the lower standards the Water Department will have to treat for PFAS.**

How will PFAS treatment be funded? The Water Department is seeking funding from the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF). The DWSRF offers low interest loans for applicable projects like PFAS treatment. The WWD submitted a project proposal to the SRF and it has been approved. **The deadline to appropriate funds to be eligible for a low interest DWSRF loan is June 28, 2024.** Accordingly, appropriation of the funding is included in the 2024 annual town meeting (ATM).

How much will PFAS treatment cost? The estimate for engineering and construction of 2 PFAS treatment plants is \$24.5 million. The proposed PFAS treatment plants will be constructed at the current water treatment plant locations on Forge Village Road and Nutting Road.

How is the Water Department funded? The Water Department is an Enterprise Fund and accordingly receives funding exclusively from water rates, fees, and service development charges. The WWD receives no funding from the tax levy (property taxes). If you are not a water customer you do not fund the Water Enterprise.

Are we involved in any PFAS litigation? The Town of Westford is a participant in a PFAS Multi District Litigation (MDL). This is a cost-recovery litigation directed at the manufacturers of PFAS materials. As of now 2 companies have agreed to settle—3M and Dupont. The 3M settlement (awaiting court approval) is for \$12.5 billion and the Dupont settlement is for \$1.25 billion. Allocation of settlement monies is based on PFAS concentrations and volume of water pumped. Westford is within the first phase of litigants. Our hope is that these funds will help us with the cost of PFAS treatment and provide some rate relief for our customers.

Will our water rates increase? The Water Department increased rates last July for the first time since 2009. This increase was driven by reduced revenues, anticipated effects of our next withdrawal permit (further reductions to revenues caused by increased conservation restrictions), a significant spike in operating costs caused by post-COVID inflation, and the increasing likelihood of PFAS treatment.

In addition to maintaining our current aging infrastructure including essential capital projects, construction of 2 PFAS treatment facilities and the attendant operating and maintenance costs will result in the need for future rate increases. We are currently modeling several budget scenarios, including future rate increases, and will present these different scenarios to the Select Board in April for their input. Ultimately, the Water Department is responsible for the financial well-being of the Water Enterprise. As a strictly regulated public water supplier, we are required to meet ever-expanding state and federal standards. Our objective is to find the best rate scenario that sufficiently funds the Enterprise while minimizing the burden to our customers.

What is the timeline for PFAS treatment? If Article 9 passes at ATM this April, the Water Department will apply for the low-interest DWSRF loan by the deadline of October 11, 2024. Final plant design is anticipated by February 2025, and bidding for a construction contract will occur between February and April 2025. The construction contract award is scheduled for June 2025 with construction beginning in July 2025. Construction of the 2 PFAS treatment plants is expected to be completed by December 2027. This timeline is tentative and will change as circumstances dictate.

April / May at the J.V. Fletcher Library

Unless otherwise noted, the following programs are made possible by the Friends of the Library.



YA Crafternoon (Taylor's Version): Monday, April 22nd at

3:30 p.m. Celebrate the release of The Tortured Poets Department with some Swiftie-theme crafts. For Grade 5 and up. Registration is appreciated, but drop-ins are welcome. [Register Here.](#)

Virtual: Q&A with author C.S. Harris: Tuesday, April 23 at 7:00 p.m. We are so excited to be chatting with Historical Mystery author, C.S. Harris! As you may know, C.S. (aka Candice Proctor) is the prolific writer of the Sebastian St. Cyr series. We're also celebrating the book birthday of the 18th in this series, "Who Cries for the Lost?" - with a title like that, don't you just want to run out and read every book, starting with "What Angels Fear". [Register here.](#)

A Community Reads on Climate Change: Monday, April 29th at 7:00 p.m. Concerned about our changing climate and would like to learn more? Want to talk with your friends and neighbors about this important issue? In celebration of Earth Month, the J.V. Fletcher Library, Westford Climate Action, and the Westford Sustainability Department are hosting a community book discussion on climate change. Choose a book from the curated list from the [L.A. Times](#) and bring your ideas and questions to the Meeting Room at the Library. Talk with fellow community members about the challenges of and possible solutions to this urgent issue. The curated L.A. Times book list is [available here.](#) Registration is suggested but drop-ins are welcome. [Register here](#)

YA Sweet Reads: Tuesday, April 30 at 6:30 p.m. Join us in the Meeting Room to discuss Mirror to Mirror by Rajani LaRocca and enjoy some dessert! Copies of each the book are available at the Main Desk. Open to Grade 6 and up. [Register here.](#)

Virtual Job Search Help for 50 & Over Networking: Wednesday, May 1, Interviewing Strategies. The Massachusetts Library Collaborative's 50+ Job Seekers Group meets on biweekly the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., via Zoom. If you are unemployed and actively looking, underemployed, seeking a new career direction, re-entering the job market after a long employment gap, or recently retired and looking for your "Encore Career", this networking group program is perfect for you! [Register Here](#)

Virtual: Coexisting with Coyotes in Suburban Communities: Thursday, May 9 at 7:00 p.m. Eastern coyotes are found in nearly every town and city in Massachusetts, and they can thrive close to humans in a variety of habitats. Join this webinar to learn about eastern coyote biology, how coyotes use suburban areas, and how communities can take effective steps to coexist with coyotes. This talk will be presented by MassWildlife's Black Bear and Furbearer Biologist, Dave Wattles, PhD. [Register here.](#) This program is hosted in collaboration with Memorial Hall Library in Andover, MA.

Ukulele Sing Along, Play Along: Saturday, May 11 at 2:00 p.m. in the Meeting Room Join Julie Stepanek and other players for a ukulele sing & play along! A play along is participatory music at its best. Julie will prepare song sheets (lyrics and chords) of songs and lead participants in playing those songs, offering tips and encouragement as we play, sing and have a good time. Please note: while this is not a beginner teaching class, Julie will offer tips and all skill levels are welcome! A limited number of ukuleles are provided. However, you are welcome to bring your own! [Register here.](#)

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J.V. Fletcher Library (continued)

Top Requested Book Club Books: Charles Schweppe, our Serials/Interlibrary Loan Librarian has compiled a list of the most requested book club titles over the past year. Charles is happy to request multiple copies of titles for your book club. For more information, contact the Information Services Desk at 978-399-2304.

American Dirt, by Jeanine Cummins (appearing on its second list!)

Lydia and her son are forced to flee their middle-class existence in Acapulco by the drug cartels. As they join the countless people trying to reach el norte, Lydia soon sees that everyone is running from something. But what exactly are they running to? *American Dirt* will leave readers utterly changed when they finish reading it.

Lessons in Chemistry, by Bonnie Garmus

It's the 1960s and despite the fact that Elizabeth Zott is a scientist, her peers are very unscientific when it comes to equality. So she finds herself an unwed, single mother and the star of America's most beloved cooking show. Her singular approach to cooking is proving revolutionary. Because she isn't just teaching women how to cook, she's teaching them how to change the status quo.

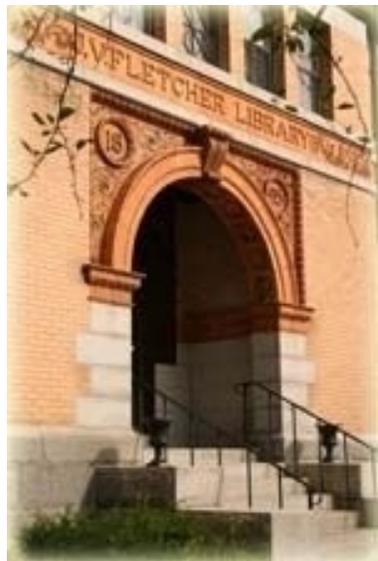
The Personal Librarian, by Marie Benedict

The remarkable, little-known story of Belle da Costa Greene, J. P. Morgan's personal librarian-who became one of the most powerful women in New York despite the dangerous secret she kept in order to make her dreams come true from New York Times bestselling author Marie Benedict and acclaimed author Victoria Christopher Murray.

The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo, by Taylor Jenkins Reid

Summoned to reclusive Evelyn Hugo's apartment, unknown Monique Grant listens as her story unfurls: from making her way to the movies in the 1950s to her decision to leave in the late 80s, and, of course, the seven husbands along the way. As Evelyn's life unfolds, Monique begins to feel a very a real connection. But as the story catches up with the present, it becomes clear that her life intersects with Monique's own in tragic and irreversible ways.

I would note that in addition to Marie Benedict having one of the most requested single book last year, she had two other titles with multiple requests (*The Mystery of Mrs. Christie* and *The Only Woman in the Room*), making her the most requested author of the year!



Friends of the Library e-newsletter: The best way to learn about our upcoming programs and new services is through the FOL weekly e-newsletter. [Sign up here.](#)

Check out our [Museum Passes page](#) or call the Library for reservations. Unless otherwise noted, our museum passes are generously funded by the Friends of the Library. [Have you joined the Friends yet?](#)

Quick Links to Our Most Popular Services!

[Programs - Adults](#)

[Programs - Kids](#)

[Programs - Young Adults](#)

If you have questions or need assistance, please call us at 978-399-2300

or send us an email at westfordlibrary@westfordma.gov

April 2024 Sustainability Update, Sue Thomas, [Sustainability Coordinator](#)

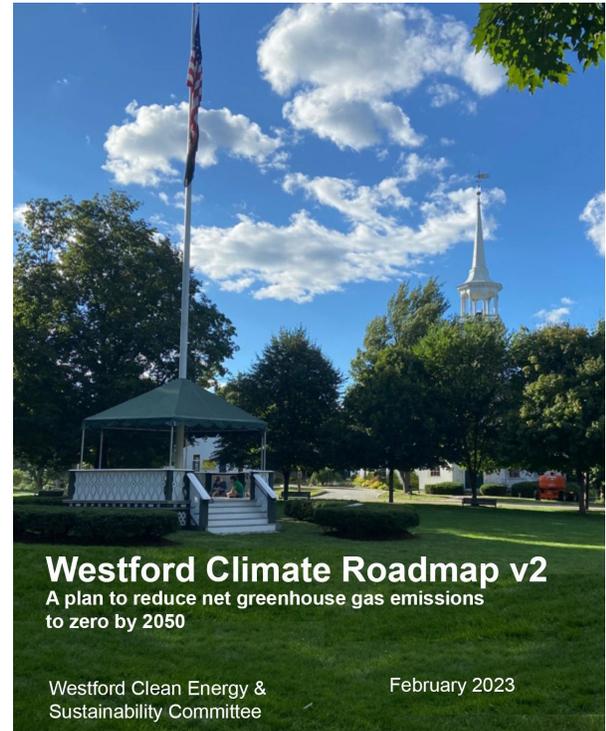
Every month is Earth Month in Westford

Roadmap A year ago the Select Board endorsed the [Westford Climate Roadmap, A plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to zero by 2050](#), Version 2.0, developed by the Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee to implement the 2020 Town Meeting Resolution to promote clean energy and reduce fossil fuel use to achieve the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' limit of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. There is no better time to review this document as we approach town meeting and the discussion of community priorities embedded in the warrant and the budget. Many of our household and governmental financial pressures can be tied back to environmental concerns: energy costs, insurance rates, waste disposal, food prices, supply chain disruptions, construction price increases, disaster recovery costs, including the clean-up of our water supply, and disease.

Volunteer Opportunities: If you are excited by the contents of the Roadmap and would like to participate in executing it, please consider joining one of the two committees most involved in implementing it: the [Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee](#) and the [Westford Recycling Commission](#). Join a meeting to learn more or fill out a [Citizen Activity Form](#) to express your interest. Reach out if you have any questions about these Committees doing great work for you.

April is tax month: if you have filed for an extension or are deep into planning for next year's tax return, Rewire America has the information you need with their Federal [tax guide](#) and [incentive calculator](#) tool. For state returns and incentive information for planning, go [here](#) to see MA energy rebates and incentive programs, and visit [Mass Save](#) for rebate information.

Westford Pop vs Competitive Electricity suppliers: Competitive electricity suppliers are likely in touch via mail, email, and social media to let you know it is a sweet time to switch suppliers. [The MA Attorney General](#) and I would like you to know that while this may be true, it may not be. Please read the fine print and beware all of the terms of your "deal", especially early termination fees or term lengths that place your renewal at traditionally high price and demand periods (summer and winter). If you are willing to watch the rates every month and are able to find deals that allow you to switch your supplier multiple times a year without penalty, you may be able to play the market, however, for most customers, this can be a losing game, which is why [MA is considering legislation](#) to ban competitive suppliers from the Commonwealth. Low price offers now, which expire in the late fall when prices are likely to be high, may cost you money over the course of the year. [The Westford Pop program](#) provides price stability, savings over current National Grid Basic service rates, vetted clean energy, and historically, saves our residents money when considered over the course of a year. Utility rates are set for six month periods. Competitive suppliers set their term lengths with customers. Westford Pop rates are negotiated and set for a term of two or three years. The current Westford Pop rates are set through December 1, 2025. Finally, the town has vetted the clean energy being purchased through Westford Pop and confirmed that it incents the development and production of additional local clean electricity. Not all "clean" energy is created and counted equally.



(Continued on next page)

Sustainability (Continued)

Shave the peak incentive programs: Westford facilities and I are evaluating participation in the National Grid's Municipal demand response program for several of our schools. This program pays the town to limit electricity use on 1-6 peak use days during the summer in return for savings. Facilities can opt out of participation during any of the events should the schools be in use. Estimated annual savings for Westford range from \$15,000 to \$50,000 depending on the number of events this summer and our ability to participate on those days. Residents and businesses can take advantage of similar programs through [National Grid ConnectedSolutions](#).

Public Health Fair Many thanks to our town health professionals for organizing the Westford Health & Wellness Fair and to volunteers from the Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee and Westford Climate Action who staffed the environmental health table for me! Look for the materials on the [Sustainability website](#) soon.

Electric Vehicles 101 and the Electric Vehicle Car show were last week. Many thanks to the School Department, the Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee and Westford Climate Action for two terrific events. The Electric Vehicles speaker from Green Energy Consumer's Alliance, Anna Vanderspek, gave an outstanding presentation and Westford Cat offered us the technical assistance to record and provide a hybrid meeting. If you missed it, please check out the recording [here](#). The Green Energy Consumer Alliance maintains a rich set of EV car buying/leasing resources through their Drive Green Program, from buyer/leasing guides to tax guides, which may be found [here](#). The car show offered a casual setting to talk to a dozen resident EV, plug in hybrid vehicle owners and lease holders about their real-world experiences and to view their vehicles without any sales pressure. There is a lot of choice in the car market now! Watch for other vehicle shows in surrounding communities this spring.



Spring is often for cleaning!

- ✓ For cleaning
 - Go natural and use cheap and effective products like vinegar, baking soda, and hydrogen peroxide
 - Use [environmental working group's database](#) to buy non-toxic products
 - Use washable towels and old textiles instead of paper towels
- ✓ For extra stuff
 - Sell your excess purchases – the [Roudenbush Yard Sale](#) is now **Saturday, June 1st**!
 - Donate your reusable stuff
 - [Participate in the Westford Recycling Commission Diversion events](#)

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Sustainability (Continued)

Earth Day is April 22nd. The 2024 theme is People vs Plastics and the goal is to achieve 60% reduction in plastics production by 2040 by :

- ✓ Developing awareness of the widespread public and planetary health threat posed by plastic phasing out single use plastics by 2030
- ✓ [Ending fast fashion \(many textiles are plastic\)](#)
- ✓ Develop innovative materials and processes to build a plastic free world

How can you help? Address your disposable lifestyle one item at a time. Start small and build on your successes. Don't demand perfection, but keep striving to do better. Change is process. None of us adopted plastic all at once, it gradually permeated our lives. It will take time and practice to eradicate it.

- ✓ Talk to your grandparents/parent about how they lived without plastic and strive to do the same
- ✓ If it isn't medically necessary, just stop using it
 - straws
 - Disposable containers and cups
 - Plastic bags – carry reusable cotton bags of all sorts and wash them.
 - NEVER microwave food in plastic or pfas covered bags (popcorn)
- ✓ Don't buy things packaged in plastic or skip packaging altogether. Seek out alternatives
 - in bulk or loose
 - home-made
 - refillable
 - by subscription
- ✓ Replace plastic with glass where applicable, like food storage. Unlike plastic, glass is inert and won't leach into food.
- ✓ Don't participate in fast fashion for you or your household (linens, decorations, furniture)
- ✓ Buy a few durable, classic pieces every season or as needed made with natural, and, if possible, uncoated, materials. Rayon, acrylic, and fleece are all plastics and should be avoided when possible.
- ✓ Clothing marketed as no iron, waterproof, sun proof or insect repellent provide those properties through the use of coatings which often consist of PFAS chemicals, even if the fabric itself is natural, like cotton.
- ✓ Thrift/buy used

Don't forget to read about climate and join the community discussion April 29th at the JV Fletcher Library. [Register here.](#)

Community Wellness

TOWN OF WESTFORD 2024

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS EVENTS

TOWN COMMON
MAY 1 – MAY 10, 2024

Mental Health Awareness flags and signs will be displayed around the Town Common

J.V. FLETCHER LIBRARY
MAY 2024

J.V. Fletcher Mental Health Awareness Book display with mental health information

J.V FLETCHER LIBRARY
MAY 6, 2024
10:00 – 4:00

Adult Mental Health First Aid Training

This training teaches adults how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges. Registration is required. To register please contact Nicole Laviolette, Westford Community Wellness Coordinator, via email nlaviolette@westfordma.gov or phone 978-399-2503.

COUNCIL ON AGING (COA)
MAY 13, 2024
11:00 – 11:45

Mind & Every Body Practice

Join Brittany Nash, Regional Community Health and Wellness Coordinator, for a 45-minute guided meditation at the Cameron Senior Center. To register, please call the COA at 978-692-5523.

J.V FLETCHER LIBRARY
MAY 14, 2024
10:30 – 11:30

Personal Wellness Presentation

Are you interested in learning how to support your well-being? This session will focus on exploring the many factors of self-care. Receive the information and resources to create a self-care action plan. A brief guided meditation practice will follow the presentation. To register please contact Nicole Laviolette, Westford Community Wellness Coordinator, via email nlaviolette@westfordma.gov or phone 978-399-2503.

J.V FLETCHER LIBRARY
MAY 22, 2024
10:30 – 11:30

Mind & Every Body Practice

Join Brittany Nash, Regional Community Health and Wellness Coordinator, for a 45-minute guided meditation at the J.V. Fletcher Library. No registration required.

Community Wellness (Continued)

JOIN US FOR THE UPCOMING FREE



ADULT MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING

WHAT IS ADULT MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID?

The Adult Mental Health First Aid training teaches adults how to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among adults



WHO SHOULD KNOW AND BE INVOLVED?

- Community members
• Employers
• Police officers
• Hospital staff
• First responders
• Caring individuals

HOW IS THIS TRAINING BENEIFICAL?

- 1. Informs Adults on common signs and symptoms of mental health and substance use challenges
2. Helps reduce stigma
3. Teaches you how to interact with a person in crisis and how to connect a person with help
4. Provides guidance with a simple 5-step action plan (ALGEE) how to properly and safely respond to these challenges

WHEN & WHERE?

Date & Time: Monday, May 6, 2024 10:00AM-4:00PM

Location: J.V Fletcher Library 50 Main Street, Westford, MA

Register by May 1, 2024

Register by emailing Nicole Laviolette

nlaviolette@westfordma.gov



Health Department

ARE YOU PREPARED?

ON MARCH 19TH, 2024, THE WESTFORD HEALTH DEPARTMENT IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MASSACHUSETTS OFFICE ON DISABILITY (MOD) HOSTED A TRAINING PRESENTATION ON EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS. PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN ATTENDANCE WERE GIVEN AN "EMERGENCY GO PACK" WITH ESSENTIAL ITEMS THAT MIGHT BE NEEDED DURING AN EMERGENCY.

IF YOU MISSED THE IN-PERSON PRESENTATION AND WOULD LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS YOU CAN VIEW THE RECORDING BY CLICKING HERE: [HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=-K-BGHVCWYC](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-K-BGHVCWYC)

TO VIEW THE MOD EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION PACKET CLICK HERE: [MOD SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION PACKET](#)

TO VIEW THE EMERGENCY SERVICES CARD CLICK HERE: [EMERGENCY-SERVICES CARD](#)



Health Department (Continued)



WESTFORD HEALTH AND WELLNESS FAIR

We want to give a big thank you to all the town employees, vendors, participants, and residents who joined us at the Westford Health and Wellness Fair that took place on April 6th, 2024 at the Stony Brook School. Thank you for making the fair a huge success!



Health Department (Continued)

FindTreatment.gov

SAMHSA's National Helpline

1-800-662-HELP (4357)

FindSupport.gov

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

988 or 988Lifeline.org

APRIL

**ALCOHOL
AWARENESS
MONTH**

**HELP IS
AVAILABLE**

SAMHSA

[samhsa.gov/find-help](https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help)

Health Department (Continued)

Signs of Drinking Too Much:

SAMHSA

- You drink more or longer than you intended
- You try to cut down or stop drinking, but are not able to
- You need to drink more than you once did, to get the effect you want
- You continue to drink even though it makes you feel depressed or anxious - or adds to another health problem
- Loved ones or trusted friends have made comments about your drinking
- You spend a lot of time drinking or thinking about alcohol
- You find that drinking interferes with daily activities, family, friends, or work
- Or maybe...
 - You have had legal problems due to drinking
 - You have experienced symptoms of withdrawal when you don't drink (such as shakiness, sweating, tremors, headaches, anxiety, irritability, and/or insomnia)

HELP IS
AVAILABLE**APRIL****ALCOHOL
AWARENESS
MONTH**[samhsa.gov/find-help/atod/alcohol](https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/atod/alcohol)

Health Department (Continued)



JOIN US FOR THE UPCOMING FREE

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING

This Youth Mental Health First Aid Training is supported by a grant from the Greater Lowell Community Foundation (GLCF)

WHAT IS YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID?

The Youth Mental Health First Aid training teaches adults how to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among children and adolescents from ages 12-18.

HOW IS THIS TRAINING BENEIFICAL?

1. Informs adults about common mental health concerns among youth.
2. Helps reduce stigma.
3. Helps adults recognize common signs and symptoms of mental health and substance misuse challenges beyond "typical" teen behavior.
4. Provides guidance with a simple 5-step action plan (ALGEE) how to properly and safely respond to these challenges.

WHO SHOULD KNOW AND BE INVOLVED?

- Parents
- Educators
- All community members



Date: April 29th and 30th
 you must attend both sessions
Time: 10:00AM-1:00PM
Location: J.V. Fletcher Library, Meeting Room, 50 Main St. Westford, MA 01886



NEPHA
NORTH EAST PUBLIC HEALTH ALLIANCE



Interested in attending?
 Please contact Brittany Nash for registration!

 bnash@westfordma.gov

Westford Recreation

Westford Recreation After School Program (WPC)

Session 5 registration open! WPC is safety focused, with activities and scheduling flexibility like no other program. Conveniently located at Abbot, Crisafulli, Day, Miller, Nabnasset, and Robinson schools. Runs Monday-Friday, from school dismissal to 6:00 p.m. Visit **About WPC** - westfordma.myrec.com.

Rec's Special Programs, Grades K-8, May 7

Need coverage for **Town Elections - Professional Development Day**? Rec's Special Program runs on May 7, from 9am-3pm, with early arrival and extended day options. Enrollment is open to surrounding communities. Visit **Special Programs** - westfordma.myrec.com.

Rec's Seasonal Programs

SPRING: Marcus Lewis Tennis Extension Program, Pickleball, Nitehawks Track and Field, Youth Chess, and On the Mark Archery.

SUMMER radar up? Check out Prime and JR. Impact Speed & Agility, Brazilian Youth Soccer, Fast Skills Football, and more. Visit **Programs** - westfordma.myrec.com.

Rec's Summer Weekly Programs

Think Kids. Think Summer! Swimming, Arts & Crafts, Sports & Games, Wingaersheek, Canobie Lake Park, and more. Enjoy nine weeks of flexible full-week programs with early arrival and extended day options: **Kids Club, Destination Exploration and Summer Beach Party at D.E.** Visit **Summer Weekly Programs** - westfordma.myrec.com.

Annual Town Meeting Childcare

Enjoy **free childcare** at the Annual Town Meeting on Saturday, April 27, 2024. Register by Thursday, April 25. NO Drop-ins. Visit **Annual Town Meeting Childcare** - westfordma.myrec.com.

STARTING SOON:

PICKLEBALL

NITEHAWKS TRACK AND FIELD

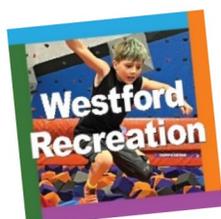
ON THE MARK ARCHERY

YOUTH CHESS

REGISTER ONLINE AT WESTFORDMA.MYREC.COM



What a great trip it was to the New England Aquarium! Fun was had by all, whether en route to Boston, or enjoying the beauty of our ocean's inhabitants. (Including touching the sting rays, and greeting Myrtle the turtle, the aquarium's 95-year-old green turtle!)



65 Main Street, 3rd Floor, Westford, MA 978-692-5523 | westfordma.myrec.com

LEARN MORE ►

WESTFORDMA.MYREC.COM

WWW.WESTFORDMA.GOV

Spring. Summer.

"Not to Miss" Programming at Westford Recreation!



Brazilian United

starting in **APRIL**

MARCUS LEWIS TENNIS-STONY BROOK COURTS

YOUTH AND ADULTS: TENNIS IS FOR EVERYONE.

NITEHAWKS TRACK AND FIELD - ALEX IVANOV

GRADES K-8: SKILLS, TECHNIQUES, FUN MINI MEETS.

PICKLEBALL - DONALD VAN DYNE

AGES 18 AND UP: ALL LEVELS, GREAT EXERCISE.

starting in **MAY**

ON THE MARK ARCHERY

YOUTH AND ADULTS: FUN, FOCUS AND RELAX.

YOUTH CHESS - INT'L MASTER PRATHIBA Y

AGES 5-14: FUN. CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING.

starting in **JUNE**

FAST SKILLS FOOTBALL - PAT GENDRON

AGES 8-13: NON CONTACT, PLAY FAST, HAVE FUN.

starting in **JULY**

BRAZILIAN YOUTH SOCCER SUMMER CLINICS

AGES 7-14: THE BASICS WITH CONFIDENCE, MOTIVATION, AUTONOMY.

FLAG FOOTBALL - SCOTT BROWN

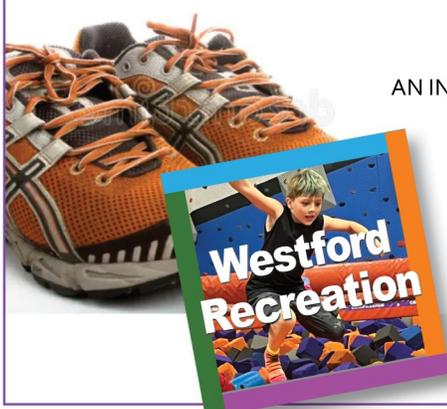
AGES 7-12: LEARN CORE SKILLS. THEME DAYS.

SPEED AND AGILITY, JR AND PRIME - D.J. BROCK

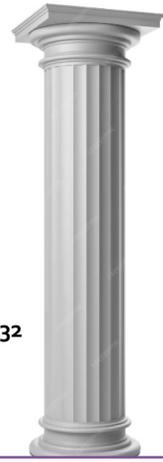
AGES 12-21: IMPROVE ATHLETICISM, COMPETITIVE, SUPPORTIVE.

PLUS GREECE TRIP FOR GRADES 7-9

AN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL TRAVEL EXPERIENCE!



Marcus Lewis Tennis Center



Experienced Instructors! Great Coaches!

REGISTER at westfordma.myrec.com

Westford Recreation | 65 Main Street, 3rd flr, Westford, MA | 978-692-5532

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK

Recycling Commission



Mark your calendar now for these upcoming Special Collection events!

Visit www.westfordma.gov/recycling for important details.

Brush Chipping

Saturday, April 20, 10:30 am - 4:30 pm. \$10/load at the Highway Garage, 28 North Street.

Electronics & More - DATE CHANGE FROM APRIL 27 TO JUNE 22

June 22 at the Highway Garage, 28 North Street, from 9 am – 1 pm.

Computers, monitors, and most other electronic devices and equipment, appliances of all sizes, and scrap metal. [Electronics & More Acceptable Items](#)

Zero Waste Collections - APRIL 27 CANCELED. TO BE RE-SCHEDULED.

Drop off Container

Old Water Department on Forge Village Rd. For donating books and media, VHS tapes, cassette tapes, older textbooks, full sets of encyclopedias, and any book in fair but still usable condition and is not donatable at the JV Fletcher Library. Note that this book container is available 24/7.

Household Hazardous Waste

Saturday, May 4, 9 am - 1 pm. Highway Garage, 28 North Street. Fees will apply. Checks are preferred, made out to Town of Westford.

[What to bring and what NOT to bring](#)

To safely transport hazardous materials, leave them in their original containers, tighten caps and lids, pack the containers in sturdy upright cardboard boxes that are padded with newsprint or scrap paper, and drive directly to the drop off site after loading your car. Never mix chemicals, and never smoke while handling hazardous materials.

Some types of hazardous waste such as motor oil, batteries (including automotive/tractor lead acid batteries, button batteries, and rechargeable batteries), and fluorescent tubes and light bulbs can be recycled locally, year-round, and for no fee. For details, please refer to the Westford Recycling Commission's document [How-to-Recycle-Most-Everything-PDF \(westfordma.gov\)](#).

For more information on Westford's Hazardous Waste Collection on May 4, and to see other options if you cannot participate on May 4, please refer to the Westford Recycling Commission web site: www.westfordma.gov/recycling.

(Continued on next page)

Recycling Commission (Continued)

New Curbside Compost Program for Westford Residents. Westford is proud to announce residents can now sign up for a curbside compost program through **Bootstrap Compost** at a discounted \$6 per visit for weekly customers or \$8 per visit for biweekly customers. There will be a \$1 lower cost once 120 residents participate. To redeem this discount, please go to their website to sign up. When you enter your Westford address, it will show the discount price. [Bootstrap Compost](#). Existing customers can contact Bootstrap to convert their current plan to the town plan.



RECYCLING VOLUNTEERS WANTED. You are welcome to come to one of our Westford Recycling Commission meetings to learn what we do. Meetings are held on the second Thursday every month except August and December. Questions: recycling@westfordma.gov.

Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repair, Repurpose, Rot (Compost) and Recycle!

MA resource for "What is Recyclable?" <http://www.RecycleSmartMA.org>

Visit www.westfordma.gov/recycling now, and for further details as we approach these collection events.



Cameron Senior Center

CAMERON VOLUNTEERS CELEBRATED FOR WEEKLY DONATION OF TALENT, SKILLS, AND TIME AT A VALUE OF \$10,000 WEEKLY TO OLDER ADULT COMMUNITY AND OTHERS.



Katie Russell, Senior Assistant who serves as the volunteer coordinator shared that without 100 plus volunteers (all ages) we couldn't do all the programs and services we provide daily. Volunteers range from Handy Man Repair Program, Hike with Mike, UPBEATS Band, Cameron Music Makers, Fitness Center Monitors, Friendly Visitors, Food Distributions, Trudy's Boutique, Administrative, WA students, Men and Woman's Breakfast, Program Instructors, COA, and FRIENDS Boards, and so many more. *Special thanks to our luncheon sponsors which included: Whole Foods, Muffins on Main and RiverCourt Residences*

NEW WATERCOLOR CLASS

Wednesday May 8th – June 26th

10am -12:00pm. No class on May 29th and June 19th

Claire Gagnon opened her art school in 2018, Chez Claire Art School, where she teaches Drawing, Acrylic, and Watercolor classes for adults. She enjoys sharing her passion for art and helping students develop their own talent. Join this Watercolor class to relax, socialize with your fellow artists, and to enjoy the process of creation. In this Watercolor class for intermediate and advanced students, you are welcome to bring a photo to paint from, or paint from examples provided.

Claire likes to guide the students to accomplish a stronger composition, a better design with a sense of harmony. She will also invite the students to develop a sense of observation while painting a still life. For more background about Claire, or to see her artwork, go to www.ChezClaireArtSchool.com. Suggested supply list available at registration.

Cost of this course will be \$125. Please sign up by phone 978.692.5523 or online at myactivecenter.com on Wednesday, May 1, 2024.

ACORN TO OAKS

Wednesday, May 8th, and June 5th at 10:00 a.m.

We are collaborating with the Roudenbush in a reading program to the students at the Frost school. Please contact Katie at 978.399.2330 or at krussell@westford.ma.gov with any questions

(Continued on next page)

Cameron Senior Center (continued)

TRUDY'S SPRING FASHION SHOW

Tuesday, May 21st at 1pm

Don't miss this opportunity to witness the unique fashion treasures that can be found at

Trudy's Boutique, our very own Friends of Cameron Senior Center Thrift Shop.

Trudy's is open M - F from 9 am—3 pm. Secure your free seat now by calling 978.692.5523.

Light refreshments will be served. If you would like to be involved with the fashion show, please reach out to Katie atkrussell@westfordma.gov

30 YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE CAMERON

June 12th at 1:30 pm

Our COA Board and staff, as well as Friends of the Cameron Center, are thrilled to celebrate the 30th year Anniversary of Cameron on Wednesday, June 12th from 1:30-3:30 pm.

We will have caricature drawings, tours, door prizes and more. Please RSVP for this fun occasion at 978-692-5523. Transportation is available; please provide a 48-hour notice by calling Robert Rafferty, Transportation Dispatcher at 978.399.2322.

EBI'S SUMMER BBQ COOKOUT IS BACK!

Friday, June 28 at 12 noon at the Franco Pavilion

You will enjoy freshly grilled BBQ chicken and/or beef, accompanied by rice, grilled tomato, dessert, beverages, and some tunes performed by local Tim Clark. A special thanks to Ebi and Desiree Masalehdan for sponsoring this FREE event. Please RSVP at 978.692.5523.

"GAY NINETIES CELEBRATION!"

The Westford Council on Aging is pleased to announce once again our annual Gay Nineties Celebration on Friday, May 17th from 10:30 AM – 2:00 PM at the Westford Regency Inn. In celebration of Older Americans Month, this event honors those Westford elders who are ninety years of age and older. The afternoon will include a catered lunch served around 11:30 AM with entertainment. Advanced registration is required, at 978.692.5523, before May 6th. Our honored Westford guests aged 90 and over are welcome to bring two guests; they will be seated at your table. Both the honoree and their two guests attend free of charge. The cost for all other guests will be \$30 if you are not a member of the Friends of Cameron, and \$19 if you are a Friends member. Westford residents will have priority. Transportation is available.

Thank you to our sponsors for their financial support: The Friends of Cameron; Nancy and Chet Cook; Westford Florist; Nashoba Valley Technical High; Westford Rotary.

ELVIS PRESLEY TRIBUTE - JUNE 5TH at 1 pm

The Friends of the Cameron will be hosting an

Elvis Presley Tribute performance at the Cameron. Cost \$10. Please keep an eye out for further details

SUMMER CASINO TRIP TO ENCORE!

Tuesday, June 11th In honor and remembrance of our dear friend and ardent supporter Richard (Dick) Severyn, we will be traveling to Encore Casino in Everett on Tuesday June 11th, and are inviting all those ages 50 and older to join us. MBT Worldwide Coach will be driving us with departure from the Franco-American Club at 9:00 am. Please arrive by 8:45 am and park in the rear of the lot. Departure from Encore is at 3:30 pm. The fee for this trip will be \$40 which includes driver gratuity, and is due at sign-up as there will be limited seating. Encore does give a \$20 bonus, which you will receive upon arrival at the casino. If you have any questions, please contact Claire.

Please call 978.692.5523 to sign up for this fun day at Encore!

To learn more about the
Cameron Senior Center
programs and services please visit:

www.westfordma.gov/coa,

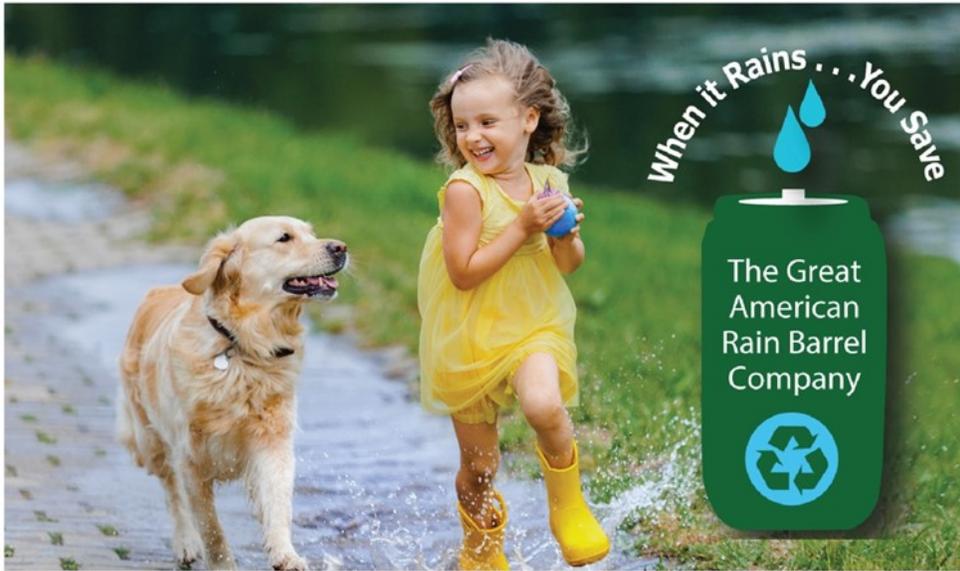
www.facebook.com/CameronSeniorCenter/

Or please feel free to call us at 978-692-5523.



Westford Senior Center

2024 Rain Barrel Program



Be Part of the Solution

Climate crisis is intensifying the water cycle, making wet periods wetter and dry periods drier. Severe droughts can make both rainfall and flash flooding more severe, creating *weather whiplash* events. When heavy rain falls over drought-stricken soil — which is often hard and cracked — it cannot soak into the ground and becomes runoff.

Rain Barrels Can Be Part of the Solution:

- Rainwater is an alternate source of water during droughts.
- Rainwater is a healthy, chlorine and chemical-free water source for plants and gardens.
- Improves residential stormwater management.
- Rain barrels help reduce pollution, erosion and improves local watershed health by collecting runoff rain from roofs and gutters.
- Lower municipal water demands & save energy at treatment plants.

About The Great American Rain Barrel:

- 100% re-purposed, food grade, UV protected and BPA free barrels. **Produced in Massachusetts.**
- Most durable rain barrels on the market: 3/16" wall thickness. Screen filtered to keep mosquitoes out.
- Will last for years when properly drained & stored for winter. Pay for themselves in one year.
- Several rain barrels can be linked together — easy 5-minute setup.
- **Available Colors:** Forest Green, Earth Brown, and Nantucket Grey. Also available unpainted.

How to Purchase Your Rain Barrel:

Rain Barrels are available for purchase by residents at the discounted price of \$89.00.

How to Order: <https://www.greatamericanrainbarrel.com/community/>. Select Town and State

Pickup: Wednesday May 22th 4:00-6:00pm Westford Water Department 60 Forge Village Road

Deadline: May 12, Midnight.

Veterans Services - Memorial Day 2024



Town wide celebration of Memorial Day will be held on Sunday, May 26th. Ceremonies will be conducted at Freedom Park @ 8:45 AM, Forge Village monument @ 9:15 AM, Graniteville monument on North Main St @ 9:45 and then at Nab Lake, Byrne Ave. dam at 10:45. On the Town Common, the reading of the Honor Rolls will begin at 10:20 AM.

Culminating the village ceremonies will be a parade starting at noon from the Roudenbush Community Center to the Town Common.

Veterans who would like to participate should meet at Freedom Park at 8:30 AM on Sunday. All are encouraged to commemorate our US servicemembers who have died in defense of our country on this holiday weekend. Join us if you can.

US flags to be placed on Veterans graves on May 18th.

American Legion Post #159 members and volunteers will be putting the US flags up in the weeks prior to Memorial Day. We will do our best to make sure that every veteran's grave is properly marked. Sometimes a flag will be misplaced or unintentionally omitted, please let the Veterans Service Officer know if a flag is missing, we will try and put one in place prior to Memorial Day. The Town of Westford's Military Burial Index can be found at <https://data.westfordma.gov/vets/>



The flat bronze markers are provided by the VA at no cost, more information on obtaining them can be found at <https://www.va.gov/burials-memorials/memorial-items/headstones-markers-medallions/> or by calling/emailing the Veterans Services department. (978) 392-1170 or veterans@westfordma.gov

Stormwater Management

**When you fertilize the lawn,
Remember
you're not *just* fertilizing the lawn.**



It's hard to imagine that a green, flourishing lawn could pose a threat to the environment, but the fertilizers you apply to your lawn are potential pollutants! If applied improperly or in excess, fertilizer can be washed off your property and end up in lakes and streams. This causes algae to grow, which uses up oxygen that fish need to survive. So if you fertilize, please follow directions and use sparingly.