City of Crystal Lake, Illinois CITYLETTER

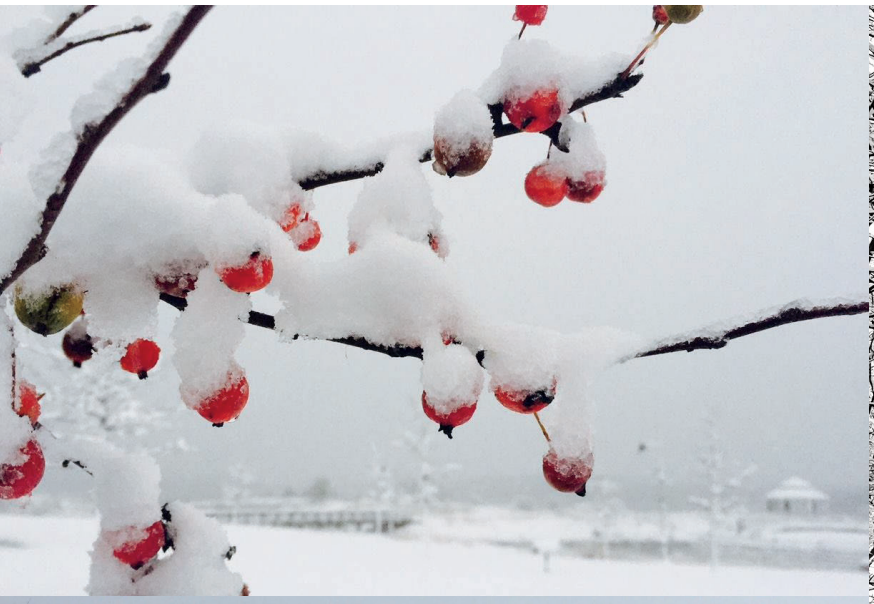






Photo By: Karen Lindburg Ventura

Clearly Crystal Lake New Year!

The New Year brings a fresh start and the perfect time to set new resolutions and goals. No matter what you're striving for in the year ahead, Crystal Lake has everything you need to make it happen. Whether you're focusing on eating healthier, picking up a new hobby, committing to a workout routine, or seeking more exciting entertainment experiences, Crystal Lake offers endless opportunities to support your journey.

From vibrant local events to wellness-focused amenities and community activities, it's the ideal place to turn your resolutions into reality. Check out the Clearly Crystal Lake Facebook and Instagram platform for more information about what is new and going on all season long!

www.facebook.com/clearlycrystallake

www.instagram.com/clearlycrystallake/

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CLEARLY CRYSTAL LAKE CORNER

New Businesses

Freundly Designs, offering graphic apparel and **Curated by Laney Boutique** opened in Downtown Crystal Lake at 30 N. Williams Street. Freundly Designs creates custom apparel for businesses, schools, and will offer on-site pressing for grab-and-go items. Curated by Laney Boutique offers curated boutique clothing and accessories for women who value comfort and style.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Citizen Police Academy

The Crystal Lake Police Department is excited to announce the next Citizens Police Academy! The academy is a free 11-week program, providing a working knowledge of the Crystal Lake Police Department. The Academy consists of a series of classes, discussions, and demonstrations of the Department's operations and divisions. The Department uses this educational program to enhance community safety, increase positive communications, and foster a partnership between the public and the Police Department.

Enrollment is open to all, with priority given to Crystal Lake residents and those who work in Crystal Lake. Participants must be at least 17 years of age, pass a criminal background check, and sign a waiver as well as a hold harmless agreement. Fill out the Citizen Police Academy Application and contact Officer Kelci McGrath at kmcgrath@crystallake.org or (815) 356-3755 for questions. Applications may be emailed to Officer Kelci or dropped off in the Police Department lobby open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Classes will begin on January 29, 2025 and will continue once a week every Thursday until April 9, 2025. Class times will be from approximately 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

In addition, those interested in volunteering with the Crystal Lake Police Department must attend the Citizen Police Academy.

Applications can be picked up in our Police Department lobby located at 100 W. Woodstock Street or by scanning the QR code to the right.

Tip411

Did you know the Crystal Lake Police Department utilizes an anonymous tip program called TIP411? This program allows the Police Department to utilize a more thorough and encompassing approach to crime prevention while at the same time building partnerships with the community in order to combat crime.

With this program, citizens are offered another outlet to play an active role in helping keep their neighborhood safe.

Using you cell phone, simply send an anonymous tip to the Crystal Lake Police Department by texting the

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word CLPDTIP and the tip information to 847411. The TIP411 technology will remove all identifying information prior to the message being viewed by the Police. You may also utilize this program by visiting the Police Department website at www.crystallake.org.

Safe Winter Driving Tips

As winter arrives, it's crucial to adjust your driving habits for safety. Ensure your vehicle is winter-ready by checking tire pressure, brakes, and fluid levels regularly. When driving on icy or snowy roads, maintain a safe distance from other vehicles and reduce speed.

Be particularly vigilant for ice patches, especially on bridges and overpasses, as these areas tend to freeze more quickly and can be especially hazardous. In case of a breakdown, stay in your vehicle and call us for assistance.

Crystal Lake Police Department (815) 356-3620
Officer Kelci McGrath - (815) 356-3755 or kmcgrath@crystallake.org

WaterSmart Portal

With the water meter replacement project underway, the City of Crystal Lake has launched the WaterSmart portal! This web-based portal allows each resident to view and manage their water usage. Customers will be able to view and understand their water bills, sign up for customized alerts, and get notified in real time about high water use that could be from leaks. WaterSmart will provide water conservation tips and walk you through steps you should take to resolve any leaks.

To register, go to http://crystallakeil.watersmart.com.

- Use your account number listed on your water bill as your registration code.
- Answer the simple profile survey to provide accurate comparisons to similar households.

Scan the QR code to watch a helpful video on how to navigate your account in the portal!

How to Prevent Frozen Pipes

When temperatures drop below freezing, water pipes and water meters exposed to cold air may freeze. Below are some helpful suggestions to make sure your water supply stays flowing this winter.

Provide Warmth:

- Check for proper temperatures in all areas where water pipes are located and eliminate cold air from blowing on water pipes.
- If a sink is located against an exterior wall, open the cabinet doors.
- Open the door to rooms, closets, and cabinets where water pipes are located to allow air circulation.

Use Your Water Supply:

- Allow a small trickle of cold water to run through your faucets.
- Make sure your drains remain clear to prevent overflow or flooding.

If in spite of best efforts you find yourself with frozen pipes this winter, please contact a plumber.



FIRE RESCUE DEPARTMENT



2026 FIRE SAFETY CALENDAR



JANUARY

- Give your space heaters space
- Never use an oven to heat your home
- Turn space heaters off when leaving the room



FEBRUARY

- Burn Awareness Week
- Let food rest before removing it from the microwave
- Use back burners when you can
- When frying, use a pan lid/splash guard



MARCH

- Close Before You Doze
- A closed door can mean the difference between 1000 & 100 degrees in the event of a fire



APRIL

- Test smoke alarms once a month
- Replace smoke alarms every 10 years
- When you hear a smoke alarm, you have less than 2 minutes to get outside





MAY

- Make an escape plan
- Establish a meeting place
- Know two ways out of every room
- Practice your plan



JUNE

- Only use grills outside
- Keep an eye on what you are grilling
- Clean your grill after each use



JULY

- Leave the fireworks to the professionals
- Remember, sparklers burn hot



AUGUST

- Keep matches & lighters away from children
- Teach children that matches & lighters are not toys, they are tools



SEPTEMBER

- Recycle lithium-ion batteries responsibly
- Don't overcharge lithium-ion batteries. Unplug devices once they are fully charged



OCTOBER

- Fire Prevention Month
- Be safe when trick-or-treating



NOVEMBER

- Watch what you are cooking
- Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove
- Set a timer when cooking



DECEMBER

- Inspect your holiday lights, make sure they are safe to use
- Keep candles at least 12 inches away from anything that can burn
- Water your Christmas tree every day



Sources: NFPA.org, U.S. Fire Administration, American Burn Association

Tear this page out and display it all year for safety reminders!

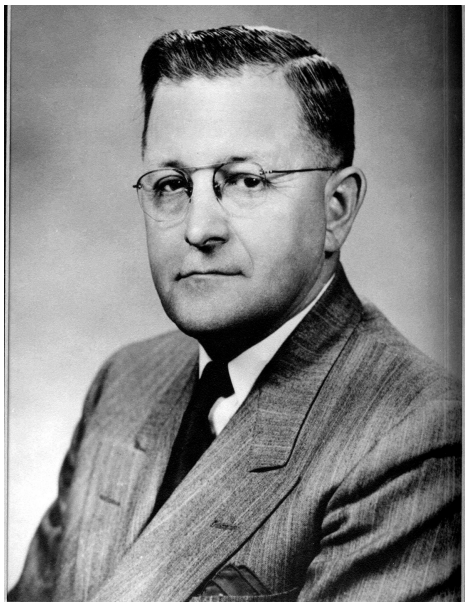
STOP-AND-GO LIGHTS

DIANA KENNEY

Stop-and-Go Lights (aka traffic signals) in Illinois were first installed in the 1920s in Chicago and Springfield. The system installed in Springfield included signs that flashed the words “Stop” and “Go” in addition to the standard red, yellow and green colors.

Two decades later, Crystal Lake was on a mission to get their own Stop-and-Go light installed at the corner of Virginia Street (Route 14) and Dole Avenue. Locals knew this was a very dangerous intersection, especially during the summer months with extra beach and tourist traffic. Drivers on Dole Avenue would race to cross Route 14 but often misjudged the speed of oncoming traffic. The result was numerous near-miss, minor and major crashes. Because Route 14 was a state highway, the need for and approval of the signal was determined by the state highway department. And although locals knew the light was needed, the state was not convinced.

In May 1946, Mayor George Krause made a trip to Springfield to plea for a Stop-and-Go light. Up until then, traffic counts, written requests, petitions and city council resolutions had been ineffective. Mayor Krause must have been a persuasive man as within a week of his Springfield trip, a letter and agreement from the State of Illinois were received indicating the state will pay the cost of installation with the city to pay the cost of the electricity. Despite assurances and an agreement, it still took two years before the light was installed in May 1948.



Crystal Lake Mayor George W. Krause

A July 8, 1948 Herald headline reports, “The Heaviest Traffic of Year Flowed Without Mishap.” In the accompanying article, Police Chief Joel Murphy stated, “The new Stop-and-Go light at Dole Avenue and Virginia Street is serving a real purpose. It is enabling traffic to get across the street and is also slowing through traffic noticeably.” In an effort to further reduce traffic speed on Virginia Street in the business section, large “No Passing” and “Police Patrolled” signs were erected at both ends of the busy section between Dole Avenue and McHenry Avenue.

By October 1948, the city was requesting a second Stop-and-Go light for the intersection of Virginia Street and McHenry Avenue. In spite of repeated and insistent letters from the city council, Chamber of Commerce, Lions Club and other civic organizations, the state determined there was no need for an additional light. Finally, in September 1955, approval was given for Crystal Lake’s second Stop-and-Go light on Virginia Street.



Looking west on the stretch of Virginia Street (Route 14) between Crystal Lake's two Stop-and-Go Lights (late 1950s). On the left is McCormick Park. On the right is Parkview Barber Shop and Herrmann's Drug Store.

About the Author: Diana Kenney is President of the Crystal Lake Historical Society. To contact Diana, email info@cl-hs.org.

THREE OAKS RECREATION AREA

Park Hours
6:30 A.M. - Sunset

Pavilion Rental Reservations

The City is now accepting pavilion reservations for 2026! Guests can book their rental through the online portal at threeoakscl.recdesk.com which can be found on the City's website.

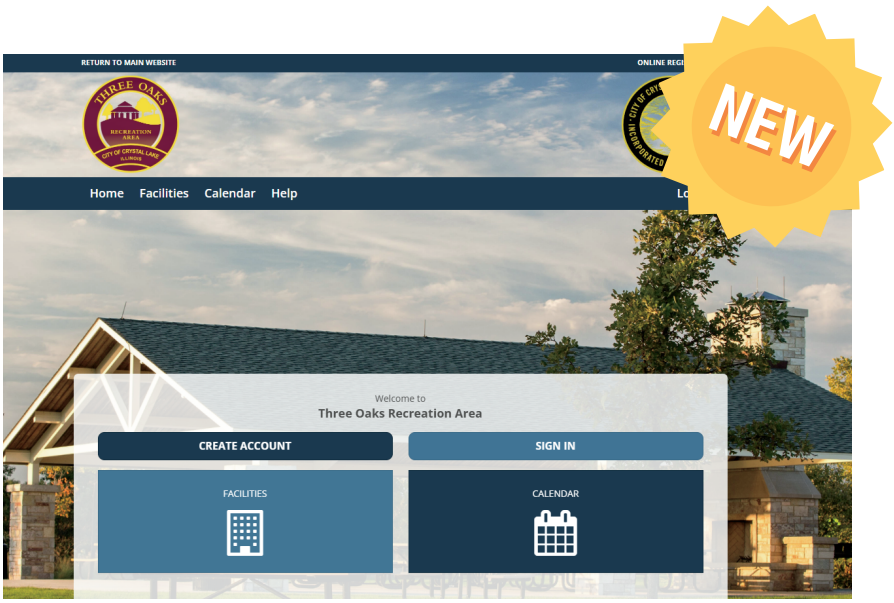
All pavilion details and related FAQ forms are available on our website under the Pavilion Rentals tab. Should you have any questions, please contact City staff at (815) 459-2020 ext. 4288.

New Pavilion Rental Portal

While Three Oaks has had an online portal to reserve pavilions for several years, we are excited to announce a new and improved portal! If you previously held an account from reserving a pavilion in prior years, you will need to create a new account for 2026.

Recently, approved at the December 2, 2025 City Council meeting was a small increase in the refundable deposit for pavilion rentals. This helps to ensure that renters are able to cover the cost of additional tallies for park amenities should they choose to add those on to their rental.

Visit our website for additional information on creating an account, booking your rental, FAQs and pavilion details.



Employment

Applications are being accepted to join us this 2026 season! Seasonal Lifeguards, Cashiers, and Marina Attendant roles are available. For position details, visit the City of Crystal Lake Human Resources Employment page and complete an employment application today!

www.crystallake.org/three-oaks-recreation
Information Line: (815) 356-2447 | Rainout Line: (815) 506-9333 | threeoaks@crystallake.org
5517 Northwest Highway, Crystal Lake, IL 60014

Curbside Electronics Collection Event: March 2 - 6

LRS will be conducting curbside electronics collection during the week of March 2 - 6, 2026. Residents may set out a maximum of five electronic items, including a limit of one TV or one computer monitor. The electronics will be collected on residents' regularly scheduled collection day. LRS will conduct the next electronics collection week in September 2026. The following table details which items may and may not be set out for electronics collection.

Please contact LRS at (844) 633-3577 with any questions regarding the electronics collection event.

Acceptable Electronic Items	
One Television or One Computer Monitor	Fax Machines and Printers
Cell Phones, Telephones, and Tablets	Holiday Lights
Cameras	Modems
CD Players	Paper Shredders
Computer Drives	Satellite Receivers
Cords and Cables	Scanners
Electronic Mice and Keyboards	Stereos and Video Game Consoles

Items NOT Accepted	
Air Conditioners	Hair Dryers and Hair Irons
Batteries	Humidifiers
Appliances and Refrigerators	Liquids or Chemical Waste
Battery Operated Toys	Smoke and Fire Detectors
Coffee Makers	Packaging Materials
Computer Disks	Microwaves
Dishwashers	Water Softeners

The next electronics collection event will take place in September.

CALENDAR | JANUARY 2026

Thursday, January 1
City Offices Closed

Monday, January 5
Historic Preservation Commission Meeting
4:30 P.M.

Tuesday, January 6
City Council Meeting
7:00 P.M.

Wednesday, January 7
Public Arts Commission Meeting
8:00 A.M.

Wednesday, January 7
Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting
7:00 P.M.

Thursday, January 8
Youth Commission Meeting
4:00 P.M.

Tuesday, January 20
City Council Meeting
7:00 P.M.

Wednesday, January 21
Sustainability Committee Meeting
6:00 P.M.

Wednesday, January 21
Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting
7:00 P.M.

All Meetings at City Hall
100 W. Woodstock Street

City of Crystal Lake, Illinois

MAYOR
Haig Haleblian

COUNCILMEMBER
Ellen Brady
Brett Hopkins
Cameron Hubbard
Ian Philpot
Denise Smith
Natasha Teetsov

CITY MANAGER
Eric Helm

Police/Fire/Ambulance
Emergency Only
911

City Hall
(Non-Emergency)
815-459-2020

www.crystallake.org

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City of Crystal Lake
100 W. Woodstock Street
Crystal Lake, IL 60014

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Visit: https://www.crystallake.org/your-government/communications/enews-sign-up

to receive the newsletter by e-mail only.

WE VALUE YOUR OPINION

The City of Crystal Lake values the opinion of its residents. If you have any concerns or comments about the City Newsletter, please email City staff at comments@crystallake.org.

If you have questions or concerns for specific City departments, please contact the following:

City Manager's Office	(815) 459-2020	Option 5
Community Development Department	(815) 356-3605	
Finance Department	(815) 459-2020	Option 0
Fire Rescue Department	(815) 356-3640	
Human Resources Department	(815) 459-2020	Option 5
Police Department	(815) 356-3620	
Public Works and Engineering Department	(815) 356-3614	