



The City Link

Official News and Information
from the City of Billings

Billings Pride:
City-wide

Spring 2009

Effects of Winter on Drinking Water Production

Occasionally, citizens ask if severe winter conditions affect their drinking water.

The answer is yes, particularly the City's supply. All of the water for Billings comes from the Yellowstone River. Under certain conditions, river ice threatens the ability to draw enough water for processing.

An ice jam could block water from the City's intake. To reduce risk, the City has different ways to draw water from the river for processing. The City's primary intake is on the bank of the river. The City's back-up intake is in the middle of the river.

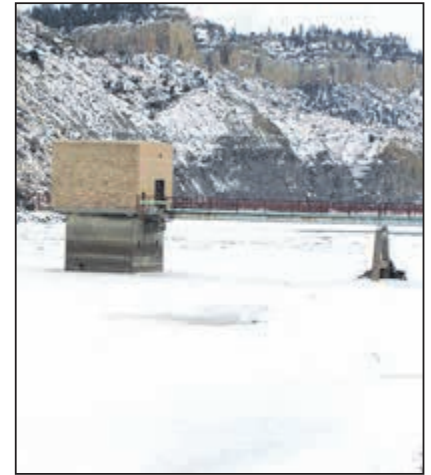
Additionally, City staff recently

installed an emergency intake. This channel is also located on the river bank. If one of the inlets becomes blocked, at least one of the others should still be operational.

The City's supply has been threatened by ice in the past. During a winter in the early 1980s, an ice jam blocked the primary intake. Ice was also affecting the City's ability get enough water from the alternate intake. Concern rose to the point that a crane with a wrecking ball was brought in to break up the ice jam. Unfortunately, the cables holding the wrecking ball broke during one swing, launching the ball out into the river, where it remains. Fortunately,

the ice jam broke up on its own before the situation got any worse. Since that time, the intakes have been upgraded to improve winter capabilities.

Even with the improvements, a rare condition could threaten the water system's capacity. Should that ever occur, the Water department will take whatever measures one needed to resolve the problem as fast as possible. The community will be alerted if something like this ever takes place. City residents can best help minimize the problem by faithfully following any directions for water use or conservation issued during such an emergency.



Billings' Alternate Intake – January 2009

Budget Preparation for Fiscal Year 2010

The City of Billings is in the budget development mode for Fiscal Year 2010.

Billings Mayor Ron Tussing and the City Council have adopted the Capital Improvement Plan, Equipment Replacement Plan and Technology Replacement Plan.

Each City Department will once

again instructed to keep its Operations and Maintenance (O&M) budgets at a zero percent increase, except for uncontrollable prices such as electricity, natural gas, gas and diesel fuel, etc.

Requests for additional services are handled through supplemental budget requests.

The Departments will complete their requested FY10 budgets in the first week of March. They will be reviewed along with supplemental budget requests the last week of March and first week of April with Administration.

Changes to the requests will be completed after these meetings in preparation of upcoming meetings with the

Mayor and Council.

The preliminary budget will be presented to the Mayor and Council on May 5 and at additional public meetings with dates, times and locations advertised in the Billings Times.

The FY10 budget is scheduled for a public hearing and adoption June 8 at a regular Council meeting.

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Visit the City's Website: <http://www.ci.billings.mt.us>

Streets-and-Traffic-Division--Winter-Operations



Each of us is affected by winter weather—we may wear a heavier coat, warm up our cars longer, or give ourselves more time to get to work on icy roads. We generally do these things without much thought or preparation. Not so for the City's Street-Traffic Division! Over the years, staff has developed and implemented detailed opera-

tion plans, budgets, and staffing to handle winter storm events and keep residents safe, no matter what the weather.

So far this winter, staff has responded to several major storm events, beginning with the early October storm that resulted in significant tree damage throughout the City. Frequent snow storms since

then have kept crews on the streets: cleaning up branches, plowing snow, sanding and deicing. So far this winter, 43.1" of snow has fallen in Billings, according to the Billings Office of the National Weather Service. As you can see from the historical data below, this is above normal for Billings.

Snow Fall – Average Totals in Inches											Billings, Montana		
# Years	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Annual
68	9.3	7.6	10.2	8.1	1.6	T	T	T	1.2	3.6	6.8	8.3	56.7

These almost continual winter weather events have resulted in Street-Traffic Division employees putting in 3,532 hours of overtime cleaning up branches, plowing 330 miles of roadway lanes, distributing sand and applying liquid deicers at controlled intersections, school crossings, hills and curves throughout the City.

Materials Purchased	
Sand	\$56,411
Ice Slicer	\$80,076
Hicohaw (calcium chloride)	\$115,690

Materials Applied (December 2008 thru January 2009 only)	
Sand	2,524 tons
Ice Slicer	228 tons
Hicohaw (calcium chloride)	119,700 gallons

The costs associated with overtime, additional materials, and extra fuel have strained the budget. However, the City is committed to continuing to provide safe and clean roadways for residents.

King-Avenue-East-Construction-Project

The King Avenue East Project is nearly complete. This project consisted of widening King Avenue East to five lanes from South Billings Boulevard to Orchard Lane, constructing two new traffic signals at Calhoun Lane and Orchard Lane, restriping South Billings Boulevard to a four-lane section from King Avenue East to Midland Road, and constructing two crossings on the City-County Drain. Knife River started construction in early September, and with the late arrival of winter, was able to complete a majority of the construction ahead of schedule. The remaining items to be completed include the ditch crossings, final installation of the traffic signals and chip seal of South Billings Boulevard. King Avenue East will be a more efficient route with enhanced traffic safety and will be complete prior to the opening of new retail stores.



24th-Street-Signal-Timing



The Public Works Department is "going green" with the traffic signals along 24th Street West. And not just the color of the signals, although Billings drivers along 24th will be seeing less red. The Traffic Engineering section recently worked with Kittelson & Associates out of Portland, OR, to complete a traffic signal re-timing project along 24th Street West between Grand Avenue and King Avenue. Computer modeling of traffic flows along 24th was used to develop modified signal timing plans for all the signals along 24th. A primary goal of the project is to reduce overall delay to traffic along 24th and traffic entering 24th from major side streets, such as Central and Broadwater. The new

signal timings were implemented by Street-Traffic crews and then field-adjusted based on observations of actual traffic flow at various times of the day and week. Kittelson also drove the street during peak traffic periods and recorded information regarding average travel speeds, travel time for the length of the corridor and the average number of stops per vehicle driving between Grand and King. Based on data collected by Kittelson, Billings residents will save over \$330,000 annually in fuel and costs associated with traffic delays from the improved signal timing and coordination along 24th Street West. The smoother traffic flow is also expected to reduce traffic accidents in the corridor.

MET Transit Route and Schedule Study

MET Transit just concluded a thorough Route and Schedule study. A tremendous amount of information was collected from on-board bus surveys, community-wide telephone surveys, and six public meetings. Many good ideas regarding transit service options, as well as route costs, were obtained from the information.

MET Transit was challenged with staying within its current budget while analyzing transit service options and route costs. Therefore, for the first time since 1991, the MET made minor changes to the routes and schedules for more efficiency and increased bus fares. MET looks forward to utilizing many of the suggested transit service options in the future as more revenues become available. Thus, the following route changes and fare increases went into effect February 1, 2009:

<u>FARE INCREASES</u>	<u>Old</u>	<u>NEW</u>
Adult Cash	75¢	\$1.25
Elderly & Disabled Cash	25¢	50¢
Regular Pass	\$18	\$22
Elderly & Disabled Pass	\$3	\$6
Student Pass	\$10	\$15
10-Ride Ticket	\$6	\$10

ROUTE CHANGES

- Route 2P-Rimrock – Will serve both directions on Rimrock Road. Poly will no longer be served east of Rehberg. Poly is already served by Route 3D-Crosstown.
- Route 6P-Lewis – This route will be modified to go south on 32nd Street West to Monad Road and will no longer serve the College of Technology. Route 7D-Broadwater will continue to serve the College of Technology.
- Route 10D-Southside – The inbound route to downtown will now travel farther east on State Avenue to S. 27th Street. This will provide new service to a number of businesses that have requested it.
- Route 16P-Main – This route will now travel on N. 25th Street instead of N. 23rd Street because of more passenger demand.
- Route 18M-Heights – This route will now travel on N. 25th Street instead of N. 23rd Street because of more passenger demand.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

- Route 2P-Rimrock – Add a morning and evening commuter trip, and drop a midday run.
- Route 4P-Parkhill – Eliminate midday service.
- Route 7D-Broadwater – Add mid-morning run.
- Route 9D-Central – Add mid-morning inbound service.
- Route 12D-Overland – Add an early morning run and drop a midday run.
- Route 13D-Southwest – Drop early and midday runs and add a mid-morning run.
- Route 14P-Alkali – Drop a midday run.
- Route 18M-Heights – Add a morning commuter run.

Remember, even more than before, you can get there by bus!

Air Service Returns to Montana Communities

Great Lakes Airlines began daily air service between Billings and five Montana communities on Feb. 19.

Glasgow, Glendive, Havre, Sidney and Wolf Point now have air service to Billings after the cessation of service by Big Sky Airlines a year ago. Great Lakes provides air service to these communities under the federal Essential Air Service (EAS) Program.

Incorporated in 1979, Great Lakes Aviation has headquarters in Cheyenne, Wyo., with its main hub in Denver, Colo. Great Lakes provides scheduled passenger

service at 59 airports in 17 states with a fleet of EmBraer EMB-120 Brasilas and Raytheon/Beechcraft 1900 regional airliners. The air service to and from Billings is provided in 19-seat Beechcraft 1900D turbo prop aircraft, capable of a maximum altitude of 25,000 feet and a maximum cruising speed of 325 miles per hour.

A flight schedule is available on the Airport's website at www.flybillings.com/. Tickets on Great Lakes Airlines can be purchased online at www.flygreatlakes.com, through its reservation center at 1-800-554-5111, or through a travel agent.

Parks and Playgrounds

Professionals recognize that the social and physical skills that children develop on the playground become lifelong skills that are carried forward into their adulthood. Independent research finds that playgrounds are among the most important environments for children outside the home. Most forms of play are essential for healthy childhood development, but free, spontaneous play -- the kind that occurs on playgrounds -- provides the most beneficial type of play.

Billings Parks, Recreation and Public Lands (PRPL) maintain 39 outdoor public playgrounds located in parks throughout Billings where children can play. Many are modern playgrounds which contain "play structures" that link many different activities and pieces of equipment together. Modern playgrounds contain play components such as slides, jungle gyms, chin up bars, monkey bars, climbers, ladders, bridges and mazes. Many of these help children develop physical coordination, strength and flexibility, as well as provide lots of fun. The newest modern "play structure" in

the Billings PRPL system was installed last fall in Central Park. Central Park is located on Central Avenue between 8th Street West and 10th Street West. It is the City's first public playground with a poured-in-place rubber compound underneath the play structure. This rubber surface is firm and stable enough for easy wheelchair maneuvering and provides easy access for children and parents with disabilities. At the same time, it provides a soft surface that minimizes injuries due to falls. This new play structure, along with the rubber fall protection, is state-of-the-art in outdoor playgrounds and is well worth a visit. Parks, and the playgrounds that are in them, are important to our children's well being and the quality of life in our community.

The Billings PRPL Department invites you to visit one the 39 playgrounds located in public parks throughout the community. The locations of public parks and playgrounds can be found by visiting the PRPL website at: www.prpl.info or by calling (406) 657-8371. Enjoy Billings parks and get out and play!



Central Park Playground

NEWS FROM THE



Library Sponsors Program on Governor Babcock

The Library will present a special reading by author Linda Grosskopf. She will talk about, and read from, her recent book *Challenges Above & Beyond: The Biography of Governor Tim and First Lady Betty Babcock* on Wednesday, Feb. 25 at 7 p.m. on the third floor of the Library.

Babcock, who was born in Minnesota, was the Republican governor of Montana from 1962-1969. Ms. Grosskopf will talk about Babcock's life and the research that she used to write her book.

Friends of the Library Book Sale

The Friends of the Library will present their spring book sale on Friday, May 1, and Saturday, May 2, on the third floor of the Library. This is the second year the Friends will sponsor a spring sale with proceeds going to assist the Library with its ongoing programs and services. There will be thousands of new and quality used books available at prices ranging from 10 cents to \$1,

with others available at special prices. There will also be a large supply of audio visual materials available at great prices. Support the Friends and the Library, and stock up on your summer reading materials by attending the Friends book sale in May.

Library Sponsors Guitar Recital

For the fourth consecutive year, the Library will sponsor a recital by classical guitarist Peter Fletcher. The recital will take place on Wednesday, May 6, at 7 p.m. Mr. Fletcher, from New York, is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music. Over the years, he has built a strong reputation for himself as a guitarist who is as comfortable playing the music of Bach as he is of 20th Century composers with works written especially for him.

If you are a guitar fan, or interested in classical music, you won't want to miss this special program funded by the Friends of the Library.



Peter Fletcher - Guitarist

PRPL On-Line Registration Now Available

The Billings Parks and Recreation and Public Lands (PRPL) Department is pleased to announce a great new "On-Line Registration" service available to area residents: for a number of City services.

On Jan. 26, the PRPL website, www.prpl.info, went live with a new software program which will enable people to register for most recreation activities or reserve the use of a park shelter. This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

In preparation for the upcoming busy summer season, people are encouraged to establish their online account now so their first actual usage is expedited. The registration process utilizes the latest web security measures for credit card transactions. No transaction information is stored on City servers, but is only recorded by the credit card processing companies.

In the past, people would have to mail in a registration form or come to the office to register, which is difficult when most adult family members are at work during normal business hours. Other communities which have offered this service have seen a significant increase in registrations due primarily to the convenience offered. For further information, please visit www.prpl.info or contact the office at (406) 657-8376.

Mayor and City Council of Billings

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We want to hear from you

Please provide us with input for our next newsletter.

What did you like most about the newsletter?

What would you like to see in upcoming newsletters?

Mail or e-mail your comments to us at:

citylink@ci.billings.mt.us

The City Link
P.O. Box 1178
Billings, MT 59103



Working through Billings Depot, Inc., the City of Billings recently completed renovations on the Burlington Northern (BN) office building at 2224 Montana Avenue. The building was originally built in the 1940s adjacent to the historic Northern Pacific Railway Passenger Station and Lunch Room. It is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Buildings; it was instead designated as a non-contributing

structure within the Billings Townsite Historic District.

The structure of the building and the exterior walls were not altered during the renovation, and there was no adverse effect on the historical or architectural integrity of the adjacent Historic Passenger Station/Baggage building.

The renovations brought the building up to present codes and added new

Public Works renovates... moves into...Depot building

mechanical and electrical systems.

Window sills and wainscot were added in patterns characteristic of the passenger depot. The entrance halls, stairway floors, and bathroom floors now have terrazzo floors. The bathroom walls have a high ceramic tile wainscot. The design of the new office space compliments the details within the adjacent historic buildings with new materials characteristic of the time period.

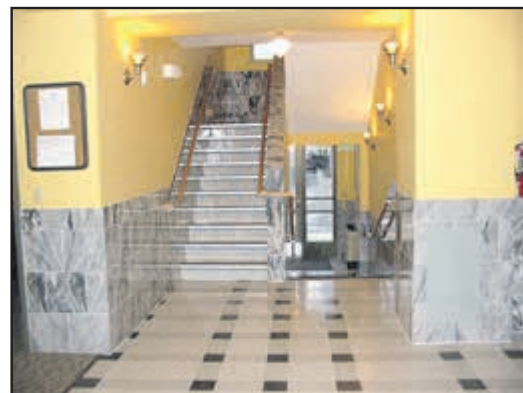
The administration and engineering divisions of City's Public Works Department now call the Depot "home." Twenty-eight permanent, full-time employees work in the building. The move consolidated engineering division staff in one location. Previously, engineering staff was scattered across the 4th floor of the Library and as far away as the Utility Service Center on Belknap Avenue. Now, permits and fee calculations are done in one place. Public Works administration staff has also been consolidated in one location, which further

improves efficiencies.

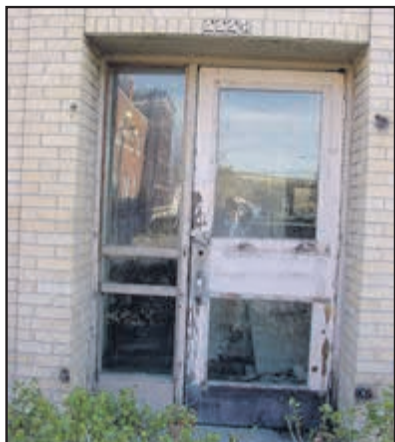
Thank you to A&E Architects for the design work and Fisher Construction for bringing the design to life.



(2002)



(2008)



Before (2002)



After (2008)



**BILLINGS FEDERAL
CREDIT UNION**
Expect a difference.

248-1127
www.billingsfcu.org

760 Wicks Lane • 2522 4th Ave. N • 32nd & King Ave. W



Shane Winden Patrols City Center

The City of Billings and the Downtown Business Improvement District (BID) announced the selection of Billings Police Officer Shane Winden as the Downtown Resource Officer assigned to patrol downtown Billings.

This "Center Beat Cop" is made possible for the first two years through Tax Increment Financing and will be funded in subsequent years through assessments on private property owners.

This was a common assignment 20 years ago and was classified as a first generation Community Policing Program. The officer worked what was then the rough downtown area, concentrating on problems associated with bars, intoxication and prostitution.

Officer Winden will be stationed at the Downtown Billings Alliance office, 2815 2nd Avenue North. He can be reached at (406) 294-5060, extension 105. Officer Winden's official first day was Tuesday, Jan. 27.

City Equipment Design for Tree Leaf and Branch Collection

The City Fleet Services Division staff came up with the idea to graft a round, bale-handling grapple onto a Street Division front-end loader bucket for more efficient handling of tree branches and leaves. This bale-handling grapple was purchased from a local vendor. Brackets were fabricated to attach the grapple to the loader bucket. Hydraulic valves, hoses and controls were added to the loader for operation of the grapple attachment. The grapple attachment also works well for picking up small to moderate size tree branches for loading into trucks. Metal mesh screening was designed for quick attachment to the grapple for use while picking up leaves from City streets. Way to go!



Comments and Questions from Lester Bertsh of Billings:

I like everything about the newsletter – the new transfer center, new Fire Chief and Assistant Chief, good info on Miller Crossing, and the names and wards of Council members. I think designated right-hand turn lanes should be placed at the intersection of Grand Avenue and 24th Street to help move traffic.

Answer:

Staff assumes the reader is asking about creating an eastbound right turn lane on Grand to turn south onto 24th Street West, since there is heavy right turn volume on this leg, and the northbound and westbound legs already have dedicated right turn lanes. Staff welcomes the opportunity to respond to this in the CityLink because it is a question received several times per year. The good news is that one of the biggest stumbling blocks to getting an eastbound right turn lane at this intersection has been overcome. Previously the City did not have sufficient street right-of-way at this location to add a lane and the street widening necessary for an added lane would have adversely impacted the convenience store on the corner, even if right-of-way were purchased. With the redevelopment of this corner as a CVS Pharmacy, the City has acquired the extra right-of-way to construct the turn lane. Now, it is a matter of getting the estimated \$90,000 proj-

ect for widening and traffic signal relocation worked into an upcoming City budget.

Comment from an anonymous reader:

Residents of Billings should be aware of City codes that require campers/boats/RVs to be off of the streets on Oct. 1 of each year. A notice in the Gazette would be helpful.

Answer:

City staff is unaware of any City code which requires vehicles to be removed from City streets by Oct. 1 of each year. However, City code does prohibit:

1. Storage and/or on-street parking of vehicles for more than five (5) consecutive days;
2. Display of merchandise (including vehicles) other than for a garage sale or a use allowed by permit under the temporary use section;
3. The use of any recreational vehicle for living or sleeping purposes for more than five (5) consecutive days when parked off-street or stored in any residential zoning district or in an area developed for

residential use; and,

4. Storage for more than five (5) consecutive days of junk, salvage and trash.

For more information, please contact the Code Enforcement Division:

- Within the City limits, please email: Cal Meyer - mey-erc@ci.billings.mt.us, Don Vegge - vegged@ci.billings.mt.us, or Nancy McCullough - mcculloughn@ci.billings.mt.us.
- In Yellowstone County, please report violations to Colleen Schell-Berg - bergc@co.yellowstone.mt.gov.
- In the City, please call (406) 657-8281.
- In Yellowstone County, please call (406) 294-5035.

Comments and Questions from an anonymous reader, via email:

You asked what we'd like to see in the newsletter. How about a question/suggestion column? I'd submit the following:

1. The row signs in the airport long-term parking lot aren't as helpful as they could be. They just mark

the rows. When you have someone else picking up the car, they have to search the entire row to find it. Could the signs be changed to mark how far along in the row the car is? Either number the parking spots or subdivide the rows: e.g. A1, A2, etc.

2. The sign by the airport that indicates whether Zimmerman Trail is closed is in the wrong place for folks driving up 27th. They have to drive all the way up to the airport, make the turn on Highway 3 and then they see the closed sign. Then they make a U-turn and drive back down to Rimrock Road. It's a waste of time and gas, and the U-turns are potentially dangerous. A sign between Poly and Rimrock Road, on 27th would be very helpful. The current sign is marginally helpful for folks coming from the Heights to Zimmerman Trail, but would be better placed before the stop sign at the airport, so that they didn't have to make a U-turn and head down to Rimrock Road when the Trail is closed. They could just turn left at the stop sign.

Answer:

1. Thanks for the good suggestion. Airport staff will order and install signs to subdivide the rows.
2. The intersection at 27th and Highway 3 is being rebuilt under the MDT Airport Road Project. Staff will work with them on locating these signs properly with the new configuration.

Putting 'Community' in the Community Planning Process

A diversified economy, scenic beauty, recreational opportunities, and strong arts, music and culture all combine to make Billings "Montana's Trailhead," "The Star of the Big Sky Country," or just a wonderful place to call home.

But, it takes serious planning to preserve these excellent qualities and to maintain a vibrant community where people want to work, play and live. In the next several issues of the CityLink, Planning Division staff will share information to show how planning is shaping our community right now and how it is necessary to secure the long term health and vitality of Billings.

People sometimes think that planning is done by government staff, behind closed doors, and with little community participation. The fact is, planning is something the community must do together all the time. Through participation in public meetings on everything from subdivision decisions, to the City's Capital Improvement Program, to voting on local mill levies for services, to talking to community leaders, the community can decide where it wants to go and

how it is going to get there. Here are some examples of specific planning issues the community will guide for Billings in 2009:

- Implementation of the 2008 Growth Policy, a visioning document for the community.
- Revisions to the City's Historic Preservation codes to improve preservation opportunities, moving forward with historic preservation activities on Minnesota Avenue and in the McKinley Elementary School neighborhood.
- Updates to the Billings Urban Area Transportation Plan that identifies current and future transportation needs, traffic flow improvements, and integration of transit and bicycle/pedestrian facilities.
- Participation in the Master Plan Process for the East Billings Urban Renewal District to plan for the revitalization of the neighborhood between downtown and Metra Park.

Planning is about staying involved in government

decisions and actions, participating in public meetings, and talking to your neighbors, friends and elected officials about your vision for Billings. Planners will help the community get where it wants to go. The community must decide if and how it wants to get there.

For more information about planning:

In the Billings Community, visit <http://mt-billings.civicplus.com/index>.

In Montana, visit <http://www.montanaplanners.org/>

In the Region, visit www.wccapa.org

In the Nation, visit <http://www.planning.org/community/> or www.planetizen.com

Watch for Future CityLink Planning Articles:

Trucks, Cars, Bikes and People: Transportation Planning in the Billings Community

Current Planning: Zoning, Subdivisions and Managing Development on a Daily Basis, etc.

Going Green

The City's Public Works Department (PWD) has made "going green" a priority in all programs and operations. The PWD has "gone green" in nearly every area of business over the last several years—from simple office recycling to energy audits to LED traffic signals to Christmas Tree recycling to water conservation and everything in between. Wherever possible, the PWD chooses the "green option." Recent examples include:

• Water Treatment

Implemented energy audit recommendations that reduced electrical consumption by about 166,000 KWh/year. Installed motion-activated lighting and changed out heating controls to maintain 45 degree internal temperatures to reduce costs when buildings are not occupied.

• **Traffic Engineering** – Modified 24th Street West signal timing (see article on page 2). Installed solar-powered school flashers on Alkali Creek Road. The PWD is also in the process of converting incandescent signal heads and pedestrian crosswalk signals to Light Emitting Diode (LED). LED lamps consume less electricity than fluorescent lighting and the lamps last about ten times longer.

• **Stormwater** – Constructing and modifying ponds in the Lake Hills area to collect and store runoff for golf course irrigation. Recycling stormwater to remove contaminants and sediments and reduce the amount of water that needs to be treated before it is used for irrigation.



Alkali Elementary School
Solar Panel Flashing Light Pole

• **Utility Service Center** – Recycle paper and metals (including brass water meters, copper pipe, wire, and aluminum cans). The PWD also removed and replaced many ballasts and bulbs, all single pane windows with double pane thermal units, and installed programmable thermostats for conservation during evenings and weekends.

• **Billings Regional Landfill** – Provide recycling containers at the landfill for aluminum cans, cardboard, newspaper, used oil and used anti-freeze. Scrap metal is also diverted, baled and recycled (±700 tons each year). Tree wastes are stockpiled and ground into wood chips and used as a supplemental fuel source; or composted and used to reclaim areas at the landfill. The PWD curbside yard waste collection program

continues to expand. The 2008 program diverted 2,000 tons that were then composted at the landfill.

The PWD will continue to choose "green" because it is the right thing to do for Billings and its residents. Some projects coming up include installing rubber sidewalks (environmental advantages), installing "floating islands" to remove harmful pollutants from waterways using natural microbial processes, expansion of the electronic and household hazardous waste recycling efforts, and using Xeriscaping along roadway projects (water conservation).



Rubber Sidewalk

The Billings Community & Senior Center

The Billings Community and Senior Center is a part of the City of Billings Parks, Recreation, and Public Lands Department. The Community and Senior Center's primary focus is to serve active senior adults age 55 and over in our community.

The Senior Center offers a wide variety of services, recreational activities, classes and programs that promote healthy, active lifestyles.

The center has a computer bar, a health and fitness room, as well as exercise classes and wellness programs.

Types of activities and classes include: balance training, blood pressure clinics, hearing clinics, foot care clinics, shingles vaccinations, oil painting classes, watercolor class, line dancing and evening dances.

For those with special interests, there are consumer education opportunities, as well as a book club, investment club and writers group. Also offered for seniors members are a wide variety of games, such as: bridge, cash bingo, pinocle, cribbage, poker and other activities.

To improve accessibility, the center also serves the community by facilitating other senior and community agency programs, such as public flu shot clinics and income tax assistance.

For the general public, City Recreation programs, such as landscape design, belly dance, GPS, yoga, Zumba and fly fishing are offered as evening classes.

Mountview Cemetery is Online Again

New technology can be a great thing if it doesn't interfere with our wants and desires. That is what happened when the City's website was updated last year. However, City staff is pleased to announce that

people who want to do family research at home can do so again by going on the web.

It is true that most people do not want to even think about a graveyard, much less go to one. However, there are others who are fascinated with family history or just have questions about our City cemetery. By going online to www.ci.billings.mt.us/cemetery, they are able to find out where a family member is buried, what the flower policy is, even

where the cemetery is located or other general information.

The new addition to Mountview Cemetery's website is the Grave Locator. This is a link to the Yellowstone County website which provides a database of people buried at several government-owned cemeteries in the county. In time, this link will also be able to provide a map to where a loved one is buried in the City cemetery.

News from Parks, Recreation and Public Lands Department

Registration for all upcoming Parks and Rec programs can be made at the Billings Parks and Recreation Office at 390 North 23rd Street, or on-line at www.prpl.info. Registration cannot be made over the telephone.

Girl's 5th and 6th Grade Volleyball

Girl's 5th and 6th Grade Volleyball will be starting March 11 and 12. This program is designed to help develop skills and self confidence in our youth. The program is built around developing teamwork while minimize the pressure of competition.

Practices are evenings from 6-8 p.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays at Poly Drive Elementary, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays at Big Sky and Sandstone. Games will be played on Saturdays for five weeks, starting on March 28.

The registration fee is \$45 for City residents and \$55 for non-residents.

Any students wishing to participate, but who cannot afford the registration fee should have their parents contact the Parks and Recreation Office for a Fee Reduction Form. Registrations will be available and accepted at the first practice. For more information call (406) 657-8376 or (406) 657-8371.

Adult Spring Soccer

Men's and Women's 9x9 Soccer Leagues will begin playing games on April 5. Games will be played on Sunday afternoons. Team fees are \$225. The registration deadline is March 30. The team fee includes seven regular season games played through May 17.

For more information, call (406) 657-8376 or (406) 657-8371. A registration packet will be mailed directly to your home or business. You may also download this information from the PRPL website.

Welcome to Yoga Classes

If you are new to Yoga, this class

is for you! It will start with the most basic principles of Yoga, poses, alignment and breathing. Throughout the session you will gradually expand from foundational poses into expansive variation, increasing muscle tone, endurance and flexibility.

There are 2 sessions to choose from: Session 1 runs from Feb. 23 to March 30. Session 2 runs from April 6 through June 11. Classes will meet on Monday evenings from 6:45 to 7:45 p.m. at the Billings Community Center, 360 N. 23rd Street. The registration fee is \$55 per person for City residents and \$65 per person for non-residents.

Beyond The Basics Yoga Classes

Ready to embrace release, renewal, and the joy of movement? This class is designed to introduce intermediate poses, breath work and relaxation techniques. There are two sessions to choose from: Session 1 runs from Feb. 23 through March 30, and Session 2 runs from April 6 through June 11. Classes will meet on Monday evenings from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the Billings Community Center, 360 N. 23rd Street. The registration fee is \$55 per person for City residents and \$65 per person for non-residents.

Fly Fishing Classes

Fly Fishing class instruction includes everything you need to know about fly fishing! Learn how to "rig" lines, tie knots and the basics of how to tie flies. You will also learn what fish feed on, keys to successful fishing and "hands-on" casting practice. Supplies for tying flies and rods for casting practice will be provided, but you may bring your own equipment if you have it. There are two sessions for you to choose from. Session 1 runs from March 17 through March 28, while Session 2 runs from May 5 through 16. Classes will be held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Billings Community Center, 360 N. 23rd Street, and one Saturday morning from 9 to 11 a.m. at Laurel Pond. The cost for each session is \$45 for City

residents and \$55 for non-residents.

Landscape Design Classes

The class will be held on Wednesday evenings beginning March 3 and run through April 15. Class times are 6 to 9 p.m. This is a popular class instructed by Jolene Rieck from Peaks to Plains Design, a local architect and community-planning firm. Classes will be held at the Billings Community Center. You will learn how to create scalable base maps and develop master plans for your property. The course will teach design composition, plant selection, xeriscape techniques with low water plants, as well as deck, patio, paving, fencing and irrigation. Estimating costs and how to select a contractor to implement the new plan will also be included. The registration fee is \$85 per person for City residents and \$95 per person for non-residents.

Martial Arts Classes

This class teaches a martial arts discipline called Kyuki-Do. This mixed martial art incorporates Tae Kwon Do, Hapkido and Judo. Tae Kwon Do is a Korean variation of Karate and includes foot and hand techniques, joint locks and twists ideal for self defense. Judo is a Japanese discipline that involves the entire body and mind. Judo has many throws and holds used to control an opponent. There are several sessions to choose from, so please contact the Parks and Recreation Office on-line or at (406) 657-8371 for dates and times of classes. The registration fee is \$110 per person for City residents and \$120 per person for non-residents.

Pure Pilates Classes

This class will teach the fundamentals of Pilates matwork. The exercises will increase in intensity as each person progresses. All levels are welcome. Come and learn why so many people are raving about all the fitness benefits to Pilates. Please bring a mat and a towel. There are several sessions to choose from, so please contact the Parks and Recreation Office on-line or at (406) 657-8371 for dates and

times of classes. The registration fee is \$55.00 per person (City residents) \$65.00 per person (non-residents).

Recreational GPS with Maps class

A "Using Recreational GPS with Maps" class will be offered on Feb. 27, from 7 to 9 p.m., at the Billings Community Center, 360 North 23rd Street. The cost for the class is \$35 for City residents and \$45 for non-residents. This class will provide hands-on individual assistance using maps with GPS. Participants will receive a map, grid tool and handouts, which will include a copy of all class procedures and practice exercises. You will learn to take coordinate readings from a map and put it into the receiver and vice-versa. Additional classes such as, "Maps, Compasses & Altimeters," and "Getting the Most from Your GPS," will also be provided in the weeks ahead. Classes are taught by instructor Ralph Saunders.

Zumba Classes

Zumba combines high energy and motivating Latin and International music with unique moves and combinations that allow you to dance away your worries and calories! It is based on the principle that a workout should be "fun and easy to do." The routines feature aerobic/fitness interval training with a combination of fast and slow rhythms that tone and sculpt the body. It is so much fun – you will love it! There are two sessions to choose from: Session 1: Feb. 19 to March 26, and Session 2: April 2 to May 7. Classes will meet on Thursday evenings from 6 to 7 p.m. at the North Park Center Gym, 6th Ave. North and North 19th Street. However, the first Thursday of each month, class will be held at the Billings Community Center, 360 N. 23rd Street. The registration fee is \$25 per person for City residents and \$35 per person for non-residents.

You may NOW register on line for all recreation programs at: www.prpl.info.