

## Holiday Happenings



### *Pictures with Santa and Mrs. Claus*

Friday, December 2, 2011 from 6:00PM-9:00PM  
Benbrook Central Fire Station  
528 Mercedes Street

Cost: Donation of four (4) non-perishable food items or \$5.00

Free Refreshments

Pictures are digital 4X6 prints

## The 20th Annual Christmas Tree Lighting and Fireworks Show

**Saturday, December 3, 2011 at 7:00PM**  
**Benbrook Community Center/YMCA**  
**1899 Winscott Road**

**Look for the Benbrook Winter Wonderland after the show!**

Food and monetary donations will be accepted at the entrance to the park before and after the show.



The Benbrook Fire Department works tirelessly during the holiday season to brighten the lives of Benbrook families by meeting community needs. Non-perishable food and monetary donations are accepted at the Benbrook Central Fire Station, 528 Mercedes Street, until December 18, 2011.

All donations directly benefit families living in Benbrook through the 'Firefighters Food Drive' and the 'Benbrook Spirit of Christmas' programs (see page 3). "The firefighters are incredibly pleased to take part in these programs. We know that many families benefit from the generosity of our citizens during the holiday season. Benbrook citizens have always come forward to help those in need, and this year, we hope to continue that tradition," says Benbrook Assistant Fire Chief, Mark O'Connor.

For more information, contact the Benbrook Fire Department at 817-249-1727.

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## TOP 10 WOOD BURNING TIPS

# Why Risk a Chimney Fire?

- 1) **Get an annual chimney check.** Have chimneys inspected annually and cleaned as necessary by a professional chimney service technician. If the fireplace is not used often, have it checked at least every two years.
- 2) **Keep it clear.** Keep tree branches and leaves at least 15 feet from the top of the chimney.
- 3) **Install a chimney cap** to keep debris and animals out of the chimney.
- 4) **Choose the right fuel.** When burning firewood in wood stoves and fireplaces, choose wood that has been split for a minimum of six months to one year and stored in a covered and elevated location. Never burn Christmas trees, treated wood, or trash.
- 5) **Build it right.** Place firewood or fire logs at the rear of the fireplace on a supporting grate. To start the fire, use kindling or a commercial firelighter. If you use commercial logs (i.e. Duraflame), only use one at a time. Multiple logs can cause excessive heat that can damage the flue.
- 6) **Keep the hearth area clear.** Combustible material too close to the fireplace or a wood stove can easily catch fire. Keep furniture at least 36 inches away.
- 7) **Use a fireplace screen.** Use metal mesh or a screen in front of the fireplace to catch flying sparks.
- 8) **No magazines or glossy paper.** When starting a fire in the fireplace, use newspaper only. Magazines or other types of glossy paper can cause creosote deposits inside the flue.
- 9) **Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.** Place throughout the house and check batteries twice a year.
- 10) **Never leave a fire unattended.** Be sure fire is fully extinguished before leaving your home or turning in for the night. Supervise children and pets closely around the fire.

For more information, check out the Chimney Safety Institute of America: [www.csia.org](http://www.csia.org).

## FLOODPLAIN SERIES (Part 4)

# DRAINAGE SYSTEM MAINTENANCE

The City's drainage system is designed to allow for rainwater to drain from city streets into inlets, or storm drains, which pipe the excess water into area creeks. The system 'channels' excess rainwater away from streets and homes, thus avoiding flooding in the community. While rainwater has hardly been an issue in this drought season, drainage system maintenance is still very important. The dumping of dirt, rock, debris, rubbish, tree or brush cuttings, grass clippings, or other material into a creek or drainage channel is prohibited by city ordinance and can reduce the capacity of the drainage way, causing flooding when rains do occur.

In addition, excess fertilizer and pesticides applied to lawns and gardens wash off into the drainage channels and can pollute streams. Using these items sparingly helps limit chemical run-off into storm drains. Yard clippings and leaves can wash into channels causing not only obstruction, but contributing chemicals that can

pollute creeks and streams. Using organic mulch or safer pest control methods, and composting or mulching yard waste whenever possible is recommended.

By city ordinance, yard waste cannot be left in the street or swept into storm drains or streams. The city attempts to remove obstructions from all drainage channels within drainage easements; however, the landowner is responsible for normal maintenance such as cutting vegetation. For drainage channels on private property with no drainage easement, the property owner is responsible for all maintenance. The City may be able to assist on private property in limited cases.

**Debris dumping violations should be reported to the City Code Compliance Department at 817-249-6078.**

## HOLIDAY REFUSE

Since Christmas and New Year's Day are both celebrated on Sunday this year, there will be no interruption in curbside trash/recycle service. Normal Wednesday collection of refuse and recycling will occur as usual.

**Benbrook residents may dispose of Christmas trees in one of the following ways:**

- Place trees at curbside on Wednesdays before 7:00 a.m. Trees and other brush are normally collected by Allied Waste within 72 hours. Trees should be cut into segments that weigh less than 50 pounds and do not exceed six feet in length.
- Take trees to the roll-off brush dumpster located at the City Maintenance Facility, 467 Winscott Road, from December 26-January 10, Monday-Friday, from 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- To recycle your tree, take it to Dutch Branch Park Complex (from December 26-January 10), off Winscott Road, in the rear parking lot behind Par 3 Golf. Place trees in the designated area (look for signs). Once trees are collected, city crews will mulch the trees. Free mulch will be made available to citizens, in the same location, around mid-January. For questions on the mulching program, please contact the Parks Department at 817-249-5580.

Please remove any nails, stands, plastic bags and decorations from all trees, whether placed curbside, in the brush dumpster, or recycled.

**For more information, contact City Hall at 817-249-3000.**



## Spirit of Christmas



The Benbrook community is celebrating 25 years of providing Christmas gifts to children attending Benbrook elementary schools. Each year, school counselors identify students living in financially struggling households. The families supply their clothing needs, in addition to toy items on the children's "wish list."

The process to "adopt" a child or a family is very easy. If you are interested in becoming a 'Benbrook Christmas Angel', contact the program leaders below and they will provide a list to include the child or children's name(s), clothes/shoe size(s), and wish list items. **The cut-off date to adopt is Monday, December 12, 2011.**

**This year, there are 517 children waiting to be adopted.** "This is an unusually large number of families in need of assistance. We recognize that many in our community are feeling the effects of a weak economy. Our hope is that Benbrook residents will come through for these children, as they always have," says project coordinator Beth McKnight.

Please consider becoming a Benbrook Christmas Angel by adopting a child or a family. Contact Beth McKnight at 817-825-5243 or [bethm76126@yahoo.com](mailto:bethm76126@yahoo.com) or Joel Peal at (817) 249-0500 or [jpeal@ymcafw.org](mailto:jpeal@ymcafw.org)

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**City Council:**

Jerry Dittrich, Mayor  
Charlie Anderson, Place 2  
Larry Marshall, Place 3  
Rickie Allison, Place 4  
Jim Wilson, Place 5  
Mark Washburn, Place 6  
Ron Sauma, Place 7

Benbrook City Council  
meets on the 1st and 3rd  
Thursday of each month  
at 7:30pm at City Hall  
911 Winscott Road.

For more information:  
call **817-249-3000**  
or visit [www.cityofbenbrook.com](http://www.cityofbenbrook.com)

## Residential Refuse/Recycling Rates

Beginning January 1, 2012, residential refuse/recycling **rates will increase from \$12.21 to \$12.95 per month**, per the City's renewed contract with Allied Waste Services. Commercial/Industrial customers should receive rate increase information in their December bills. For information on residential refuse, recycling, bulk and brush collection, please go to [www.cityofbenbrook.com](http://www.cityofbenbrook.com).

## 4 PAWS SANTA PHOTOS/ANNUAL SALE

4 PAWS (Pets Are Worth Saving) animal adoption agency is again offering photos of your pet(s) and/or children with Santa from **11am-4pm at PetSmart**, 4465 Bryant Irvin Road, on **December 3-4, 10-11, and 17-18**. The cost of photos is \$9.95 with your PetPerks card. 4 PAWS receives \$5 for each photo. Proceeds from photo sales benefit animals in the Benbrook Animal Shelter. 4 PAWS is also collecting items for the Annual Treasure Sale scheduled for spring 2012. This is their largest fundraiser and your donations are tax-deductible and very much appreciated. If you are interested in volunteering as a Santa or Santa's Helper, or have items to donate to the sale, please call **817-249-0459**.

