

For more information call Katy Hanzlik at 847-391-5650 April 8, 2009

DES PLAINES PREPARES FOR EARTH DAY/ARBOR DAY

for immediate release

Thousands of communities around the world will celebrate Earth Day, April 22, 2009, and Arbor Day, April 24, 2009, this month. In the spirit of these holidays, Des Plaines is launching an "Idling Gets You Nowhere" campaign, in conjunction with Earth Day, and will have an Arbor Day tree planting ceremony at Algonquin Middle School, 767 E. Algonquin Road, Des Plaines.

The "Idling Gets You Nowhere" campaign will include public education about car idling and designation of pilot "idle-free" zones at select railroad crossings - a suggestion made by 6th Ward Alderman Walsten and the Deep Green Committee. The pilot idle-free zones are scheduled for Union Pacific (freight line) crossings at Oakton, Algonquin, and Thacker. At these railroad crossings, drivers will be asked to turn off their car engines while waiting for passing freight trains. The program is voluntary and aims to educate residents on the negative impacts, both financially and environmentally, that unnecessary car idling has on the community.

According to the Metropolitan Mayor's Caucus, of which Des Plaines is a member:

- Excessive idling can damage an engine's components. It's a myth that idling is good for an engine.
- Recent studies have found that ten seconds of idling uses more fuel than restarting the engine. These studies dispel the old myth that turning off your car for anything less than three minutes "isn't worth it".
- The best way to warm up an engine is to drive the vehicle, not let it idle.
- One hour of idling burns up to a gallon of fuel.
- An idling vehicle emits 20 times more pollution than one traveling 32 mph.

At 10 AM on Friday, April 24, 2009 the City of Des Plaines will observe Arbor Day with a tree planting ceremony at Algonquin Middle School. Mayor Arredia will read the City's Arbor Day proclamation and assist students to plant a tree on the school grounds. Lurvey's Garden Center is generously donating the tree for this year's ceremony.

For twenty-one (21) years, Des Plaines has been recognized as a Tree City. To qualify for annual Tree City designation, Des Plaines must meet standards established by The Arbor Day Foundation and the National Association of State Foresters. For more information, call Des Plaines Public Works at 847-391-5464. #