

# PLYMOUTH PUBLIC SAFETY

## EXTRA

### Welcome to the Public Safety Extra

This publication provides an inside look at fire and police services, equipment and news.

For more Public Safety news and information, view our annual report, subscribe to Alert Plymouth, sign up for eNotify emails, and follow the City of Plymouth on Facebook and Twitter.




Mike Goldstein

And remember, we're just a phone call away.

Sincerely,


**Mike Goldstein,**  
Director of Public Safety

 [plymouthmn.gov/publicsafetyreport](http://plymouthmn.gov/publicsafetyreport)

 [plymouthmn.gov/eNotify](http://plymouthmn.gov/eNotify)

 [plymouthmn.gov/alertplymouth](http://plymouthmn.gov/alertplymouth)

 [facebook.com/plymouthmn](https://facebook.com/plymouthmn)

 [@PlymouthMN\\_gov](https://twitter.com/PlymouthMN_gov)

### Open house brings families to Plymouth fire station



Hundreds gathered at Fire Station III in October for the Fire Department Open House. Children learned to operate a fire hose, climbed inside public safety vehicles and were delighted by the arrival of a wind-inducing North Memorial helicopter.

## Public safety agencies, schools collaborate on large-scale drill

For the second consecutive year, Plymouth has played a leadership role in preparing regional first responders for an emergency incident. In October, the Plymouth Public Safety Department and Wayzata Public Schools partnered to conduct a large-scale training exercise at Wayzata Central Middle School. The drill involved more than 150 first responders and 600 role players.

In addition to the Plymouth Police and Fire departments, the active shooter training included 16 regional law enforcement, fire and emergency response agencies, as well as Wayzata Public Schools personnel.

"It was an incredibly important exercise that allowed our staff to work collaboratively with Wayzata Schools," said Public Safety Director Mike Goldstein. "We're grateful for the district's willingness to work with us to provide a learning opportunity for all."

Though the Plymouth Public Safety Department has held training exercises at both Robbinsdale-Armstrong and Wayzata high schools in the past, this training was the largest and most inclusive to date.

Building on the department's regional active shooter training in 2015, the exercise allowed public safety personnel to test and evaluate a new model of incident response. A more collaborative effort between police and fire, the model utilizes triage response teams and casualty collection points to more quickly and efficiently evacuate and treat the wounded.



In October, law enforcement, firefighters and emergency response personnel from 16 regional agencies gathered at Wayzata Central Middle School to conduct a public safety training exercise through a partnership with the Plymouth Public Safety Department and Wayzata Public Schools.

"Tactics that we learned at last year's training were employed effectively, which allowed us to get our 'wounded' the help they needed much faster," said Plymouth Police Sgt. Curtis Smith, who coordinated the exercise.

"The platform utilizes emergency medical services, police and fire staff to eliminate danger, rescue the injured, give treatment and provide a safe haven for everyone involved," said Goldstein.

The exercise also allowed Wayzata Schools staff to practice the "Run. Hide. Fight." approach to an active shooter scenario.

"While the police are practicing evacuation, we're practicing making sure our children are safe, notifying parents and reuniting students with families," said Kristin

*Training exercise ... continued on page 2E*

## SkimStop deters credit fraud

The Plymouth Police Department recently launched SkimStop, a program that helps prevent theft of credit card information at gas station pumps.

A partnership between law enforcement and local business, the program allows participating Plymouth gas stations to better protect their customers' financial data – and offers residents the option to be judicious consumers.

A crime that's not unique to Plymouth, skimming involves placing small devices at gas station pumps to capture data each time a credit card is swiped. After retrieving the names and card numbers from the pumps, perpetrators commonly sell the data or use re-encoder devices to create new fraudulent cards using the victims' credit card numbers.

"With SkimStop, residents and businesspeople can feel confident that their credit card information is safe at participating Plymouth gas stations," said Plymouth Community Relations Officer Jim Long.

### About the SkimStop Program

To participate in SkimStop, a gas station must have its pumps inspected for signs of tampering or existing skimmers and place tamper-proof tape over the panel or door that provides access to the credit card machine at each pump. The tape shows "void" if it has been tampered with.



Photo credit: yumasun.com

A crime that's not unique to Plymouth, skimming involves placing devices on gas station pumps to steal credit card information.

Participating gas stations must complete inspections of each pump every 24 hours to ensure the tape has not been compromised and keep a daily log of the inspections. Plymouth police officers will audit the logs annually.

Participating gas stations also receive certificates to hang inside their store and 2-inch yellow SkimStop stickers to display at each pump.

A list and map of participating locations is available on the city's website at [plymouthmn.gov/skimstop](http://plymouthmn.gov/skimstop).



# City boosts public safety staffing levels to meet growing demand

As Plymouth’s population grows, so does demand for police and fire services. To provide efficient service now and in the future, the city has budgeted to boost public safety staffing levels.

The 2017 budget includes the addition of six full-time firefighters – three beginning in January and three more in July.

“We are the busiest fire department in Minnesota that doesn’t run medicals,” said Plymouth Fire Chief Rodger Coppa.

The Plymouth Fire Department handles about 1,500 fire calls a year, which includes everything from calls about smelling smoke, to oven fires to full-blown apartment fires.

In addition to scheduling paid-on-call firefighters, the department previously staffed one fire station six days per week, 15 hours per day with its duty crew. The new model will allow the department to staff two stations every day for 15 hours. Additional staff will help decrease response times and provide quicker access to necessary resources.

“Fires are different these days than 20 years ago – they burn hotter and faster,” said Coppa. “Almost everything we use is petroleum based. We build our houses with it and our furniture, too. During a fire, we don’t have as much time to get there to save lives and effect positive change.”

New police officer positions are also included in the budget – two each year from 2016-2018 – to staff the newly established fifth patrol district in northwestern Plymouth.

Continued growth in Plymouth disproportionately increased call loads and demand for police services in the original four patrol districts. The redrawn patrol map, including the new district, is aimed at balancing and reducing the call load for each patrol district.

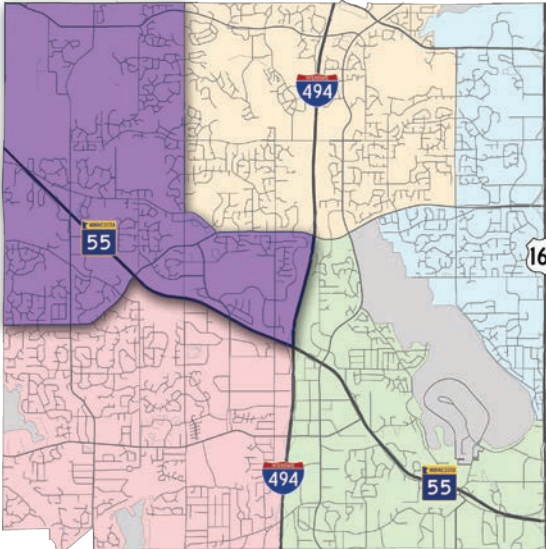
“When officers are responding to call after call, they’re not able to proactively engage with the community,” said Plymouth Police Captain Pete Johnson. “We want them to take more ownership in areas of the community they work, get to know the people better, along with their daily public safety-related issues, and come up with collaborative solutions that work for all.”



Investments in public safety – including staffing increases at two fire stations and adding a fifth police patrol district in Plymouth – will provide better customer service and quicker response times as the city continues to grow and develop.

The changes will provide the developing northwest the same level of response as the rest of the city, decrease response times, distribute the call load more evenly and allow officers to make more of a connection to their area.

“Those face-to-face conversations are not possible without removing some of the call load,” said Johnson. “Officers will have more time to invest in their cases and stop in and talk with business owners. These changes are geared toward providing our community with superior customer service.”



The redrawn patrol map, including the new fifth patrol district (upper left), will more evenly spread the call load, allowing police officers to invest more time in proactive community engagement.

## Gearing up for the job – Plymouth firefighter equipment



## Training exercise ... from page 1E

Tollison, Director of Administrative Services at Wayzata Public Schools.

With 600 school staff role playing as students, parents and teachers, it allowed the district to test its family reunification and mental health teams in a realistic setting.

“Until this point, we had been taught to lockdown and make sure everyone stays put,” said Tollison. “It was a great

opportunity to work side-by-side with Plymouth Police – and it was reassuring to know that we have so many fast, professional first responders to keep us safe.”

“This sort of exercise helps ensure that all responding agencies are coordinated and communicating effectively, and everyone knows their roles,” said Smith. “We hope we never get this call, but training for it is vital to making sure we’re all on the same page.”

# Free bags offer safe medication disposal

It’s no secret that prescription drug abuse has been on the rise across the country – but the Plymouth Public Safety Department is doing what it can to combat it locally.

For small amounts of medicine, the department is handing out free drug deactivation bags residents can use at home to safely dispose of unwanted medications in the trash.

The bags can be picked up during normal business hours at the Plymouth Public Safety Building, 3400 Plymouth Blvd. Hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, and 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday.

Two bag sizes are available. The larger bag allows for disposal of up to 90 pills, 12 ounces of liquid medication or 12 transdermal patches. The smaller bag allows for disposal of 45 pills, 6 ounces of liquid medication or six transdermal patches.

The bags contain activated carbon, which neutralizes the medication and prevents it from contaminating the groundwater.

“Properly disposing of unwanted medication is vital to prevent abuse, accidental poisoning and addiction,” said Plymouth Public Safety Director Mike Goldstein. “Opioids, such as Methadone, Vicodin and OxyContin, are prescribed to treat pain, but are highly addictive.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 14,000 people died from overdoses involving prescription opioids in 2014 and almost 2 million Americans abused or were dependent on them.

The bags are available to residents, thanks to donations by the Armstrong-Cooper Youth Hockey Association and the Plymouth Crime and Fire Prevention Fund.



For safe disposal of small quantities of medication, free drug deactivation bags are available during normal business hours in the lobby of the Plymouth Public Safety Building.

## Other Medication Disposal Options

Large or small quantities of medication can be disposed of at any of Hennepin County’s free medicine drop box locations. Bring medications in original packaging. No needles, sharps or syringes are accepted, and no identification is required. Visit [plymouthmn.gov/medicine](http://plymouthmn.gov/medicine) for locations near Plymouth.

Some pharmacies are also taking back prescriptions, though the program is voluntary.

“Federal and state laws have recently changed to allow local pharmacies to take back and destroy unwanted prescription medications,” said Goldstein. “We hope that Plymouth pharmacies will opt in to this program to provide another safe disposal option for residents.”

## PARKING REMINDER

On-street parking is not allowed on city streets from 2-5 a.m. This regulation is in effect year round. During winter months, parking is also prohibited after a 2-inch snowfall until the street has been plowed curb-to-curb. Violators may be tagged and/or towed.

For more information, including how to obtain a waiver for special circumstances, visit [plymouthmn.gov/police](http://plymouthmn.gov/police).