

Farview Recreation Center to serve as Disaster Recovery Center

Written by
Tuesday, 24 May 2011 17:46

Victims of the storm damage will be encouraged to go to Farview Recreation Center to learn from various social service agencies about different programs to assist them with their recovery needs. On Tuesday, May 24 the site will be set up and is scheduled to open to the public on Wednesday from 9 am to 7pm. The site will remain open as long as services are needed.

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Storm Response Update

As of 4 pm Monday, May 23

Tree Damage and Removal – It is estimated that 2,000 trees in parks and along boulevards were downed or damaged during the tornado and storm that moved from Wirth Park northeast to North Mississippi Regional Park. Park Board, Minneapolis Public Works and St. Paul Forestry crews worked throughout the day today to make roads passable in the storm damage area. As of 4 pm today, all roads are open and passable except on a 10-block segment along 33rd Avenue, from James Avenue North west to Lyndale Avenue North, which still has down power lines. Forestry crews will now begin clearing wood debris that is located within the street right-of-ways. This means clearing from back of sidewalk to back of sidewalk. Once the right-of-ways are sufficiently cleared, the Forestry Division will rent cranes to remove trees from homes. The cranes are very large and need enough clearance to get down streets to be used.

Tree Debris Cleanup – After Park Board and City crews remove trees, they will provide tree debris pickup for property owners in the affected area. Public Works and Park Board crews will collect tree debris from May 25 through June 10 for properties in the city west of Interstate 94 and north of Highway 55 (Olson Memorial Highway). This service is for tree debris only, not other debris.

Parkland and Park Facility Damage – At Wirth Park, an estimated 200 trees are down throughout the center of the park. The Wirth Beach area sustained significant damage and trees are down along the roadway and interior of Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden. The beach and garden are closed until these sites are safe for the public. At Webber, the tornado caused a hole in the rec center roof, tennis court damage, and uprooted trees throughout the park. Park Board Operations crews are working to repair Webber, Folwell picnic shelter building and the Willard picnic shelter building. The Webber roof will be repaired by Friday, but staff are still assessing the window and building damage caused by flying debris to determine when the building can be opened to the public. Park Board crews are also working to get power restored to Webber, Folwell, North Commons, North Mississippi Interpretive Center, and Northside Service Center. Recreation staff is prepared to provide programming and services at facilities once power is restored.

Heron Rookery – A large 60-80 nest heron rookery located on an island off the western shore of North Mississippi Park was wiped out during the storm. Adult herons are in circling in the air frantically looking for their nests and chicks. The National Park Service and Audubon Society will be visiting the site to assess the situation and, if possible, recover injured adult and chicks. If Park Board crews or the public find an injured heron or an orphaned or abandoned heron chick – it can be brought to the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center in Roseville. More information and driving directions can be found at <http://www.wrcmn.org>

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Processing of Wood Debris and Woodchips – For efficiency, cost effectiveness and EAB control, all trees are being chipped by a local vendor at the former Scherer Bros site now owned by the Park Board. Because of the severity of the storm and the number of down trees, it is impossible to keep Ash trees separate from other tree species. All trees are being chipped twice to meet the Minnesota Department of Agriculture’s compliance agreement standards for hauling woodchips outside of the county. Woodchips from the storm will not be available at the Park Board’s free woodchip pick-up locations.

Private Tree Removal Contractors – The City of Minneapolis has posted a “Make Sure Your Contractor or Tree Company is Licensed” fact sheet on their website to provide homeowners with tips on finding a contractor with proper licensing.

Resources Available for North Side Residents Affected by Tornado – The City of Minneapolis has a fact sheet listing shelter and food and water resources for residents affected by the tornado. The information sheet also provides the public with ways to donate funds to the Red Cross and Minneapolis Foundation.

Volunteers – At this time, the area is not safe for volunteers. When volunteers are needed in coming days to assist residents, the City and Urban Homeworks, a local nonprofit, will be making a call to volunteers. If volunteers are needed for park areas affected by the storm, the volunteer office will coordinate with the city to notify the public.

Utility Pole Storage at Folwell Park – Excel Energy is Folwell Park as a temporary holding site of up to 100 utility poles needing replacement in the storm area.

Communications – The Park Board is working with the City of Minneapolis to provide regular updates to residents, park visitors, public officials and the media. The Park Board will post all updates at Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board.