Town of Penfield Supervisor’s Column
December 17, 2018

Last Thursday evening Councilwoman Paula Metzler and her family sponsored a Christmas tree lighting in the Four Corners at Schaufelberger Park to honor the brave men and women serving our country who will not be home for the holidays. Paula’s own nephew is one member of the military who will be serving and away from home and missed by family this Christmas. The American Legion, Braman Post 1229, members of various veterans service agencies, Boy Scout Troop 312 of Penfield, and many others were on hand to light this tree for all to enjoy this holiday season. On behalf of our town board and all Penfield residents, we say thank you to all who are currently serving and those who have served to provide us the freedom we have in our great country.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is sharing an appeal for “Less Waste & More Cheer” during the holiday season. Between Thanksgiving and New Year’s Day, Americans will generate 25 percent more trash than any other time of the year. Reducing, reusing, recycling and properly disposing of waste will help ensure the environment is clean and safe for generations to come while protecting wildlife and ecosystems.

What can you do to give more with less?

- **Avoid single use disposables**—ditch single use disposables during mealtime, snacking, and on the go. Give a gift that never stops giving by gifting a reusable water bottle or travel mug. Forgo the ribbon and wrapping and give gifts in attractive reusable bags.
- **Gift experiences over objects**—plan a weekend getaway to go hiking, skiing, snowboarding or snowshoeing. Enjoy a cooking, art, or fitness class with a friend or family member, visit a museum, or attend a musical or theater production together. Donate to a non-profit organization in the name of a loved one.
- **Instill a love of nature**—purchase an [Empire Pass](https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8829.html) or [campground gift card](https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8829.html) to experience NYS parks and campgrounds with family and friends.

And be sure to recycle right! Do not place the following items in your recycling bin:

- **Ribbons**—reuse ribbons where you can or dispose of in your garbage.
- **Holiday lights**—replace broken or blown bulbs for continual use or check with large home improvement stores for a recycling program.
- **Plastic bags**—return plastic bags and other film plastics to retail stores. Find a recycling location near you.
- **Batteries**—different types of batteries require different handling. (Read more about [recycling batteries](https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8829.html).)
- **Wrapping paper**—not all wrapping paper is recyclable; for information on this topic and more information on undertaking a sustainable holiday season, visit DEC’s website at [https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8829.html](https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8829.html).

RG&E would like to share these important and potentially lifesaving winter reminders:

*Keep vents and meters free from snow and ice*

Keep vents and gas meters clear of snow and ice to prevent hazardous conditions. Snow, ice, and other debris can block exhaust vents for furnaces, water heaters and similar appliances, causing toxic fumes and poisonous carbon monoxide to build up indoors. Furthermore, snow and ice accumulation around natural gas meters and regulators can prevent gas company personnel and first-responders from locating and accessing them during an emergency.
Note the location of outdoor vents (including sidewall vents, meters and regulators) to make sure they remain clear and accessible. After storms, gently remove snow and debris by hand or with a broom to avoid damage. Be alert to potential ice accumulation on rooftops and gutters. Falling ice and snow can damage utility meters and regulators.

Always report emergencies

Call RG&E at 1.800.743.1702 to report gas leaks, odors, or damaged gas equipment. If you suspect a leak, get up and get out, leave the area or building and call from a safe place. If there’s an immediate danger call 911.

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors

Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors should be located on every level of your home and outside all sleeping areas. Test them monthly and replace the batteries at least twice a year.

Appliances

Never use your stove or oven to stay warm. Only space heaters intended for indoor use should be operated indoors or in enclosed spaces, in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions. If you are unable to keep your home safely and comfortably heated call 311 for resources that can help you and your family.

Home Generators

Any generator that plugs into a home's wiring should be connected via a transfer switch by a licensed electrician. This ensures that when the generator is in use, house wiring is isolated from utility lines. Improper installation can damage the generator and create hazards for utility employees working on poles and even the general public. If adding a natural gas-fired generator, consult your gas company to ensure there is adequate pressure. Generators should be placed outdoors and away from doors and windows to prevent exposure to carbon monoxide.

One more plug for this very important event this Friday...the American Red Cross will be holding its annual Holiday Blood Drive on Friday, December 21 at the Penfield Community Center, 1985 Baird Road from 1:00 to 6:00 PM. Blood shortages are dangerously low! To schedule a donation appointment to help save a life during the holiday season, please call 1-800-Red Cross or go to www.redcrossblood.org. Walk-ins are also welcome. Thank you in advance for making a difference in the give of life!

This is the last column before Christmas; on behalf of the town board and all of the employees of the town of Penfield, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a happy and safe holiday season!

Tony

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