



# Metro Codes

E—News For Neighborhoods

Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County

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## Community Matters MAYOR STARTS PRO-ACTIVE EFFORT FOR BETTER NEIGHBORHOODS

A new initiative from the Mayor's Office of Neighborhoods designed to provide a sustained period of response to concerns in specific communities was launched in late July at the Mayor's Night Out meeting in Inglewood at the new South Inglewood Community Center.



Brady Banks, Director of the Mayor's Office of Neighborhoods discusses Mayor Dean's new community support program, "Community Matters".

Banks quickly added that having all neighborhood associations, as well as all neighbors, engaged will be critical to the ultimate success of this program.

Banks and the Office of Neighborhoods, along with the Department of Codes & Building Safety, Public Works, Health as well as the Sheriff's Of-

The initiative called Community Matters partners key neighborhood-oriented Metro departments to provide two months of coordinated assistance in a community to alleviate codes and health violations, and remove litter and large bulk items.

"It is critical for government to be accessible and responsive to citizens' needs," Nashville Mayor Karl Dean said.

"Community Matters will ensure that we not only fix the specific problems brought up at the Night Out events, but that we address the issues affecting the quality of life in our communities on a larger scale." Mayor Karl Dean

More than 100 persons filled the room to hear mayor Dean's comments.

"The bright idea that we had was why don't we try and beat it to the punch and say, 'let's address these issues on the front end.' That way people are building relationships with Metro departments who do this kind of work, but they're also seeing that we can get in front of some of these issues rather than waiting back for things to happen," said Brady Banks, director of the Mayor's office of Neighborhoods.

ice will be strategically reviewing all communities in the county to determine where this program should be utilized.

Community Matters includes:

- Codes Department providing training in N.O.T.I.C.E., a neighborhoods Codes abatement program, for neighborhood leaders
- Metro Beautification coordinating neighborhood clean-up events
- Codes and Health departments identifying neighborhood "hot spots" for violations and issuing citations
- Davidson County Sheriff's Office providing pick-up assistance for those receiving citations for excessive bulk items

Terry Cobb, Director of Codes and Building Safety, applauded the effort and pledged support.

"Our department always searches for proactive methods to head off problems before there is a larger issue. With the Mayor's support, I believe we will be able to improve an already good effort which will greatly enhance the quality of life for all Nashvillians," Cobb said.

Mayor's Night Out is an opportunity for citizens to meet one-on-one with the mayor and department heads to discuss concerns about their community. The next Mayor's Night Out has not been announced.

## Illegal Signs Clutter the Streets

The world is full of clutter and nothing causes more of it than illegal signs.

“Actually, bootleg signs on the public right of way are prohibited by the Metro Code of Laws,” Terry Cobb, Director of Codes and Building Safety.

“Unless the metro Council has given specific permission, they are not allowed.”

Cobb said that several Metro departments and agencies are given the authority and duty to enforce the laws related to signage. This authority includes the provision to remove the sign and/or to cite the violator and prosecute the violator. In addition to the Department of Codes & Building Safety, the metro Code of Laws empowers other departments with the authority to remove signs and/or cite violators to court including the Traffic & Parking Commission (through Public Works), the Metro Police and the Nashville Electric Service (if attached to power poles or NES equipment).

“The removal of bootleg signs from the public ROW is a constant vigil. Codes removes thousands of these signs over the 530 square mile jurisdiction of the Metro Government each year,” Cobb said. “We even use volunteer teams of Codes Inspectors to remove signs one weekend per month. We work on this problem to the extent that we have resources available to focus on the problem and as resources are available.”



Example of an illegal banner placed on a fence along the right-of-way.



Example of an illegal ground sign removed along the right-of-way.



Example of an illegal signs placed on a utility pole.



Example of illegal ground signs removed along the right-of-way.

Cobb said the government works hard to clear the ROW as well as enforce the laws. He said the Davidson County Sheriff’s Office provides inmates in crews which work the streets throughout the year. He said the Metro Beautification Commission organizes volunteer teams on an on-going basis to remove signs from the ROW and pick up other litter.

Public Works maintenance crews (cutting crews) remove the signs from the ROW on an on-going basis. NES uses light duty employees to remove signs and handbills from power poles almost daily, Cobb added.

“We encourage citizen volunteers and neighborhood organizations to assist in removing signs and clearing the clutter,” Cobb said. “A citizen group from District 16 emailed me a photo of hundreds of signs they removed voluntarily from their district during a weekend project,”

While the problem is much better than just a few years ago, Cobb said it seems to be a never-ending problem.

“We have literally cleared an intersection on Saturday and cleared the same intersection Monday,” Cobb said. “Companies and individuals need to take personal responsibility for their actions and stop breaking the law. It is illegal and it is dangerous. Drivers field of vision can be easily blocked by these sign so there are liability issues these companies who illegally place signs probably never think about.”

### Weekend Inspection Results for FY 07/08

Actions Taken						
Abates Issued	Signs Removed	Housing Violations	Junk & Trash Violations	Zoning Violations	Vehicle Violations	Premises Identification Violations
240	3,238	2	16	20	40	5

## Nashville Communities Celebrate National Night Out Against Crime

More than 75 neighborhood and community groups joined together on August 5 for Nashville's 14th annual celebration of "National Night Out Against Crime."

According to the county organizing committee, nearly 50 events were held throughout Davidson County. Events ranged from ice cream social to block parties to street festivals, these events brought out thousands of Nashvillians with one message: criminals are not welcome in our community. The Department of Codes & Building Safety, Metro Police, Fire and Sheriff's Office along with other agencies including OEM, Metro Health, Planning and others showed support by displaying their services and showing support for their neighbors.

Members of the Codes & Building Safety Department attended several of these celebrations across the city. The department set up an informational display at the Flatrock Heritage 2008 Night Out Against Crime celebration.

NNOAC has been extraordinarily successful in promoting involvement in crime and drug prevention activities, strengthening police-community relations, and encourag-



Bill Penn, Assistant Director with Codes & Building Safety discusses Community support programs with to "Flatrock" residents at the "Flatrock Heritage" 2008 Night Out Against Crime event at Glenciff High school.

ing neighborhood camaraderie as part of the fight for safer streets.

Since 1984, "National Night Out—America's Night Out Against Crime" has grown to involve over 30 million people from more than 9,000 communities. This event is hosted nationally by the National Association of Town Watches.

Mayor Karl Dean greets Nashville citizens at the "Night Out Against Crime"



### HEY SONGWRITERS! THE BIG GIG COULD BE YOUR BIG BREAK!

The Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority's brand-new Music City Central Transit Center will open its doors downtown in late October, and we want to introduce it Nashville style — by putting it to music. Send us your original, 60-second jingle in any genre about all of the reasons to choose public transportation. The winner will win BIG in the Big Gig Jingle Contest, including a \$1,500 cash prize courtesy of Bal-four Beatty Construction. Plus, you have the option of performing your jingle at the Grand Opening of Music City Central, and hear your song across the airwaves as we promote the Center!

#### 1. WRITE IT!

Create an original 60-second jingle promoting Music City Central.

#### 2. SEND IT!

[Submit your CD](#) between Aug. 1 and Sept. 15, 2008.

#### 3. HEAR IT!

One winner will be chosen by celebrity judges, including those who work on Music Row. Plus, the winner will have the opportunity to perform at the Music City Central Grand Opening and receive a \$1,500 cash prize!

## MAYOR TO HOST 2008 NASHVILLE HOUSING FAIR WITH GREATER NASHVILLE ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS

Mayor Karl Dean announced that he will host the 2008 Nashville Housing Fair presented by the Greater Nashville Association of Realtors at the Tennessee State Fairgrounds August 16 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.

"Nashville needs to be a city for families and I want to make sure we are doing what we can to help families find homes they can enjoy and afford in Davidson County," Dean said. "This housing fair is an opportunity to help people connect with housing professionals—Realtors, home builder, lenders, and homeownership counselors—that can help them get on the path to homeownership."

The Mayor's Office and GNAR have partnered with multiple agencies to plan and present the fair. Sponsors of the housing fair include: Pilkerton Realtors, Crye-Leike Realtors, Fridrich & Clark Realty, Village Real Estate, Fifth & Main, Freeman Webb Cos., Fox Ridge Homes, Westview Homes, Centex Homes, The Jones Company of Tennessee, Celebration Homes, First Tennessee Home Loans, Countrywide Home Loans, SunTrust Mortgage, Pinnacle Financial Partner, Regions Bank, U.S. Bank, Tennessee Housing Development Agency, Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency,

*"We are honored and delighted to be the presenting sponsor for the 2008 Nashville Housing Fair," said Mandy Wachtler, President of GNAR.*

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Affordable Housing Resources Corp., Habitat for Humanity, The Housing Fund, Dominion Financial, Serveus, and Woodbine Community Center.

"We are honored and delighted to be the presenting sponsor for the 2008 Nashville Housing Fair," said Mandy Wachtler, President of GNAR. "Many people may feel that owning their own home is now impossible. But with access to the right resources, the kind you can find at the Nashville Housing Fair, the American Dream can still become a reality. And research shows when people own their own homes the health improves, there's a positive impact on their children, and our communities are strengthened."



### **About GNAR**

The Greater Nashville Association of REALTORS® is one of Middle Tennessee's largest

professional trade associations and serves as the primary voice for Nashville-area property owners. REALTOR® is a registered trade mark that may be used only by real estate professionals who are members of the National Association of Realtors and subscribe to a strict code of ethics.

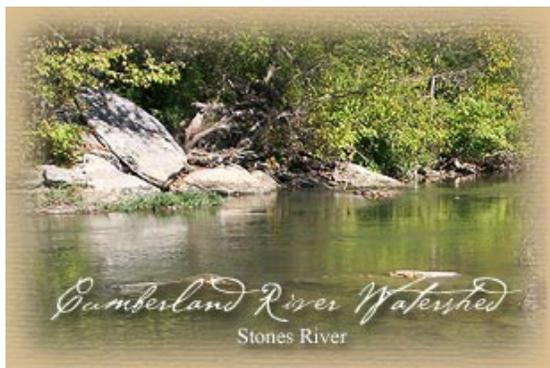


Photo courtesy of the Cumberland River Compact at [www.cumberlandrivercompact.org](http://www.cumberlandrivercompact.org)

## Cumberland River Compact

The Cumberland River Compact, begun in 1997, formed to take on the role of an "educational organization" with the mission being "to enhance the water quality of the Cumberland River and its tributaries through education and by promoting cooperation among citizens, businesses, and agencies in Kentucky and Tennessee."

The Compact's belief is simple: "through education and cooperation more long-term partnerships and solutions will be forged than were we to form yet another "activist" organization." Its vision is equally simple: "to be a trusted source of information and education on water quality and to facilitate cooperation among all stakeholders to ensure that our rivers and streams continue to provide us with clean water, bountiful crops, healthy fisheries and abundant recreational opportunities."

The Cumberland River is 697 miles long. The Cumberland River watershed covers 18,000 square miles and is home to almost 2 million people. Since 1997, the Compact has set out to create a Watershed Outreach Program in each of the 14 watersheds that make up the Cumberland Basin. A watershed is the land area that drains into a stream. An area of land that contributes runoff to one specific delivery point; large watersheds may be composed of several smaller "sub-sheds," each of which contributes runoff to different locations that ultimately combine at a common delivery point. For more information, please go to the website at: <http://www.cumberlandrivercompact.org/>.

## Mayor Accepts Community Enhancement Fund Recommendations

*Review panels complete merit-based process for awarding funds to nonprofits*

Mayor Karl Dean announced he has accepted the award recommendations of the Community Enhancement Fund review panels.

The CEF grant program was established by the mayor to ensure the \$2 million allocated in the 2008-2009 operating budget for local nonprofits are awarded on a merit basis. Members of community review panels independently scored the grant applications and then determined award recipients during public meetings held earlier this week.

Three priority areas for funding were identified by the mayor: education and aftercare, domestic violence and community service. A review panel was established for

each priority area. Review panel members were selected by the mayor, Vice Mayor Diane Neighbors and Councilmember Erik Cole, who also serves as the chair of the Council's Budget and Finance Committee.

"This is a tight budget year and we have limited resources to share with our nonprofit community," Dean said. "It is important that the resources we have been distributed in a fair and equitable way. The grant program allowed for the thoughtful consideration of the needs of our community and the best organizations to fulfill those needs. I want to thank the review panel members for their commitment to this process."

## Living History Tour: Mayors, Musicians, the Military and More

A walk through the cemetery is truly a walk through Nashville's history. The Nashville City Cemetery Association is sponsoring tours of the oldest continually operating cemetery in Nashville on Saturday, September 27, 2008, from 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM.

The gravestones tell the stories of individuals and families from the 1820s to the present day. This year's theme for the Living History Tour is *Mayors, Musicians, the Military and More*. Local actors will portray some of our notable citizens from the past, and music and other activities will round out the day.

The City Cemetery is the oldest continuously operated public cemetery in Nashville. On March 9, 1820, the Mayor of Nashville and the Aldermen purchased from Richard Cross four acres of land located "on the plains, south of town, for its burying ground." The cemetery opened on January 1, 1822.

Fourteen years later the cemetery had outgrown its original site and more acres were acquired. By 1850 the cemetery was the final resting place for over 11,000 people of every race, religion and economic status. Since the opening, there have been 20,000 interments in the City Cemetery. Over the years, there have been removals such as the Civil War Federal soldiers to the National Cemetery, Gallatin Pike, and the relocation of graves to new family lots in Mt. Olivet Cemetery after the Civil War.

Four of Nashville's founders, James and Charlotte Robertson & John and Ann Robertson Cockrill; four Confederate

generals: Felix Zollicoffer, Bushrod Johnson, Richard Ewell, and Samuel Read Anderson; the man who named the American flag "Old Glory", Captain William Driver; Union Navy Commodore Paul Shirley; a Tennessee Governor, William Carroll; 15 mayors of Nashville, and two of the original Fisk Jubilee Singers, Mabel Lewis Imes and Ella Sheppard Moore, are among the interesting people buried in the small and peaceful cemetery.



The City Cemetery was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1972 because of its historical and architectural significance.

Come visit the Cemetery. Walk down the lanes and you will begin to feel that you have stepped back in time. Its quiet beauty can provide an escape from the busy world outside its walls.



Picture courtesy of Gary Layda, Metro Photographer

## To Harvest The Rain

By: Al Cooke

Agricultural Extension Agent, North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service

Whenever rainfall is in short supply, we become more aware of the costs of water, the depths of wells, and the limits of ponds. Then there arises an interest often expressed as “rain barrel.” Catch-22 is that when you need a barrel full of water is usually not a good time to try to fill a barrel. And when it starts to rain again, then we have short memories.

This issue comes around periodically, however. And property owners eventually face some tough choices. Under guidelines for “severe drought” or “extreme drought” they must ask themselves what are non-essential uses of water. Is your vegetable garden essential? Is your lawn essential? Is that oak tree that shades your home essential? All have value. But essential is a subject for philosophical discussion. Some would say all of the above are essential. Others would respond, as existentialists, that the only essential is death.

One of the challenges of life, both as individuals and as members of civilized communities, is managing water resources. That’s why we have wells, municipal water districts, and reservoirs. Another, perhaps primitive, method is the cistern or rain barrel.

Essentially, a cistern is a water storage container connected to a collection/storage system. These systems are in routine use in many areas where groundwater is limited or where terrain may raise the cost of moving water great distances.

Water seldom exists in a pure state and almost always comes with contaminants. Atmospheric contaminants may consist primarily of dust but other considerations include

fungi, bacteria, insect parts, and even radioactive materials. Rainwater is generally of good quality but there is no guarantee. It may be sufficiently acid to be corrosive. And that brings us to a bigger weakness in the safety of rainwater use: our catchment, conduction, and storage facilities.

How clean is your roof? Are there bird droppings? Do bats fly overhead? Do birds ever nest in the gutters? Have you ever cleaned out a stopped up gutter and noticed the odiferous fragrance. We may get thirsty enough to drink that water.

But let’s begin by assuming we are not going to use our water collection strategies for human consumption. If you are considering using rainwater for consumption, then you will certainly want to investigate not only filters but also sterility techniques that are beyond the scope of this article. But even if you only plan to use the water to irrigate or wash cars, there will be some filtration issues. Particles washed from a roof can clog sprinklers and scratch car finishes. So we will need some filtering.

A rule of thumb is that a roof of 1,000 square feet will collect approximately 600 gallons of water in a one-inch rainfall. That’s about 10 or 12 barrels. In the course of a year, you might catch more than 25,000 gallons. How much of that do you want to store at any one time? The answer to that question varies with how much water you use, how quickly you can replace it, and how long you might go without rain? There’s a lot we don’t know.

You are probably in the best position to estimate how much water you might use. If you develop a rain catchment sys-



This is an example of a commercially available rain barrel, but just about any sturdy, plastic container will do.

## Earth Friendly Materials Can Save Money

Roofing shingles, gypsum board and concrete blocks could join newsprint, milk jugs and aluminum cans in the recycling bin and may help the construction industry save money in the process, say researchers at the University of Florida.

Timothy Townsend, professor of environmental engineering at UF, and his student assistants hope to show contractors, consumers and state officials how to save money by putting useful construction wastes back to work rather than dumping them into landfills, where they are likely to contaminate groundwater as they break down. Florescent light bulbs, for instance, contain mercury, as do thermostats and certain types of wall switches. Roof vent flashing contains lead.

"Construction and demolition waste or C&D, has an environmental impact," said Townsend. "C&D wastes account for 23 percent by mass of the solid wastes in Florida and are now recognized as a source of groundwater contamination."

But making the program succeed may depend more, at least in the beginning, on making it financially attractive rather than on touting its environmental benefits.

"We know that recycling C&D will save money that can also be passed on to consumers in lower construction costs," Townsend said. "But separating the material at the construction site, rather than shipping it to a materials recovery facility, reduces the likelihood that recyclable material will end up at the landfill."

"Recycling has become more important and potentially cheaper than putting C&D in landfills since the cost of using landfills has risen," he said. "Several Florida counties have even made it illegal to put C&D waste in landfills that do not have liners."

Since February, Townsend and his students have been scrounging around construction sites in Alachua County, some in the shadow of the UF campus, separating all manner of debris at residential and commercial construction and demolition sites to see what is still useful.

They also are experimenting in the laboratory to determine over time what happens to C&D debris that ends up in landfills. Townsend simulates landfills by placing waste building materials in 7-foot-high metal cylinders and regularly testing the "fermentation" -- the odors and gasses they produce. Computerized tests confirm high amounts of sulfides and high acidity. The "nose test" also confirms the presence of sulphur.

Townsend said state environmental policy makers are striv-

ing to reach a balance between environmental protection and increased regulations and costs for C&D waste disposal. Indeed, the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is working with Townsend and his team on the project and hopes to see it succeed.

"We're very excited about it. We feel that, yes, we're headed in the right direction," said Tom Edwards, an environmental specialist with DEP and contact manager with the UF project. "C&D is very hard to recycle. We tend to see it as solid waste, not a recoverable material."

Edwards and his department are helping Townsend get out the word to contractors and others in the construction and demolition industries. A workshop on changing state regulations on C&D waste was held in Tampa last month, and three more are planned during the next several months in other parts of the state.

The study is scheduled to be finished by March. Until then, Townsend and his students will keep digging through building site throw-aways in hopes of making demolition and construction a little more earth-friendly.

"No one wants to live near a landfill, and no one wants the water table contaminated," Townsend said. "So it behooves us to recycle and to develop new markets for recyclable materials."



## Employee Highlights



Michelle Steele is the new Customer Service Supervisor for the Property Standards Division of the Department of Codes & Building Safety. Currently, she supervises the three division customer service representatives and the main department operator.

Ms. Steele came to Metro in September of 1999 when Bill Purcell was first elected Mayor. She served as a neighborhood liaison in the office answering daily calls for constituent services. She moved up the ranks quickly, first becoming the Training Coordinator for the very successful Neighborhood Training Institute, Grants Coordinator for the Community Enhancement Grant, Program Coordinator for all programs implemented in the Mayors Office of Neighborhoods and finally Director of the Office of Neighborhoods. In April 2007, Michelle went to work for the Metro General Services Department, serving as the first Director of 311, Metro's new Information and Referral line.

Always working to improve the livability of Nashville's neighborhoods, Ms. Steele also shares her time with a number of community based projects. She serves as a board member of the YWCA, Northwest YMCA, and Young Leaders Council and Chair of the Delta Academy GEMS program of the Nashville Metropolitan Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Ms. Steele is also very active with her church where she serves in the Children and Youth, and Marriage Ministries.

Ms. Steele is married to Larry E. Steele, Jr. and they reside in Goodlettsville, TN.

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**Mayor—Karl F. Dean**

Director—Terrence Cobb  
Asst. Director—Bill Penn  
Office Hours: Mon-Fri / 7:30-4:00



## Plant of The Month The Purple Coneflower

Coneflowers are easy to grow and require little care. They must have a full sun location with well-drained soil; however, they often survive in less than ideal soils. They are light feeders, so once they are established fertilizer should be kept to a minimum and competing weeds should be removed. There are few pest or disease problems and even deer don't seem to care for them.



Coneflowers usually begin blooming in mid to late June (though sometimes as early as May) and continue through August. They can be easily propagated by division in the fall or early spring, and by seed, although that is usually more difficult and time consuming. Plants should never be collected from the wild as these native populations are dwindling.

Echinecea was used as a medicinal plant by many Native American tribes for ailments such as toothaches, coughs, sore throats and colds. It was quickly adopted by settlers as a medicinal plant as well and is still marketed as an herbal supplement for stimulating the immune system and fighting infection. Recent studies have indicated some mixed results when echinecea is used as a supplement and long-term use is under question. Always check with a doctor first before using any herbal supplement.

For summertime color, care-free maintenance, and to attract birds, bees and butterflies, purple coneflower is a great choice for the worry free garden.

*NOTE: James Newburn is a research associate in the Department of Plant Sciences at the University of Tennessee. He is curator of the UT Gardens which are located in Knoxville on Neyland Drive. The Gardens are a project of the UT AgResearch program. They are open to the public from dawn till dusk.*

**Terry Cobb and Bill Penn** welcome your feedback on our e-newsletter. Please send your comments to [Bill Penn](mailto:Bill.Penn@metro-nashville.org), Assistant Director, Property Standards Div, 862-6590

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For information regarding accessibility, please contact Manley Biggers at (615) 862-6521 or fax (615) 862-6499. He can also be reached at [manley.biggers@nashville.gov](mailto:manley.biggers@nashville.gov)