

Prescribed Burns and Spring Cleanups for Parks, Natural Areas and Sports Fields

Residents and drivers on Windsor's West side could see some smoke this week as prescribed burns are expected to be undertaken in the Ojibway Prairie Complex, specifically in areas around Chappus St, Ojibway Park, Spring Garden Natural Area and Black Oak Heritage Park.

The areas will be closed during the burns and it's recommended nearby neighbours keep windows shut when smoke is in the air.

[Prescribed burns](#) have been safely used as an effective management tool for Windsor's Tallgrass Prairie and Oak Savanna ecosystems for 30 years.

Windsor Park's staff will also be busy over the coming weeks cleaning up the remnants of winter in the more than 200 city parks, as well as natural areas and sports facilities.

"This is a very busy time of year for us and we know people are itching to use the parks, trails and outdoor sports fields," said Parks Corporate Leader Jan Wilson. "One of the great things about living here is the enjoyment of 4 seasons, but one of the drawbacks is the need for transition time between seasons when we need time to make places safe and useable. We're asking everyone to be patient."

Traditionally, the month of April is warming up but also wet, so staff spend much of the time with preparations that do not require heavy machinery, which could damage surfaces. Spreading mulch, picking up debris and other light tasks are underway.

"We have dog parks, passive-use parks and heavily used sports parks, and each one needs to have time to dry out and be serviced," said Wilson. "For the most part, users are very understanding and stick to paved areas, but we do have issues from time to time where enforcement is necessary."

All parks are open, but some have restricted areas and users should expect wet and muddy conditions, so staying on paved areas is recommended. **Black Oak Heritage Park currently has restricted areas**, with signage in place, and Windsor Police will be enforcing the area closures. **Ojibway Park, Spring Garden Natural Area, Oakwood Natural Area and Black Oak Heritage Park** will all be seeing extra work this spring to tackle invasive species, while protecting the habitats of native species.

Area sports fields are currently closed to active or team use and traditionally open in May. Sports fields are never to be driven on, and dogs should be leashed and picked up after.

For a complete list of Windsor parks, visit www.citywindsor.ca, or call 311 for more details.

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