

SIMPLY BRIGHT

City holds tree lighting ceremony

Hundreds gathered at City Hall on Dec. 3 for the 2nd Annual Simpsonville Tree Lighting Ceremony hosted by the City of Simpsonville. Open to the public, the ceremony featured classic sing-along Christmas carols led by Stephen Eager, a reading of the Nativity story by Pastor A. A. Dicks Jr. of Mount Zion Church and free hot chocolate and cookies from Kaffeine Coffee Shop and Roastery sponsored by Jordan Johnson and Nikki Sword of RE/MAX Results of Greenville.

Mayor Paul Shewmaker, who led the ceremony, said the event epitomized the importance of community to Simpsonville. "The 2nd Annual Simpsonville Tree Lighting Ceremony was the perfect opportunity for people of all backgrounds to come together and find common ground in again finding the holiday spirit," Shewmaker said. "We want the tree lighting ceremony to be a tradition that continues for decades, and we



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The City of Simpsonville hosted the 2nd Annual Simpsonville Tree Lighting Ceremony at City Hall Dec. 3.

continues for decades, and we thank everyone who came out to help us move the tradition another year forward." The star of the event was the City of Simpsonville Christmas Tree that stands 22-feet tall with a 5-foot Nativity star topper. Purchased in 2019, the artificial tree is the result of an effort by Councilman Lou Hutchings of Ward 6. Hutchings said attending the tree lighting ceremony with his family was "quite a rewarding" experience.

“When I first proposed the idea to Council, based on surveys I had done, I was pretty confident that most of our residents wanted this,” Hutchings said. “Even in these times, my heart was full of joy as we listened to the Christmas message, sang the wonderful carols together and watched the smiling faces of the children mailing their letters to Santa Claus. I realized a beautiful Christmas tradition had been born in the City of Simpsonville.” In addition to the tree lighting ceremony, Councilwoman Sherry Roche of Ward 4 and RE/MAX Results hosted a table for receiving children’s letters to Santa Claus and handing out free treat bags. Roche said greeting parents and children at the event was a joy. “The smiles were priceless,” Roche said. “I truly felt blessed to serve at this year’s ceremony.” The City of Simpsonville thanks Pastor Dicks, Mr. Eager, Ms. Johnson, Ms. Sword, Kaffeine and, most importantly, Simpsonville residents and visitors for making the 2nd Annual Simpsonville Tree Lighting Ceremony “Simply Bright.”

“The smiles were priceless. I truly felt blessed to serve at this year’s ceremony.”
-Councilwoman Sherry Roche, Ward 4



Mayor Paul Shewmaker and Miss Simpsonville Teen Gracen Vaughn led the countdown to the lighting of the City of Simpsonville Christmas Tree.

“I realized a beautiful Christmas tradition had been born in the City of Simpsonville.”
-Councilman Lou Hutchings, Ward 6

The Simpsonville Christmas Tree is a 22-foot tree with a 5-foot Nativity stamper.



Sherry Roche of RE/MAX Results hands out free treat bags to kids and collects their letters to Santa Claus.



Nearly 200 people attended the 2nd Annual Simpsonville Tree Lighting Ceremony at City Hall in downtown Simpsonville Dec. 3, 2020.



Stephen Eager, a local piano teacher, leads a Christmas carol medley sing-along at the 2nd Annual Simpsonville Tree Lighting.



Above: Children play on the sidewalk of North East Main Street, a portion of which was closed for the tree lighting ceremony. **Left:** Councilman Lou Hutchings of Ward 4, second from left, takes a photo of the City of Simpsonville Christmas Tree, the attainment of which Hutchings spearheaded in 2019, thereby making the tree lighting ceremony possible.



Simpsonville

PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works to collect Christmas trees

For anyone who does not know what to do with their Christmas tree after it has been used to their satisfaction, the Simpsonville Public Works Department has your back. As it has done for the past 8 years, Public Works is collecting used Christmas trees in late December and throughout January. The public may drop off used Christmas trees in the corner of the City Park parking lot near the Community Building. Public Works crews will also pick up trees curbside. Public Works Director Andy Williams said residents should not hang on to their Christmas trees too long. "Because they dry out very quickly,



The Simpsonville Public Works Department will start collecting Christmas trees from the public Dec. 26.

Christmas trees become a dangerous fire hazard both inside and outside the home," Williams said. "Simpsonville Public Works wants to help minimize that hazard by giving residents a way to safely dispose of their Christmas trees immediately after use." Please direct any questions about Christmas tree disposal or garbage collection to the Simpsonville Public Works Department at 864-967-9531.

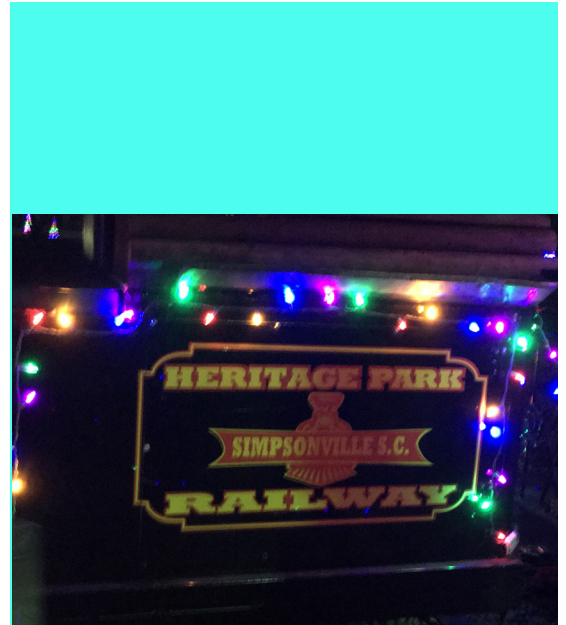


The public can drop off used Christmas trees at City Park in the corner of the parking lot near the Community Building.

Christmas at Heritage Park *Simpsonville* PARKS & REC

New Christmas lights installed at park railway

The Simpsonville Parks & Recreation Department is hosting Christmas at Heritage Park 2020 with new lights to make the holiday season brighter at the end of a long and difficult year. Held on the second and third weekends of December, Christmas at Heritage Park features train rides at Heritage Park Railway, which has been decorated with brand new Christmas lights, including a lighted village. Special Events Coordinator Lisa Everidge said Parks & Rec is “thrilled” to offer the public a way to celebrate Christmas and the holidays outdoors. “We want Christmas at Heritage Park to be an opportunity for families to feel the Christmas spirit and safely spend time together,” Everidge said. “Afterwards, families can visit our wonderful local shops and restaurants. Simpsonville has everything one needs to celebrate the holidays!”














Simpsonville

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Christmas Tree Safety Tips










The Simpsonville Fire Department has provided a few fire safety tips to ensure the holidays are both fun *and* safe this year.

-  When picking a real Christmas tree, choose a tree with fresh green needles that do not fall off easily when touched.
-  Cut 2 inches from the base of the trunk before placing the tree in the stand.
-  Make sure the tree is at least 3 feet away from any heat source, including fireplaces, radiators, candles, lights and heat vents .
-  Make sure the tree, whether real or artificial, is not blocking any exits.
-  Immediately add water to the tree stand upon placement and add water to the stand every day.
-  Decorate the tree with lights that have the label of a recognized testing laboratory and indicate indoor use.
-  Replace strings of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections; read the manufacturer's instructions for the number of allowable strands to connect.
-  Do not use lit candles to decorate a tree.
-  Always turn off lights before leaving your home or going to sleep.
-  Dispose of the tree after Christmas Day or once the tree becomes dry as dried-out trees are fire hazards.
-  Bring outdoor lights inside after Christmas Day for safety and longevity.



Winter Holiday Safety Tips

The Simpsonville Fire Department has provided safety tips to enjoy a safe holiday season this winter no matter what and how you celebrate.

-  Choose decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant.
-  Keep lit candles away from decorations, pets, children and other objects.
-  Use clips, not nails, to hang lights to avoid damaging wires.
-  Test smoke alarms and inform any guests of fire safety plans and exits.
-  Stay in the kitchen while cooking.
-  Ask smokers to smoke outside and remind them to keep their smoking materials in their possession.
-  Provide large deep ashtrays for smokers and always wet cigarette butts with water before discarding them.
-  Blow out all candles before going to sleep or leaving the room for an extended period of time.
-  Turn off all decorations, including both inside and outside ones, before going to sleep or leaving home.

More than 40 percent of decoration fires happen because decorations are placed too close to a heat source.



Simpsonville residents may drop off used Christmas trees starting Dec. 26th in City Park at 198 Park Drive in the corner of the parking lot near the Community Building. The Public Works Department will also retrieve used Christmas trees curbside from residents. To arrange for your tree to be picked up, please call 864-967-9531.

Simpsonville

POLICE DEPARTMENT

POLICE COLLECT TOYS, FOOD FOR FAMILIES IN NEED

The Simpsonville Police Department collected toys, food and toiletries to help make the holidays a little more joyful for families in need this year. On behalf of Toys for Tots and Simpsonville Police Victim's Advocacy, Simpsonville police sent a call out to the community for new unwrapped toys, canned food and men, women and children's toiletries as part of its "Stuff-a-Cruiser" campaign. Cpl. Brandon Davis, who has headed up the campaign the last two years, said he cannot thank the public enough for taking from their own pockets to give.



Simpsonville Police Department Ofc. Yojan Barrero and dispatch training coordinator Jackie Heil volunteered for Stuff-a-Cruiser at Walmart Dec. 12

"The outpouring of support and selflessness from the Simpsonville community for Stuff-A-Cruiser has been nothing short of profound," Davis said. "The unwavering dedication by the community to help each other has been inspiring. Donors should know their donations, no matter how big or small, brought comfort and a smile to a child's face in a time of need." Simpsonville police collected toys and other items from the public on Dec. 4, Dec. 11 and Dec. 12 at T.J. Maxx, Kohl's and Walmart, respectively. Simpsonville Community Relations Specialist Justin Campbell said the toy drive was a success, which will bring joy to the less fortunate during a difficult year. "None of us are immune from hard times, a fact that 2020 has reminded us of again and again," Campbell said. "Christmas and the holidays are about doing what your place in life allows you to do to help those who are struggling. That's what Simpsonville police did this year."

