

TOWN OF NISKAYUNA
One Niskayuna Circle
Niskayuna, New York 12309-
4381

Luke J. Smith
Supervisor

Town Council

Liz Orzel Kasper
William R. Chapman
Diane P. O'Donnell
Maria P. Freund

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Niskayuna Town News



Spring 2007

Supervisor Says:

As I write this column, the Town Board is completing its review with due diligence regarding the Ingersoll/Stanford Crossing project across from Mohawk Commons. By the time you read this, the vote will have already occurred on the project and the Town Board will have moved on to other, hopefully less controversial, issues.

This has been one of the most controversial issues I have faced during my four terms as Supervisor. Residents have had strong feelings on both sides of the issue. There are those who want to expand our tax base by building on this site that has been zoned commercial for nearly fifty years; others want to preserve the property, perhaps by the Town purchasing it and keeping it for town use, although no concrete proposals have surfaced. We have received petitions from both sides imploring the Board to vote in their favor.

Fortunately or unfortunately, depending on your perspective, this will not be decided on which side gets the most signatures. Board members and I have often been criticized by residents for voting in favor of a project they do not want. They ask, "why did you not listen to us?" Believe me, we do listen. Personally, I listen for information that will allow me to make a decision consistent with our laws, codes, and comprehensive plan. I try to make decisions that are legally defensible, not ones that are politically expedient. The decision before us now will be made by the Town Board based on our laws and codes, and will take into account the property rights of the owners of the property. Throughout the last seven plus years, the Town Board has made similar decisions that have balanced the need for prudent expansion of our tax base, while preserving the residential character of the Town.

Some people feel we have not been prudent and responsible in the planning decisions that have been made recently. Those who say our town is over-commercialized and over-developed forget that we changed zoning on Troy Road to prohibit commercial development. We encouraged average density townhouse development, which resulted in less road paving and more green space. As smart growth advocates recommend, we redeveloped the Mohawk Mall property; we worked with GE to rehabilitate the Research and Development Center; we rezoned the Northwest Corner of town from Industrial to Office Technology/Light Manufacturing, and working cooperatively with County Economic Development Specialists, we have seen the rebirth of the previously vacant NOVA Bus facility off Hillside Avenue.

However the vote goes on the Ingersoll/Stanford Crossing, I am pleased that we were able to convince the developer to save the original Stanford House. I am confident the Board will make a decision that will be in the best interest of **ALL** Niskayuna residents.

Sincerely,
Luke J. Smith



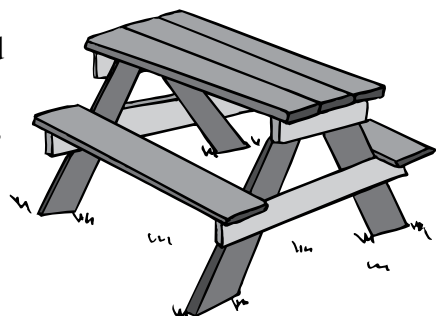
Supervisor

THE NISKAYUNA COMMUNITY CENTER

Located at 2682 Aqueduct Road, Niskayuna, this handicapped-accessible, two-level building is available for private party rentals by Niskayuna residents throughout the year. The building includes a large, upstairs open room and a large downstairs room with banquet tables. Amenities include a pool table, ping pong tables, large screen television, VCR, shuffleboard table, foosball table, and basketball game.

PICNICS

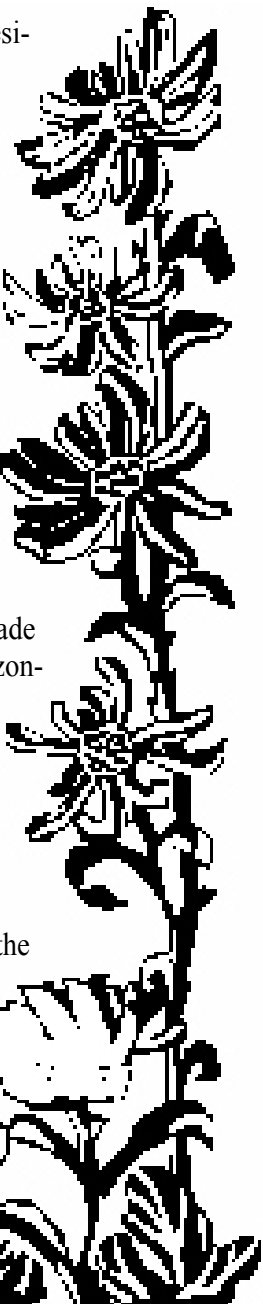
You can rent the pavilion at Blatnick Park, River Road Park, Avon Crest Park and the Recreation Complex for parties, picnics, family gatherings and other events.



LIBRARY GARDENERS to Plan for Season

The Niskayuna Library Gardeners will have an orientation and planning meeting on Wednesday, May 2, at 7:00 p.m. in the Niskayuna Library Community Room. Anyone interested in volunteering in the gardens during the upcoming season is encouraged to attend. We need more helping hands, both women and men, to assist not only with planting and weeding, but also with pruning, edging, and mulching. Early in the season, we are especially happy to have extra helpers to clean up from the winter and get our annuals planted. The meeting will provide an opportunity to get acquainted with other volunteer gardeners. Light refreshments will be served.

If you are interested, but unable to attend the meeting, please call Elaine at 377-4541 for more information. Regular weekly gardening sessions will begin on Thursday, May 3, at 9:30 a.m. at the library.



YOUR TOWN COMMITTEES AT WORK

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Luke Smith, Chair

- Discussing contracting to have Town Board meeting televised
- Reviewing start-up of reassessment/reval project
- Considering increasing permit fees for Recycling/Transfer Station
- Discussing the re-bidding of contract for insurance

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Luke Smith, Chair

- Adult care home on Consaul Rd. is under construction
- Town Board approved/disapproved Special Use Permit for Stanford Crossings Project
- Reviewing a change in zone to prohibit hotels/motels in R-3 zoning district
- GE R&D rehabilitating rather than demolishing Building D at Research Center

RECREATION COMMITTEE

Liz Orzel Kasper, Chair

- New lacrosse fields nearing completion at the Niskayuna Community Center complex
- New Pop Warner concession & storage building adjacent to the football field ready to go
- Continued progress made on developing new safe routes for biking and hiking throughout the town
- Niskayuna Senior Center needs volunteers to help with senior activities and serving lunch
- 3rd Annual Senior Citizens Arts & Crafts Show at Niskayuna Town Hall during March & April
- Seventh Annual Senior Snowball held in February in cooperation with Alterra Wynwood Center and Union College.

HIGHWAY COMMITTEE

Diane O'Donnell, Chair

- Historic Grange Hall rehabilitation project proceeding in cooperation with Environmental Clearing House (ECOS)

- Vacuum truck being purchased to clean and maintain storm drains as called for in Clean Water Act requirements
- Spring and summer road reconstruction and paving schedule is being completed

SPECIAL DISTRICTS COMMITTEE

Maria Freund, Chair

- Hydrant flushing is scheduled for April 2 -April 27
- Expect water bills by the 3rd week of April. Bills are due May 11, 2007
- Plans for new town wells are underway with drilling anticipated summer 2007
- Water & Sewer purchased new equipment to improve service and repairs.
- A new roll-off truck and a used 14-ton excavator have been purchased and received
- Purchased a trench box and trailer. Expected delivery date late March/early April
- Purchase of new grout truck and camera has been approved

ASSESSOR'S OFFICE #386-4550 2008 Town reassessment program has begun

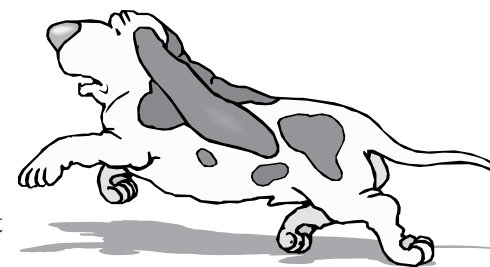
The Assessor, with the assistance of GAR Associates, the appraisal firm hired by the Town, began the town-wide reassessment project on March 26, with GAR staff taking digital photographs of all improved parcels from the right-of-way. All GAR staff members will have photo identification, and the license numbers of their vehicles will be registered with the Niskayuna Police Department, Assessor's Office, Town Clerk's Office and the Supervisor's Office.

The location of the field reviewers will be posted biweekly on our web site at www.niskayuna.org; click on "Town Departments," "Assessor," and "Reassessment Field Review Schedule." If you are unable to access the web site, you can call GAR Associates at 1-800-718-5149. A schedule will be posted on the Niskayuna bulletin board at Town Hall. The bulletin board is located to the right of the inner front door.

NISKAYUNA DOG PARK

The Niskayuna Dog Park is located in Blatnick Park on River Road across the path from the Niskayuna Skate Park. It is open year round, from dawn until dusk. The park is completely fenced and gated, and there is a septic system for waste. All dogs must be leashed when outside the dog park, but may run freely within the fenced area. Niskayuna Dog Park tags are required for dogs to use the park, and are available at the Town Clerk's Office in Niskayuna Town Hall, Nott Street East, weekdays from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 pm. To obtain a permit, owners must show proof of Niskayuna residency, and dogs must be licensed and have proof of current rabies and distemper vaccinations. Niskayuna dog park permits are valid from August 1 through July 31 each year. The annual permit fee is \$30 for first dog and \$15 for each additional dog per family. Niskayuna residents 65 years and older may purchase annual dog park permits at half price. Call the Town Clerk's Office for further information.

Please clean up after your dog; and as a courtesy to others, do not use someone else's property as a toilet for your dog.



**NISKA-DAY IS
SATURDAY, MAY 19TH!**

DRIVING RANGE

The Niskayuna Driving Range, called the "Best Kept Secret in Niskayuna", and voted "Best Driving Range in the Capital Region" by the Albany Times Union, will open for the season in mid-April. Located on River Road near the entrance to the Recycling Station, just east of Blatnick Park, the driving range offers golfers an inexpensive and delightful way to practice and improve their driving skills.



NISKAYUNA SENIOR NEWS

Sue Leonard and Edie Cannizzo, Directors

Join us each Tuesday and Thursday, year-round, at the Niskayuna Recreation Center, 2682 Aqueduct Road. Activities begin at 9:00 a.m. and include Senior Fitness Classes, Line Dancing, Indoor Bowling, Pickle Ball, Bocce and Shuffleboard; Crafts with Edie, and Bridge, Scrabble, Pinochle, Golf, Phase 10 and more. A Chef-prepared, hot lunch is served at noon (suggested donation is \$3), followed by an early afternoon activity with speakers, games, movies, or other entertainment. A free blood pressure clinic is offered monthly by the Visiting Nurses. Monthly meal/activity calendars are available at the Senior Center, Town Hall, and online at www.niskayuna.org. We invite all area seniors to participate, and welcome suggestions for interesting and new programs. There is no membership fee and most activities are free of charge. We provide door-to-door bus transportation for Niskayuna residents aged 60 and older. Donation suggested. Please come and join us.

UPCOMING 2007 SENIOR ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

March 1 - April 30, 2007: 3rd Annual Senior Citizen Arts & Crafts Show at Niskayuna Town Hall in the Town Board Room.

Wednesday, April 4, 2007: Capital Repertory Theatre presents, "It Ain't Nothin' But the Blues," a musical journey tracing the turbulent and electrifying rise of this unique American art form. \$20

Monday & Wednesday, May 14 & 16, 2007: "55 Alive," AARP Defensive Driving Course. 9:15 a.m. - 1:15 p.m. at Niskayuna Senior Center. Must attend both days. \$10

Tuesday, May 22, 2007: 22nd Anniversary Celebration of the Niskayuna Senior Center. Festivities begin at 11:30 a.m. with a special luncheon and entertainment by the Hillside Elementary School Chorus. Reservations required. Call the Senior Center for details. Suggested luncheon donation \$4.

Wednesday, July 25, 2007: Lunch and Show at Holiday Inn at Lake George to see "Shear Madness," a hilarious whodunit set in a unisex hair salon. It's a combination of Three Stooges, Marx Brothers, I Love Lucy, and Improvisation. Be prepared for two hours of madcap lunacy! \$50

RECREATION DEPARTMENT

ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN WILL INCLUDE:

- Soccer
- Babysitting Course
- Fencing
- Family Fun Run
- Spring Parade & Meet the Bunny
- Chess Instruction
- Skateboard Camp
- Roller Skating
- Middle School Parties
- Field Hockey



ACTIVITIES FOR ADULTS INCLUDE:

- Tai Chi
- Men's Basketball
- Golf Lessons
- Defensive Driving Class for individuals aged 55 and older
- Chess Club
- Family Fun Run
- Exercise
- Table Tennis League



All programs are detailed in our annual Spring Recreation Activity flyer, available at the Recreation Office, Niskayuna Town Hall, and on line at www.niskayuna.org. Call the Recreation Department at 372-2519 for information.

SUMMER CONCERTS: The Niskayuna Recreation Department will once again sponsor a series of family concerts on the green in the gazebo at Town Hall. The complete concert schedule will be available in early May on line and in the Summer Program Booklet.

SUMMER ACTIVITIES: The second week of May, copies of the Summer Program Booklet will be available at the Recreation Office, Town Hall information table, online, and at all elementary and middle schools for students to bring home. Information on the town pool, the driving range, playground program, sports camps, parks, summer concert series at the gazebo, and fall recreational soccer will be included in the booklet.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT: Niskayuna youth interested in employment ranging from babysitting to yard work to part-time jobs in area businesses are encouraged to call the Niskayuna Youth Employment Service at 372-2519 or visit Betty Ferencik in the media center at Niskayuna High School. Similarly, if you have a job to be filled, call the Youth Employment Service for names of available workers. In addition, the Recreation Department needs youths and adults to work in a variety of part-time spring and summer jobs as referees, counselors, lifeguards, and specialists. For more information, call the Recreation Department.

TOWN POOL MEMBERSHIP ID CARDS: Membership registration cards are available on line at www.niskayuna.org. If your photo (less than 3 years old) is already on file, simply complete the card and return with check to the Niskayuna Recreation Department. Your passes will be waiting for you the first time you use the pool. For those who need photos taken, you can come to the Niskayuna Community Center on *May 17 & May 23 from 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m., on June 2 from 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m., and on June 9 from 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.* Thereafter, photos will only be taken on Wednesdays from 2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. beginning on June 13. We urge you to avoid possible delays and have your picture taken on one of the earlier dates.

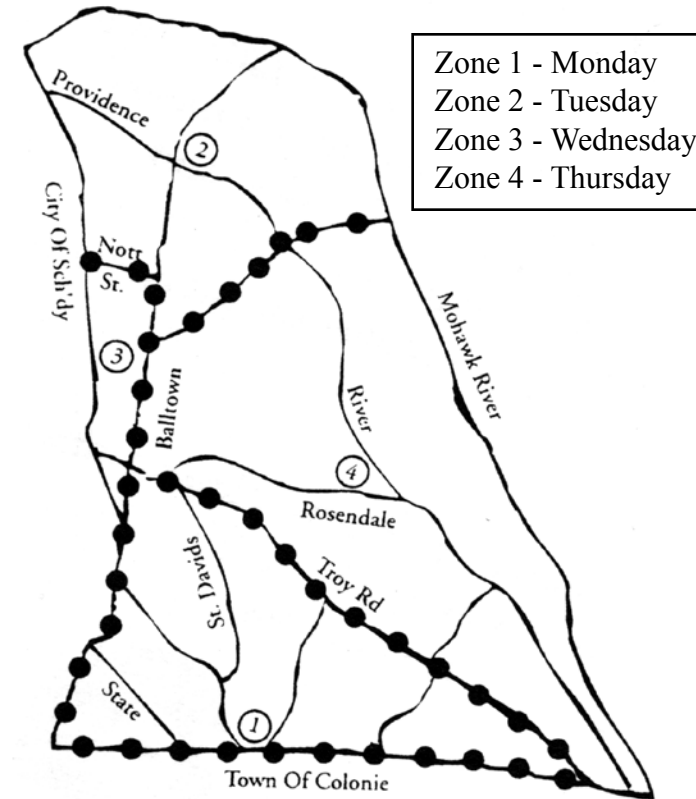
NISKAYUNA SKATE PARK: Located in Blatnick Park on River Road, the Niskayuna Skate Park will open in early to mid-May, weather permitting. **For use by skateboards and rollerblades only- no bicycles.** As with the Skate Park, the Town's tennis courts are for tennis only - **no bicycles, skateboards or rollerblades**, please.

Users of the Skate Park will be required to wear helmets and elbow and knee pads and follow all posted rules, which will be strictly enforced. Children under 11 years of age must be accompanied by an adult when using this facility. Admission is free. Please note, the Skate Park will be open only when conditions are safe. If in doubt, we suggest you check with the Recreation Department to verify that the park is open. Adult supervision provided.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

WEEKLY WASTE PICKUP

From Monday, April 9, through Friday, May 11 (weather permitting), highway trucks will circulate the town to randomly pick up yard waste placed at the curb. Scheduled zone pick up will begin on Monday, May 14 (see map).



Zone 1 - Monday
Zone 2 - Tuesday
Zone 3 - Wednesday
Zone 4 - Thursday

Except for the brown, biodegradable paper bags (do **not** use plastic bags), all containers used for yard waste must be labeled with the Town's yard waste sticker. These stickers are available at any of the following locations: the Town Clerk's Office, Highway Department, Recreation Department or Transfer Station.

Bags heavier than 40 lbs., or cans and barrels larger than 32 gallons will not be picked up. Brush must be bundled and tied and cannot be more than 3' X 3' when bundled; and to prevent injury to our highway workers, the weight should not exceed 30 lbs. Please use biodegradable material to tie your branches – no wires, please.

HIGHWAY OBSTRUCTION

Just a reminder that it is illegal to place any obstruction within the highway right-of-way (Section 319 of the NYS Highway Law). If the Highway Department notifies you that you are in violation of this law, please act promptly to correct the infraction. Failure to do so could result in the Town's removal of the obstruction at your expense.

PAVING SCHEDULE

The paving schedule is not yet available. Please call the Highway Department at 785-9753 for information in this regard.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Spring is here and it's time for those projects you've been waiting to start. Remember that many of the projects you are planning require a building permit. These include additions, fences, sheds, pools, roofing, siding, windows and decks.

In an effort to make things easier for you, the Building Department has posted many downloadable forms on the Town's web site at www.niskayuna.org. Just click on "Departments," "Building Inspector," and "Downloadable Forms." There you will find the Building and Zoning Permit Application, Fee Schedule, and information on the Town's requirements for many of the items that need permits.

As always, call, write or e-mail us any time you have questions or concerns, and we will do our best to help you.

TRANSFER STATION

Beginning April 1, 2007, the cost of Transfer Station permits will increase from \$15.00 to \$20.00 per year.



TOWN DEPARTMENTS

WATER & SEWER DEPARTMENT HYDRANT FLUSHING

From Monday, April 12, through Friday, April 27, the Water Department will conduct its annual hydrant and water main flushing in two shifts — the regular day shift 7 a.m. -3:30 p.m., and the midnight shift 11 p.m.-7 a.m. If you encounter any associated problems, call the Water Department at 377-8411 between the hours of 7 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Our standard precaution is that you avoid doing laundry when your area is being flushed.

For detailed information on the flushing schedule, please visit our web page www.niskayuana.org and go to the Water & Sewer Department.

INFLOW & INFILTRATION (I & I)

I & I refer to storm water and ground water that flow or leak into the sanitary sewer system and cause problems with capacity and treatment. Our sewage collection system and treatment plants are designed to handle a certain maximum flow. If too much water gets into the collection system, the pipes begin to back up and may overflow at low points. These low points may be in someone's basement or at a sewage pump station.

The Sewer Department does everything in its power to prevent overflows. We clean the lines to maximize capacity, maintain over a dozen pump stations, and do emergency pumping during storms to prevent backup.

Too much water also causes problems at the Wastewater Treatment Plant, which sometimes receives up to three times the flow it is designed to handle. If these excessive flows continue for prolonged periods, the treatment process could be thrown out of balance, jeopardizing our ability to achieve State and Federal mandated water quality standards.

The Town of Niskayuna and the City of Schenectady are operating under consent orders from NYS DEC that require us to demonstrate annual progress in identifying and reducing I & I. This is a very expensive process. Old sewer pipes

— both privately owned sewer laterals and publicly owned main lines — must be tested for potential leaks and either rehabilitated or replaced. Sump pumps, gutters, drain inlets, or any other feature that may be improperly connected or directed to the sanitary sewer system must be removed. The Sewer Department has flow meters and cameras that go inside the pipes to locate the problems, and is in the process of acquiring equipment that can pressure-test pipe and repair leaks and cracks without digging up the pipe.

The I & I program must be a combined effort. Our Sewer Department will replace the publicly owned portion of the system, and homeowners are expected to replace their laterals and remove any improper connections. If evidence of I & I is discovered on your property, the Sewer Department will notify you of the problem.

ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT

The second phase of the implementation of a new Payroll and Accounting Software package occurred on January 1, 2007. The new Accounting Software provides Department Heads with easy access to financial information within their scope of responsibility. The third and final phase of the conversion will be to add new Human Resources and Fixed Asset software. This phase will be implemented during the second half of 2007, and will be used to maintain information that was previously recorded by hand or on spreadsheets.

The Town is also in the process of preparing specifications to obtain alternate insurance proposals for its package policy that expires mid-year. The solicitation of proposals is performed about every five years and is intended to provide us with the best overall coverage at the lowest possible cost.

TAX DEPARTMENT

Second notices have been mailed to all residents whose property taxes are still unpaid. Please call the Tax Office on 386-4540 if you would like the penalty calculated. The collection closes on April 30, 2007. Any payments after that must be made to the County Finance Office with a higher penalty for late payment.



POLICE DEPARTMENT

During the spring and summer, as more people take advantage of the warmer days, there seems to be an increase in crimes involving larceny and vandalism during nighttime hours. Nothing is more frustrating to the Police Department than discovering, on investigation of a suspicious noise heard by a neighbor or neighbors, that something has been stolen from an unlocked vehicle, or property damage has occurred.

Many residents need to be reminded to **LOCK** any vehicle which may be parked in a driveway or in front of a house. You should also remember to remove from plain view anything of value such as computers, wallets/purses, electronics, loose change, or other items that may be easily removed and concealed by someone with the intent to steal. Take a second before retiring for the night to make sure your garage or storage shed doors are closed to deter a potential theft of tools, bicycles, or other items stored in these locations. Also, most importantly, put yourself in the shoes of responding emergency personnel from either the police or fire departments. In case of an emergency, can your home or business address be seen from the road? Make sure house numbers are well lit and large enough to be easily seen from the road. In an emergency, every second counts!

Please contact the Police Department (the only town department open 24 hours a day) at any time to report noises or vehicles that may arouse your suspicion for any reason.

ELECTRONIC COLLECTION DAY

The New York State Association for Reduction, Reuse, and Recycling is sponsoring a **Regional Earth Day Electronics and Air Conditioner Collection Event on Saturday, April 21, 2007**, at Taft Furniture, 1960 Central Avenue, between 7:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Acceptable items are: computers, computer peripheries, televisions (NO CONSOLES), telephones, VCRs, radios and air conditioners. A combination of up to three monitors or TVs will be accepted. There is no limit on processors and computer peripheries.

For further information or to pick up your coupon, which is necessary for participation in this event, please contact the Town Clerk's Office at 386-4510. Items from businesses, not-for-profit organizations, schools and municipalities will not be accepted.

COUNTY HAZARDOUS WASTE PROGRAM 2007

Schenectady County will hold its first monthly Household Chemical Collection Day of 2007 on Friday, April 20. The program allows County residents — not businesses, governments or other institutions — to bring unwanted household hazardous materials to the County Farm on Hetcheltown Road for safe and environmentally sound disposal. Residents are required to pre-register by calling 1-800-494-2273 to participate in the program. A \$15.00 annual permit is required to use the Hetcheltown facility.

Other collection dates in addition to April 20 are May 18, June 8, July 6, August 4, September 7, October 12, November 2 and November 30.

Last year's hazardous waste collection was a tremendous success. The program serviced 795 cars. Paint was the most common material received — over 5,400 gallons. Other items (327 drums) were solvents, anti-freeze, pesticides, mercury-containing items and household cleaners. There was an approximate 10% increase of these materials over the 2005 collection.

If stored or disposed of incorrectly, hazardous materials can be harmful to people and the environment. Included in these harmful, hazardous items are florescent lighting, mercury-containing materials such as old thermometers with silver monitoring columns, computers and computer equipment (especially monitors), TVs, air conditioners, and rechargeable batteries.

The County Farm program accepts thermostats, florescent light bulbs and ballast, but does not accept computer equipment, TVs or air conditioners (see segment on **Electronic Collection Day** for proper disposal). Rechargeable batteries can be returned to Radio Shack and Staples stores.

For a list of accepted items, or any other information on hazardous waste, please call 386-2225 to speak to Jeff Edwards, County Hazardous Waste Coordinator, or visit www.schenectadycounty.com.