



BUDGET CUTS WILL HIT: The Department of Public Works

When the Department of Public Works (DPW) is properly funded, most citizens of Arlington won't even be aware of their work.

Among the things for which the DPW is responsible are:

- repair pot holes and sidewalks, sweep streets, plow snow, and maintain traffic lights
- maintain 18,000 town trees, 25 playgrounds, Robbins Garden, the Mount Pleasant Cemetery and the town's open spaces
- take care of the 31 athletic fields (mow grass, line fields, remove trash)
- maintain water and sewer infrastructure
- supervise solid waste disposal, including trash, recycling, appliances, and yard waste
- maintain the town vehicles
- performs building inspections and issues permits
- make, install and repair street and specialty signs, oversee traffic line painting

Without an override, the DPW will have to:

- ***Eliminate positions in the Highways Department.*** By reducing the staff from 23 to 19, Arlington will have to let potholes go significantly longer without being repaired; have less street sweeping; have fewer people available to monitor and clear storm drains after heavy rains.
- ***Remove more trash cans from inside the parks.*** DPW will lack the manpower to enter the park regularly to empty them. Many trashcans are already gone due to cuts made because of the snow removal deficit caused by this past severe winter.
- ***Stop daily raking and lining of ball fields.*** DPW will eliminate two positions in Natural Resources, meaning a contractor hired by the Rec Department will line the soccer and lacrosse fields – which will result in higher user fees. Coaches and parents will have to prepare baseball fields on days DPW cannot.
- ***Limit tree pruning and inspections.*** We will go from two tree-pruning teams to only one team and a tree warden to oversee more than 18,000 trees in town, decreasing pruning and inspections that attempt to catch limbs in danger of falling.
- ***Eliminate holiday lights in the Center.***

With an override, the DPW can:

- ***Restore these services and increase road repair.*** An additional \$400,000 will be allocated to address for the backlog of town-wide road resurfacing projects. Many of Arlington's roads are in a critical state due to the damage caused by this past winter's severe weather.
- ***Improve snow removal.*** DPW can fill positions that were vacant last winter and operate more snow equipment. Three additional employees will be available for sidewalk clearing.
- ***Hire summer help.*** Temporary staff will mow parks and fields and empty trash cans.

Budget pressures force choices. The Cemeteries department will be reduced enough in FY12 that they will not carry caskets to the grave or lower concrete casket vault covers, a service we have been able to provide in the past. Graveside services will not be restored even with an override. However an override will allow for regular mowing and maintenance to keep our cemeteries attractive.

It's up to us. Vote Yes on June 7.