

THE UPDATE

THE LATEST IN UNIVERSITY PARK
JAN 30, 2026

WSSC ALERT: CONSERVATION EFFORTS UNDERWAY

The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) requests that residents limit water use to essential activities only to reduce strain on temperature-weakened pipes.

Focus on Essential Water Use

- Drinking, cooking & hygiene first
- Limit laundry: run only full loads
- Dishwashing: run full loads; skip running water rinse; use a basin.

Reduce Daily Consumption

- Shorten showers by 1-2 min
- Turn off taps while brushing teeth or scrubbing hands.
- Recapture “grey” water to hydrate plants.

Check for Leaks

- Dripping faucets and running toilets can waste hundreds of gallons each month.

Encourage Others

- Talk to neighbors and family about essential-only usage.
- Share tips: “Did you know turning off the tap while brushing saves 4 gallons per day?”

HARD ICE SURVIVAL GUIDE: TACKLING THE UP FREEZE

This winter has given us what may be the hardest ice many of us have ever seen. With sub-freezing temps keeping everything frozen, clearing walkways and driveways can feel impossible. Here’s a guide to help you stay safe while keeping paths clear.

1: Add Traction & Melt

- Salt or ice melt:
One mug covers 10–12 square feet
- Also try: calcium chloride (works even in extreme cold), sand, kitty litter, or ashes.



2. Go Layer-by-Layer:

- Break ice gently: Use a garden hoe, hand trowel, or small hand shovel to chip away at packed ice.
- After the ice level, shovel away the powdery snow
- Lastly, apply traction or ice melt to remaining patches

3: Safety First:

- Pace yourself: Work in short intervals; take frequent breaks indoors.
- Warm up first: Stretch to reduce risk of injury.
- Wear appropriate attire and footwear: Waterproof, insulated boots and gloves are essential.
- Work with a neighbor: keep an eye out for each other.

4: Extra Tips:

- Start around 2pm (after the afternoon sun has warmed what it can, but before the chill of sundown)
- Clear a path to essentials: Focus on doors, mailboxes, and frequently used walkways first.
- Check for weak spots in the ice cover
- Watch for hidden slippery patches under snow or ice
- Use gardening tools such as kneepads to protect joints

LEARNING, GROWING, SHARING: MORE POSSIBILITIES

Students: The Earth Club will help maintain the garden, caring for water needs and cover crops.

Community Volunteers: Residents will have opportunities to help cultivate the garden over the summer months.

Sharing the Harvest: Produce grown may be offered at community Harvest Days, used by the school, donated to families, or contributed to local food banks.

Educational **signage** and **connections** to the University Park Meadow will also provide insight into sustainable practices and the natural cycles of plants and animals



COMMUNITY LEARNING GARDEN: \$20,000 GRANT HELPS BRING LEARNING GARDEN TO LIFE

University Park has received a \$20,000 Maryland Sustainable Action Grant, thanks to the dedicated efforts of Kelsey Bryant Starr. This funding will help bring the Community Learning Garden project to life as a partnership between the UPES Parent Teacher Association, the Town's Sustainability Committee, and University Park residents and volunteers, transforming an underutilized grassy area into a space for students, neighbors, and the broader community to learn and grow together.

The garden is designed to give adults and children a place to reconnect with the land, plants, and animals, while exploring sustainable gardening and food production. The hope is that hands-on experience in the garden will help foster a lasting commitment to sustainability throughout University Park. Planned features include:

- Six raised beds for classroom and community use
- Compost bins and rain barrels
- Outdoor education area with chalkboard and seating
- ADA-accessible entrance and raised bed
- Native pollinator garden
- Mini food forest with fruit bushes and trees

Perimeter fencing will protect vegetable beds from deer and nearby traffic, while edible plants will weave around the building with plant identification signage for easy learning.

This grant helps bring the Community Learning Garden to life and celebrates the power of University Park neighbors volunteering to create sustainable, educational spaces for all.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

FEB 3

Sustainability
Committee

FEB 2

Council
Meeting

FEB 4

PTPS
Committee

