

Darienite

News for Darien

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Parking Restricted in Darien Library Lot Starting Monday, Feb 18

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Categories : [Darien Library](#)

Tagged as : [Darien Library Parking](#), [Darien Library Parking 2019](#)[Geothermal Pump System](#)

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Starting Monday and continuing through mid-June, the parking lot at Darien Library could be more difficult to park in — and impossible for some when popular events are going on.

New wells are being drilled under the parking lot for the library's geothermal heating and cooling system, and that will take up some parking spaces at various spots.

"We will have a parking attendant to help direct traffic during days with significant programs or high traffic," the library recently announced.

"Our [overflow lot](#) on Thorndal Circle is available on the evenings and weekends," the library said in an announcement last week.

The library says it will provide regular updates to the public throughout the project.

Why This Is Happening

Not far beneath the ground surface, rocks and dirt are typically at a steadier temperature than the weather aboveground. Geothermal pumps bring water up from underground to provide some heat in winter and some cooling in summer, often supplemented with other heating and cooling systems.

Some geothermal systems use groundwater, others use the same water that circulates in sealed pipes. The library is changing from the first type to the second.

At the end of January the library announced the coming project and explained why it was being done. Here's part of that announcement:

The building's temperature is regulated through the cycling of water drawn from the wells under the library's parking lot. The current system will be upgraded to a closed loop system to optimize heating and cooling.

As Director Alan Kirk Gray explained, "In the 10 years since the building opened, the library has seen a change in the sub-surface water quality drawn into the standing column wells. New technology is now available to convert the geothermal system to the use of closed loop wells."

This conversion will achieve more operating efficiencies, providing enhanced comfort throughout the building at a lower operating cost. [...]

Darien Library's geothermal heating and cooling system is an important part of the Library's recognition as a cost-effective, sustainable building that ranks in the top 5 percent of regional HVAC efficiency. [...]

Your Guide to Parking at Darien Library

- Parking at the library can be a problem: You may find the parking lot has no free spaces during popular events, as sometimes happens already (the library is more popular than was expected when the new, larger building opened up 10 years ago).
- While no parking is available for library patrons either at the Darien Police Headquarters lot, or on Hecker Avenue close to the library, or on the Post Road, there is parking on the road at Thorndal Circle (but not in the lots for the office buildings there during business hours).
- For evenings and weekends, there is a parking lot at Thorndal Circle connected to the library parking lot by a walking path. You're allowed to park there on weekends and at night.

More from the January announcement:

The funds for this project will come from the Library's endowment. "The Friends of the Library are proud to be making this Capital investment in our building," Board President Kevin Gasvoda said.

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“In addition to the generous support that we receive each year from the town of Darien for the general operations of the building and staff salaries, the Friends are committed to making significant improvements such as this whenever necessary.”