

Feb /
March
2017

NEWSLETTER OF THE
CITY OF TACOMA

HealthVine

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS CENTER • P.2
READY, SET, TRACK! • P.3
FOCUS ON THE SMALL THINGS • P.3
FINANCIAL WELLNESS • P.4



ARE YOU SICK? BE CONSIDERATE

Cold and flu etiquette is more than good manners and consideration for others; it's a matter of good health, for you, your coworkers and community.

- If you feel a cough or sneeze coming on, do it into the crook of your elbow and not your hands.
- Wash or sanitize your hands often.
- Warn others if you are coming down with something or just getting over a cold or flu.
- It would be wise to stay home if you're coughing or sneezing frequently, if you have a sore throat, if you have a fever, or are just generally not feeling well.



FEBRUARY IS HEART HEALTH MONTH

Heart disease is the number one cause of death for both men and women in the United States. It is an equal opportunity killer which claims approximately 1 million lives annually. The good news is that it is also one of the most preventable diseases. There are seven easy ways to help control your risk for heart disease.

1. **Get active:** Aim to get at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity five days a week.
2. **Control cholesterol:** High levels (over 100 mg/dl) of LDL (low-density lipoprotein), or "bad cholesterol", are dangerous, and low levels (under 40 mg/dl in men and under 55 mg/dl in women) of HDL (high-density lipoprotein), or "good cholesterol", increase the risk of heart disease and stroke.
3. **Eat better:** Healthy foods are the fuel our bodies use to make new cells and create the energy we need to thrive and fight diseases.
4. **Manage blood pressure:** High blood pressure (over 140/90 mmHg and over 130/80 mmHg in diabetics) increases the risk of heart attack, stroke, aneurysm, and kidney damage.
5. **Lose weight:** Excess weight causes extra strain on the heart; influences blood pressure, cholesterol and triglyceride levels.
6. **Reduce blood sugar:** More than 80 percent of diabetes sufferers die of some form of heart or blood vessel disease.
7. **Stop smoking:** Smokers are twice as likely to suffer heart attacks. The nicotine and carbon monoxide in tobacco smoke damages the cardiovascular system.



Source: Information in this article was adapted from Go Red For Women® and The Heart Foundation.

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS CENTER

OPENING SOON



Grand Opening on March 1 for New Employee Wellness Center in Basement Level of Tacoma Municipal Building North

Facility for *ALL* City Employees to Use

As part of the Employee Wellness Program, the City of Tacoma has established an Employee Wellness Center in Tacoma Municipal Building North (733 Market St., Basement Level) on a trial basis, to give City employees a safe, convenient place to pursue Wellness goals.

The Employee Wellness Center features lockers, showers and a fitness room equipped with stackable armless chairs, exercise mats, exercise bands and anchors, instructional posters, and the ability to view exercise instruction online through BeachBody and Daily Burn.

BeachBody and Daily Burn classes will be pre-scheduled for the first month. After that, the room can be reserved by and for employees through Microsoft Outlook like any other shared employee resource, under the name **Fitness Room TMBN**. Employee group reservations are encouraged.

[Detailed rules and guidelines for use of the Employee Wellness Center are available](#)



Check out the Employee Wellness Center on March 1, from noon - 6 p.m., during a grand opening featuring drawings for FitBits, lunch coolers, sports bottles and gym bags. There will also be free fruit snacks, massages, acupuncture and short demos on the usage of the online exercise subscriptions and exercise bands.

Normal operating hours for the Employee Wellness Center - which is accessible via City-issued employee identification badge seven days a week - are 5 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Questions about the Employee Wellness Center? Contact Wellness Coordinator Shannon Carmody at (253) 591-2002. For more information about the Employee Wellness Program, go to wellness.cityoftacoma.org.

IT'S THE SMALL THINGS THAT MATTER

It takes 21 days to break a habit and 30 days to make a new habit! So, start small and with a detailed plan:

Do you want to eat more veggies?

- Have a salad for lunch or a side salad at dinner.
- Stack your sandwich with veggies.
- Incorporate veggies into dishes without them.

Do you want to lower your blood pressure?

- Don't use salt in cooking—salt for taste before eating

Do you want to cut your calories to lose weight?

- Eat 250 less calories per day and aim to burn 250 for a 500 calorie deficit. 500 x seven days = 3500 calories or 1 pound of pure fat lost!
- Eat breakfast.
- Use low-fat or fat-free alternatives.
- Limit energy dense foods.
- Eat an open-faced sandwich/ burger.
- Choose ground sirloin rather than beef.
- Order your salad dressing on the side and dip your fork.
- Use mustard rather than mayo
- Add veggies or herbs/spices for flavor rather than condiments.
- Choose apple crisp over apple pie.
- Choose thin crust pizza over regular pizza.



READY, SET, TRACK!

Start NOW to save at least \$240 in 2018! As a reminder, you have until Sept. 30, 2017 to fulfill the requirements and earn the 2018 Wellness Incentive. So, make sure to get started NOW.

TRACK* is the newest requirement option available in the RedBrick Health Portal. It is a healthy habits tracker that allows you to track your exercise, healthy eating habits and well-being habits. In other words, it is a great way for you to earn points for what you already do or a way for you to get credit for trying something new!

Most importantly, you don't need a computer to take advantage of TRACK!

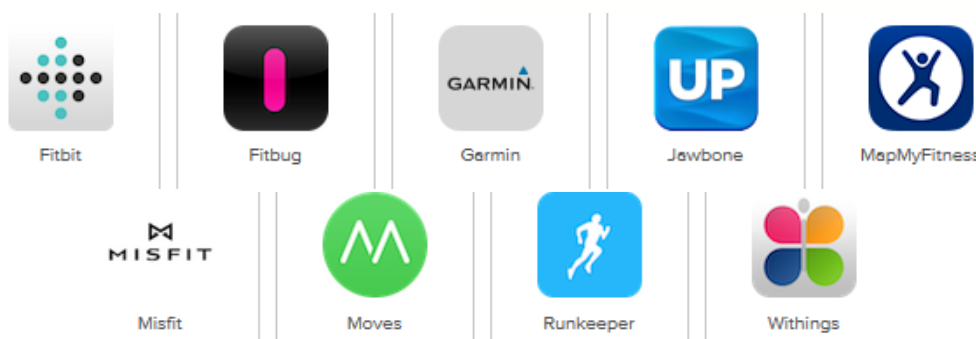
Is there a RedBrick App?

Yes! RedBrick has an **iPhone and Android App** to access TRACK and Journeys. Compass and Rewards are not currently available on the app, but they can be accessed through your phone's mobile browser: tew.redbrickhealth.com.

- Activation code: **tew**
- You must have an active RedBrick Health account
- Syncs with the Apple Health app
- Includes RedBrick Journeys and TRACK

Can I sync a device?

Yes! By syncing a device, your daily physical activity will automatically upload to the RedBrick Health Portal. These are the devices that currently sync with RedBrick:



**TRACK is NOT an available requirement option for Local 6 members.*

Important Wellness Links:

- [TRACK Presentation—Presented by Shannon Carmody](#)
- [General Population and Local 26 FAQs](#)
- [Local 6 FAQs](#)

FINANCIAL WELLNESS: PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINARS

City of Tacoma employees, their family members and friends are invited to attend any of our retirement planning seminars. All sessions will be held in the Tacoma Public Utilities Auditorium.

CITY OF TACOMA RESOURCES SEMINAR

When: Thursday, March 16 from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Assistant Retirement Director Catherine Marx will give an overview of retirement system benefits and options. She will demonstrate the online retirement benefits calculator tool, explore various options and show you how to better estimate your future benefit.

HR/Benefit Specialist Diane Peterson will provide an overview of the 457 deferred compensation and HRA VEBA plans. Employees can save and invest in their futures with tax advantages when participating in deferred compensation. The HRA VEBA is a post-separation account-based health plan. The overview will cover general rules and benefit options for eligible employees.

HR/Benefit Specialist Shannon Hoffman will discuss post-retirement health care options and eligibility requirements.

RETIREE PANEL

When: Thursday, March 23 from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Are you really ready for retirement? Hear from retired City of Tacoma employees who will discuss what they feel they should have thought about before they retired.

LEOFF II RESOURCES SEMINAR

When: Thursday, March 30 from 4 to 6 p.m.

Jim Mendoza from the Washington State Department of Retirement Systems will cover your LEOFF pension plan and benefit options.

HR/Benefit Specialist Shannon Hoffman will provide an overview of the post-retirement medical and COBRA options and eligibility requirements. **HR/Benefit Specialist Diane Peterson** will cover the 457 deferred compensation plans*.

**Representatives from ICMA and Nationwide will be available with marketing materials and to answer more in-depth questions.*

VEBA Consultant Brian Riehs from Gallagher will cover the general rules and benefit options of the post-separation account-based health plan for eligible employees.

Karni Adamson from Benefit Solutions, Inc. will cover the Medical Expense Reimbursement Plan (MERP) for eligible employees.



10 KEY RETIREMENT QUESTIONS

When: Thursday, April 6 from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Jim Reinke from ICMA will explain how transitioning into and through retirement can be rewarding and challenging. Having a plan is important. He'll focus on 10 key questions you should ask, from saving, to Social Security and Medicare, and managing your investments, withdrawals and taxes. Other topics include a more in-depth look at Social Security and retirement income withdrawal strategies.

MEDICARE CHOICES & HEALTHCARE COSTS IN RETIREMENT

When: Thursday, April 13 from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Jim Reinke from ICMA will discuss that planning for health care costs in retirement — a potentially major expense — is essential. But, if you're relying on Medicare to cover them all, you may be in for a surprise. Health care costs in retirement are likely to be your biggest expense. He will help you to better understand the potential costs and how you can take meaningful steps to be prepared.