

THE CITY CONNECTION

"FACETS OF BLACK DIAMOND"

Council schedules session on stormwater

The Black Diamond City Council will conduct a workstudy on March 5, 2009, at 6 p.m. in the City Council Chambers to discuss the recently adopted stormwater rates. These rates were imposed on all developed properties within the City of Black Diamond. Please



This utility was formed to maintain the street drainage system within our city and to aid in meeting the requirements of the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II Municipal

note; Public testimony is only accepted at the discretion of the Council. Any revisions to the rates will be posted on the homepage of the City's website www.ci.blackdiamond.wa.us and outlined in the next available newsletter. The following is a brief history on the stormwater utility formation and establishment of rates.

Stormwater Permit, under which the city operates. These requirements include educating the public, monitoring and documenting the stormwater quality efforts of the City, adopting codes that meet state requirements, and bringing the City's practices into compliance with state law.

On November 6, 2008, the Black Diamond City Council adopted a stormwater utility and established rates to fund the utility's maintenance and operations. This utility serves all properties in Black Diamond so every property owner, including those around Lake Sawyer who have not in the past received a City of Black Diamond sewer or water bill, received their first stormwater bill at the end of January.

Council approved a flat stormwater rate of \$13 per month for single-family residences. Larger buildings (multifamily and commercial development) will be charged based on a factor of 2,500 square feet of impervious surface, which is the basis for the \$13 residential rate. For example, if a duplex has 5,000 square feet of impervious surface the monthly stormwater bill will be 5,000 divided by 2,500 = 2 x \$13 = \$26 per month. Or let's say a small

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Daylight savings begins March 8th!

Helpful city information at your fingertips

Want information about your city quickly? More often than not these days people are surfing the web to keep updated on local and national news. So why not take a look at the Black Diamond website at www.ci.blackdiamond.wa.us for information that directly affects you and where you live?

The website's homepage displays notices, documents, the current month calendar and "quick links" where you can find information relating to the Highway 169 bridge closure and environmental impact statements for the Yarrow Bay master planned developments. The page also includes a link to the Black Diamond Municipal Code where you can search for anything from the authorization for

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Elected Officials

- ◆ Mayor, Howard Botts
- ◆ Councilmember, Bill Boston
- ◆ Councilmember, Geoff Bowie
- ◆ Councilmember, Kristine Hanson
- ◆ Councilmember, Leih Mulvihill
- ◆ Councilmember, Rebecca Olness

Department Heads

- ◆ City Administrator, Gwendolyn Voelpel
- ◆ Asst. City Admin./City Clerk, Brenda L. Streepy, CMC
- ◆ Community Development, Steve Pilcher
- ◆ Economic Development, Andrew Williamson
- ◆ Finance, Mayene Miller
- ◆ Natural Resources/Parks, Aaron Nix
- ◆ Police, Jamey Kiblinger
- ◆ Public Works, Seth Boettcher, PE

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Council workstudy (continued from front page)

restaurant with parking has 7,500 square feet of impervious surface the monthly stormwater bill will be 7,500 divided by 2,500 = 3 x \$13 = \$39 per month.

Until now, the City had funded stormwater maintenance activities primarily out of the sewer fund with some support from the street fund. The formation of the stormwater utility and establishment of rates allowed the City to forego a sewer rate increase and also relieved funding pressure on the street maintenance department.

To learn more about the stormwater utility, please visit the City's website and review the Stormwater Pollution Material on the Stormwater Utility Page, under the Public Works Department at www.ci.blackdiamond.wa.us. For state requirements regarding NPDES Phase II permits please visit the Department of Ecology's website at www.ecy.wa.gov. Click on water quality and then scroll down and click on stormwater. Should you have any questions, please contact us at (360) 886-2560.



To be added to the City's E-Alert email distribution list please email rpitzel@ci.blackdiamond.wa.us and include "E-Alert Addition" on the subject line. Then the City will notify you of updates to the website including when Council agendas and supporting materials are ready to view as well as when the monthly *City Connection* newsletter is posted.

City information (continued from front page)

administrative regulations to environmental codes. Plus the website includes links to departmental pages. Each City department strives to keep the citizens in the loop on current issues. For a quick overview of department pages see below:

- **City Clerk** - Council agendas, Council minutes, meeting packets, resolutions and ordinances
- **Community Development** - Building requirements, submittals, applications, planning and code enforcement
- **Court** - Contact information and other court resources
- **Economic Development** - Economic growth, business survey results and small business loan information from the Small Business Administration
- **Finance** - Finance news, budgets, 2008-2013 Capital Improvement Plan, monthly financial report and business license application
- **Fire** - Contact information and link to Mountain View Fire and Rescue homepage
- **Natural Resources** - Current activities and documents as well as environmental agency links
- **Police** - Crime statistics, found property, traffic school, employment, forms, live Amber Alert ticker and helpful links
- **Public Works** - Water, sanitary sewer, streets, parks, stormwater, cemetery and small works roster registration information

The City website is updated on a regular basis to help keep everyone up to date with City news. To contact us, you can click on the link "contact us" which will direct you to a general email address or feel free to give us a call at (360) 886-2560 or (253) 631-0351.

Disaster unemployment benefits available



OLYMPIA – People who live or work in King, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Pierce, Snohomish, Thurston and Wahkiakum counties may be eligible for disaster unemployment benefits if they lost their jobs or cannot work because of the storms and flooding that struck the region in January. They have until March 6, 2009, to apply for the benefits.

Disaster unemployment benefits are only for people who do not qualify for regular unemployment benefits, such as self-employed individuals or those who were injured in the storm, were prevented from beginning new work or became the head of their household due to a death caused by the disaster.

Affected workers are eligible to receive disaster unemployment benefits for work they lost since January 6, 2009, and should apply for benefits right away. Payments will be made retroactively. The first payable week is the week ending January 17, 2009.

To qualify for disaster benefits, people must be out of work as a direct result of the storm. Examples include:

- 1) the person's place of employment was physically damaged or destroyed,

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Clear addresses save valuable minutes

During construction of homes or businesses, the City's building inspector is required to verify that a location has proper addressing and that it is clearly marked or identified on the building. Unfortunately, he doesn't have the time to verify that every existing building in the city is accurately labeled with address numbers. You may think it's not that important, but there are many good reasons to post address numbers on your home or business. Most important to consider is that the minutes it takes to figure out which house is yours could be the minutes that save a life. For example:



- Let's say you've called 9-1-1 because your spouse is having a heart attack. The fire department arrives on your street, but doesn't know which house is yours because the only house numbers are listed on the five mailboxes grouped together at the end of the street. So, do they go door to door? Do they call back the dispatcher and ask them to call you to stand in front of your house? All of those actions take valuable time when every second is critical.

The currently adopted International Fire Code requires that all buildings have address numbers or approved building identification placed in a location that is clearly visible from the road used to access the occupancy. These numbers must be of a contrasting color with their background and be a minimum of 4 inches high and 1/2 inch wide. These numbers and/or letters must be of a durable weather resistant material and be maintained to allow for good visibility during poor weather and hours of darkness.

- Someone has broken into your house so you wake up and call 9-1-1. The burglar is downstairs and you are upstairs. The police arrive in your neighborhood, but there are three houses on your street that don't have house numbers. So do they wait outside and hope the burglar runs out, since they aren't sure which of the dark houses is being robbed?
- Or how about a more likely occurrence? On Monday, UPS tries to deliver your child's birthday present from grandparents in another part of the country, but they don't know which house is yours and they can't guess. The package goes back to the distribution center, you have to make a special trip to pick it up, and you can only get there on Saturday, four days after your child's birthday.

In order for Fire or Police to provide prompt service during emergencies, they must be able to quickly locate homes and businesses. While Mountain View Fire and Rescue/Black Diamond Fire Department develops and maintains current road maps and also trains on locating addresses, these efforts only allow them to arrive in the general area of an emergency. The final piece of information needed to accurately locate an emergency comes from addresses being clearly visible on the building and mailboxes, or on signs when the building is not visible from the road.

So please take the time to identify your home or business. Visit your local hardware store and spend a few bucks on address numbers. It might save someone's life.

Disaster unemployment *(continued from page 2)*

2) the person cannot get to work because it is inaccessible, either because roads are closed or the business is closed, or

3) the person's employer or business loses work because it received the majority of its revenue from another entity that was damaged or destroyed in the storm.

Applications are available online at www.dua.go2ui.com, by phone at (877) 416-7274, by e-mail at dua@esd.wa.gov or the local WorkSource office can assist in printing the online application. Qualified applicants will be eligible to receive between \$175 and \$541 per week in benefits.

The Employment Security Department administers the federal disaster-benefits program for the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, on behalf of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Railroad Avenue water line replacement to begin

At the February 5 Council meeting, the City awarded a contract to Slead Construction to install a new water main in Railroad Avenue. This project will replace an old, undersized asbestos concrete water main before the Railroad Avenue street improvement project begins.

The contractor is expected to start construction around February 23 and complete work before April 24. Businesses will remain open during construction and the contractor will be working hard to maintain reasonable access.

Should you have any questions, please contact Seth Boettcher, Public Works Director, at (360) 886-2560 ext. 211 or by email at sboettcher@ci.blackdiamond.wa.us.

Spring forward with fire safety on March 8

Daylight savings time is coming up on March 8 and there are a couple of other things that you should do besides changing your clocks. Daylight savings time is a great time to provide maintenance to your smoke alarms. Several studies have concluded that when working smoke alarms are present, the chance of dying from fire is cut in half.

The primary job of a smoke alarm is to protect you from fires while you are asleep. Thus, your alarms should be located between any sleeping persons and the rest of the house, outside bedrooms or sleeping areas, and on each level of the home.

There are two types of home smoke alarms available; ion and photoelectric. The ion models react faster to open flaming fires and are usually the least expensive.



The photoelectric models react faster to smoldering fires and are less likely to react to cooking. Both types provide good protection and can be used without worry. If you need more than one alarm, you might get one of each.

Smoke alarms should be tested once a month by pressing the button on the alarm. If this is too high to reach then you may use a broom handle or something similar to reach the button. The alarm will need to have the batteries changed and cleaned on a regular basis. Daylight saving time is a great time to do this.

Mountain View Fire & Rescue/Black Diamond Fire Department has a smoke alarm program where people can receive a **FREE** smoke alarm. Please call Tim Perciful at (253) 735-0284 for more information.



Officer accepts D.A.R.E.

D.A.R.E. will be returning to the Black Diamond Elementary School in April when Officer Brian Lynch steps into the classroom for the first time.

D.A.R.E. is short for Drug Abuse Resistance Education, or the police officer-led series of classroom lessons that in some communities starts in kindergarten and continues through high school graduation. In Black Diamond, the focus is on elementary school children. For more information, visit www.dare.com.

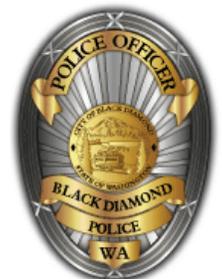
To prepare himself for this new challenge, Officer Lynch recently withstood below freezing temperatures and two feet of snow in New Hampshire to become certified as a D.A.R.E. instructor. The highly intense 80-hour training course culminated in Officer Lynch

teaching a 5th grade lesson at the Center Strafford Elementary School.

"I was extremely nervous going into the class, but it didn't take long before I remembered how to connect with the children," said Officer Lynch. "It made the trip and the class, and the two weeks away from my own family all worth it."

After years of going into the elementary schools in Enumclaw to teach safety to his own daughter's classes, Officer Lynch has taken on the important responsibility of instructing the children of Black Diamond on how to stay alcohol and drug free. "It started when my daughter was in kindergarten," he said. "I would bring the police car to the school and talk about how to be safe around strangers, or at the bus stop, or how and when to dial 9-1-1. She liked it so much that I came back a couple times a year until she moved on to middle school."

Now Officer Lynch will be able to provide even more children with the decision making tools offered in D.A.R.E.'s 10-week curriculum.



Where do your property taxes go?

With most folks having just received property tax statements from King County, this is a timely question. Many homeowners are a bit mystified as to how the postcard from King County relates to their own personal property taxes, and what their taxes actually fund.

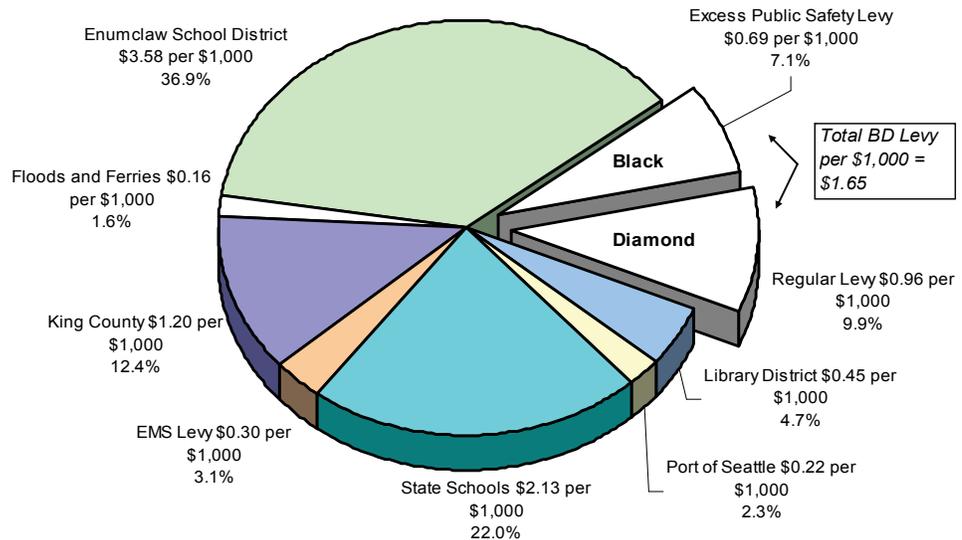
The property tax cards show a pie chart of how the county's property taxes are distributed. That pie chart reflects aggregate totals and not individual property tax information. So, depending on where in the county your property is located, levied tax amounts can differ greatly.

To find how your own property tax dollars are distributed, we encourage you to visit King County's website. The site has an online parcel viewer showing specifics for each property in the county. The website is www.kingcounty.gov and once there, enter the term "Parcel Viewer" in the search box. Look for the "Interactive Property Research Tool" link, then click the parcel viewer button. King County properties can then be located by the parcel ID number or by street address. If searching by address, only input the basic street name without abbreviations or direction. For example, if you live on 15th St. SE, just enter 15 for the street name. Once your parcel information appears, click "get property report." Toward the bottom of that web page click "property tax information on this property." In the real property tax section under the tab 2009 tax/fee distribution, you will find specifics on your own property.

Property tax levies usually vary even within a city's limits because different jurisdictions have overlapping boundaries. For example, the majority of Black Diamond citizens are in the Enumclaw School District and are taxed for 2008 at the rate of \$3.58 per \$1,000 of the assessed valuation as determined by the King County Assessor's office. Other Black Diamond residents in the Tahoma School District have a levy rate of \$3.87. Furthermore, some Black Diamond residents support Kent School District and paid \$4.39 per \$1,000, and some of our residents reside in the Auburn School District and paid \$4.41. Some properties in our City have charges under the heading of "Other." These fees are not a tax, but rather special charges, such as the \$5.50 Surface Water Management Bond issue for King County.

The following graph shows all the pieces of property taxes a Black Diamond property owner in the Enumclaw School District paid for tax year 2008. The total approximate levy was \$9.69 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. Of this amount the City of Black Diamond received \$1.65 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation or about 17%. The rest goes to the local school district, State schools, King County, Port of Seattle, Library District, and the Emergency Medical Services levy voted in by residents.

**City of Black Diamond
2008 Property Tax Distribution**
Taxed amount is per each \$1,000 in assessed value



Note that for every \$100 paid in property taxes, only \$17.00 comes back to Black Diamond to support municipal services.

King County does provide a senior/disability property tax exemption if the taxpayer is 61 years of age or older and has an annual income

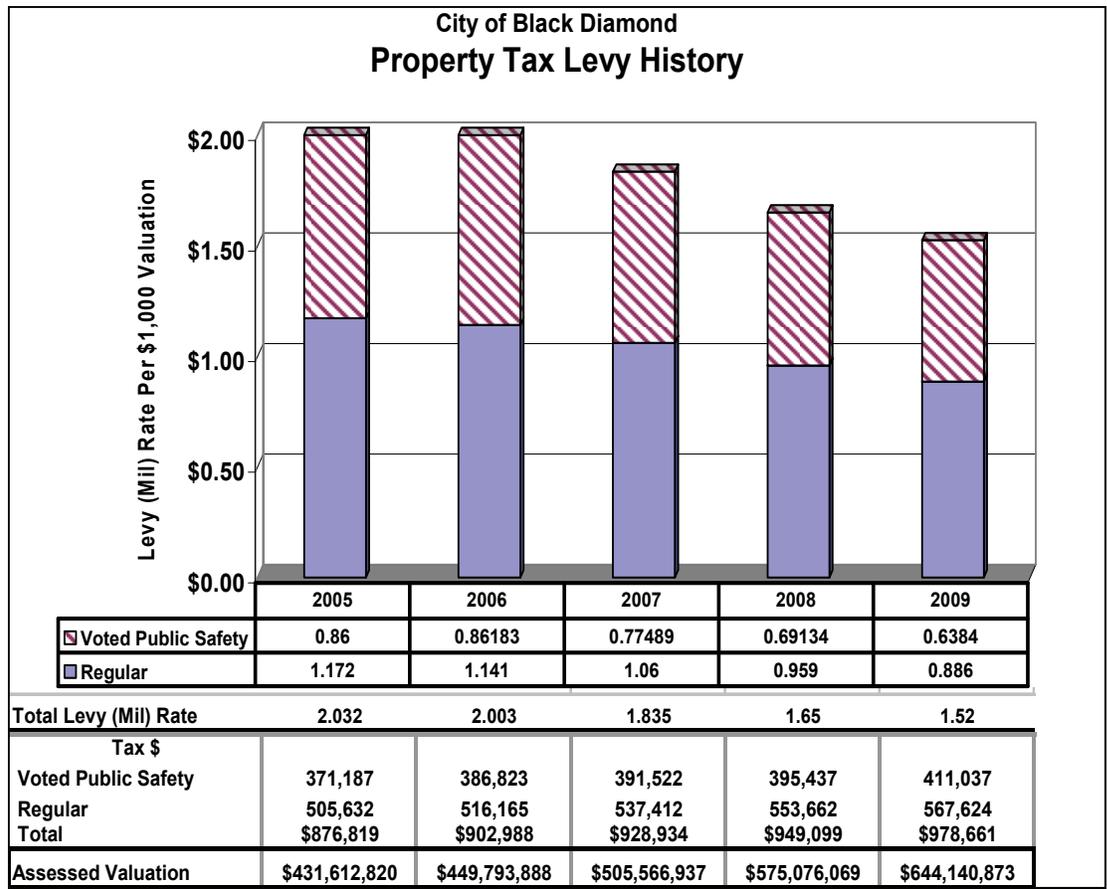
of less than \$35,000. Some other disability exemptions are also provided. You can call King County at (206) 296-3920 or find the rules online at www.kingcounty.gov/Assessor/Exemptions.

Good question. While your total bill could go up due to voted levies from other taxing jurisdictions, Black Diamond's levy rate has been dropping.

For a typical Black Diamond homeowner in the Enumclaw School District with land and buildings valued at \$300,000, the property tax is \$2,907 for 2008 with approximately \$495 going to the City of Black Diamond. This primarily pays for public safety (see article on page 5).

King County sets the property (land and building) valuations. Cities can only increase the base amount of property taxes collected each year by 1%. In 2009, the total beginning property tax amount in Black Diamond was \$978,661, thus the

total additional base tax the City could add for 2009 was \$9,787. King County then divides the total tax amount by each parcel's assessed valuation. The result is the levy (or mil) rate to be assessed. Since values have increased for the last few years, Black Diamond levy rates have been decreasing. See the graph above.



To better understand how a levy cap works in a more typical situation, let's take the model of rent due for a home shared by three college students. No matter how many occupy the home, the base rent is the same. To begin, they split the base rent of \$1,500/per month three ways. In this case, the total rent due is much like a property tax levy under I-747 in that no matter how many people help with the rent, it stays the same amount. It is the total amount to be collected. And in this case, the number of student renters act like the assessed value—it's the way the charges are spread over all of the payers. So for the three co-renters that means a monthly payment of \$500 each. If the rent doesn't change and they add a new roommate, that same amount is spread over four students, decreasing the per-student payment to \$375 per month. Even if the rent were to rise by \$100 to \$1,600, the students would only pay \$400, still reduced for the three original renters. That same example can be used to explain property taxes:

<u>Levy Year 2007</u>	<u>Levy Year 2008</u>
Property Tax = \$949,099	Property Tax = \$978,661 (1% increase + value of new construction)
Divided by Assessed Valuation: \$505,566,937	Divided by Assessed Valuation: \$575,076,069
Equals Levy Rate: \$1.835 (per \$1,000 of value)	Equals Levy Rate: \$1.65 (per \$1,000 of value)
Black Diamond's share of tax on a home valued at \$300,000/1,000 x \$1.835 = \$551	Black Diamond's share of tax on a home valued at \$300,000/1,000 x \$1.65 = \$495

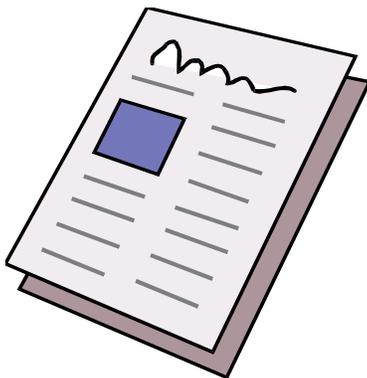
This is a real life example for Black Diamond: In 2008, the property taxes paid per \$1,000 of property values decreased from a little over \$1.83 to \$1.65, or for a \$300,000 valued home, from \$551 to \$495 per year.

Disaster assistance available

The State of Washington and federal officials urge those affected by January's severe storms, and mudslides to register with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) even if you have already registered with voluntary agencies or have reported damage to county or local officials.

Under the disaster declaration of January 30, 2009, federal assistance is available to affected individuals in King, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Pierce, Snohomish, Thurston, and Wahkiakum counties. Eligible assistance can include grants to pay for temporary housing, home repairs and other serious disaster-related expenses.

Receiving FEMA-State assistance begins with registering with FEMA. Applicants can register for FEMA assistance by calling, toll free, **1-800-621-3362 (FEMA)**. Individuals with hearing or speech impairments should call (TTY) 1-800-462-7585. Operators are available between 8 a.m. through 8 p.m. seven days a week. Applicants can also register online at www.disasterassistance.gov. **Registration deadline is March 31, 2009.**



City Connection, tell us what you think

Here at the city it is our intent to best serve the community in a way that is both cost effective and efficient. One of the best ways to get information to you is through the city newsletter which was put on hold back in 2007 and brought back in new form as the *City Connection* in July 2008. Now it's time for you to tell us what you think! Are you finding the newsletter informational, do you want to receive the newsletter by mail or email?

This month on the utility and stormwater billing statement you will find a survey about the newsletter. Please take the time to fill out the survey and send it back to the city with your payment. We would love to hear from you!



50th Anniversary kick-off was a success

Fifty years of memories were shared on Thursday, February 19 to celebrate the 50th Birthday of Black Diamond. The celebration was held at the Black Diamond Community Center. Guests were entertained by stories told from the first City Clerk Donna Gauthier who stated that her city office was in her 900 square foot home where she did her City Clerk job and raised her three children. Gomer Evans, past Mayor of Black Diamond shared with everyone that his parents were immigrants from Wales who met in Black Diamond. He also talked about growing up and raising his family in Black Diamond and how much it has meant to him and his family.



A **BIG** thank you to the 50th Anniversary Committee and staff who worked hard to make this event the success that it was. Thank you!





To be added to the Council Agenda distribution list,
 please call us at (360) 886- 2560 ext. 209
 or contact the City Clerk by email at
bstreepy@ci.blackdiamond.wa.us

Get involved with your community:
 attend public hearings

Council Public Hearings

March 5 ~ Continuation of Mobile Home Moratorium

Watch the City's website for the latest information.



50TH ANNIVERSARY CALENDARS ON SALE NOW!
 \$5 EACH

- ◆ Wonderful collection of Black Diamond's past and present pictures
- ◆ Holidays and Black Diamond events are listed on each calendar month
- ◆ Features "50 Great Things to Do in Black Diamond"

Calendars are available for purchase at:

Black Diamond City Hall, Black Diamond Community Center, Black Diamond Historical Depot Museum, Leih's Gifts, Mt. Rainier Bank and other local businesses

CITY MEETINGS

CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS
 25510 LAWSON STREET

- MAR 5 - 7 p.m.
- MAR 19 - 7 p.m.

COUNCIL STUDY SESSIONS:

- MAR 5 - 6 p.m.
- MAR 12 - 7 p.m.
- MAR 19 - 6 p.m.
- MAR 26 - 7 p.m.

PLANNING COMMISSION
 25510 LAWSON STREET

- MAR 10 - 7 p.m.

MONTHLY MEETINGS
 CITY COUNCIL:
 1st & 3rd Thursday
 at 7 p.m.

PLANNING COMMISSION:
 First Tuesday after the
 first Council meeting -
 at 7 p.m.

For meeting agendas and
 packet material please view
 the City Clerk page
 on our website
www.ci.blackdiamond.wa.us
 click on the meeting packets
 or agendas then click on the
 date of your choice.

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE @ WWW.CI.BLACKDIAMOND.WA.US

EVENT CALENDAR	CITY OF BLACK DIAMOND
	CITY HALL (360) 886-2560 P.O. Box 599/24301 Roberts Drive (253) 631-0351
	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/ NATURAL RESOURCES/ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (360) 886-2560 P.O. Box 599/24301 Roberts Drive (253) 631-0351
	POLICE DEPARTMENT (253) 631-1012 P.O. Box 309/25510 Lawson Street
	MUNICIPAL COURT (360) 886-7784 P.O. Box 599/25510 Lawson Street
	FIRE DEPT. DISTRICT #44 (253) 735-0284
	PUBLIC WORKS (360) 886-2560 P.O. Box 599/24301 Roberts Drive (253) 631-0351 AFTER HOURS (EMERGENCY PAGER) (253) 333-5555
Black Diamond Library (360) 886-1105 Hours of Operation: Monday — Thursday 10 a.m. – 9 p.m. Fridays — 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Saturdays — 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.	
Black Diamond Community/Senior Center (360) 886-1011 Hours of Operation: Monday – Friday 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.	
Black Diamond Post Office (360) 886-9429 Hours of Operation: Monday — Friday 9 a.m. — 5 p.m.	
Black Diamond Museum/Historical Society (360) 886-2142 Hours of Operation: Thursdays — 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays — Noon - 4 p.m.	
If you would like to be added to the City's E -Alert Program, email Rachel Pitzel at rpitzel@ci.blackdiamond.wa.us , please include "E-Alert Addition" on the subject line.	