



ACCGov Quarterly

The Athens-Clarke County Unified Government's Newsletter
Winter 2025-2026 | accgov.com/quarterly



ACCGov & CCSD Partner on Career Pathways

In August 2024, the Clarke County School District (CCSD) launched two new pathways for high school students as part of their Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) program. The new pathways – Biotechnology and Firefighter/EMT – heavily involved **ACCGov's Economic Development** and **Fire** departments in their development over several years. Both are centered at the Athens Community Career Academy.

Once the biotechnology pathway was approved for consideration, Economic Development and CCSD worked with local biotech manufacturers – especially those who hire high school graduates – to evaluate Georgia's existing biotechnology pathway and shape it specifically for Athens. The local pathway launched in fall 2024 as a

three semester program with the first cohort finishing their studies in December. Students who successfully complete the full pathway can sit for Biotility Biotechnician Assistant certification exams.

The firefighter pathway is led by Sgt. Michael Roberts and runs four semesters – two full years – with classes covering basic public safety, firefighter basics, and emergency medical responder topics. The curriculum also involves hands-on training at the **Fire Training Center**. Students who successfully complete the full pathway can sit for Firefighter I and EMT certification exams.

A new video featuring CCSD staff, ACCGov staff, and students in the program is available online along with pathway links and more details.

accgov.com/pathways

Solid Waste Bulky Waste Collection Program

The **ACCGov Solid Waste Department** launched a new bulky waste collection program in November to make it easier for residents to dispose of large household items for no additional cost.

Most Athens-Clarke County residents in single family detached, duplex, and fourplex dwelling structures are eligible for the service, whether they use Solid Waste for collection or a private hauler.

Bulky waste includes items such

as furniture, appliances, and oversized household items. It does not include items such as construction debris, pallets, tires, trash, or auto parts.

Collection is by request only, which can be made online or by phone. Up to four pick ups per year of up to 5 items per pick-up for a total of 20 items per year is allowed. Full details and restrictions are available online or over the phone.

accgov.com/bulkywaste |

706-613-3501



Microchip Stations

The **ACCGov Animal Services Department** installed three microchip scanning stations around the community. These stations allow anyone who has found a pet to scan for a microchip to find information about the pet's family. This can help a lost pet get reunited with a family more quickly. The stations, with instructions, are located at:

- **Animal Services Office / Adoption Center** (125 Buddy Christian Way) - 24 hours/day
- **Memorial Park Dog Park** (293 Gran Ellen Drive) - during park operating hours
- **Southeast Clarke Park - Wiggley Field Dog Park** (325 Whit Davis Road entrance) - during park operating hours

Pet microchips are small, rice-sized transponders implanted under a pet's skin, typically between the shoulder blades.

Although not GPS trackers, the microchips contain a unique identification number registered with a national database that helps provide contact information for a pet's family in case the pet is lost and found.

All pets adopted from Animal Services receive a microchip before they leave the shelter. Pets not adopted through the shelter should also be microchipped in case they are lost or escape.

accgov.com/microchip |

706-613-3540



Extinguisher Training

The **ACCGov Fire Department's** fire and life safety educators provide free training on fire extinguisher use to businesses, organizations, classes, and other small groups up to 40 in size. They can also set up at festivals or other special events for drop-in training.

The hands-on experience is in a safe, controlled environment with no real flames or mess. The training uses replica fire extinguishers that help build confidence and quick decision-making in an emergency. Trainings generally run 30-60 minutes depending on the size of the group.

accgov.com/fireeducation |
706-613-3360



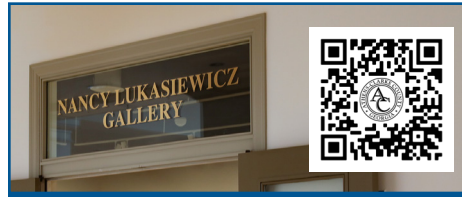
Motor Vehicle Kiosk

The **Athens-Clarke County Tax Commissioner's Office** is part of the Georgia MV Express kiosk program that allows residents access to MV Express kiosks across Georgia. These kiosks allow users to renew vehicle registrations, print tags, and – at select kiosks – even renew driver's licenses in as little as two minutes without having to visit an office.

A new kiosk that includes driver's license renewals is now available locally at the Trail Creek Village Kroger (700 US-29 N, Athens, GA 30601) daily from 6:00 AM - 11:00 PM.

accgov.com/tc | 706-613-3130

ACCGov Quarterly Newsletter
Produced by the Athens-Clarke County
Communications Department
accgov.com/quarterly



Art Gallery Renamed

The **Lyndon House Arts Center** officially renamed the South Gallery as the Nancy Lukasiewicz Gallery. After moving to Athens in 1973, Nancy and her husband Ronnie directed the restoration of the historic Ware-Lyndon House, transforming it into a cultural hub for education, exhibitions, and artist support.

Her vision also helped secure a significant expansion of the facility in 1999 through SPLOST funds. After more than 40 years of service and countless exhibitions, Lukasiewicz retired in 2016 and passed away in 2022, leaving an indelible mark on Athens' cultural life.

accgov.com/lyndonhouse | 706-613-3623



Clerk of Commission

The Mayor & Commission appointed Christine Howard as the Clerk of Commission. She began her new position on November 9.

Howard most recently served as the Executive Assistant to Mayor Kelly Girtz since October 2022. Previously, she had served as the Deputy Clerk of Commission from 2015-2022 and with the Sheriff's Office for nearly 20 years.

The Clerk of Commission is a charter officer whose role and responsibilities are defined in the charter that established ACCGov.

accgov.com/clerkofcommission |
706-613-3031

Send comments, questions, letters to:
ACCGov Communications Department
P.O. Box 1868 - Athens, GA 30603
706-613-3795 | info@accgov.com



Cold Weather Tips

The **ACCGov Emergency Management Agency** reminds residents to prepare for winter weather by following these tips:

- Make sure your home is well insulated and has weather stripping around doors and windows to keep warm air inside.
- Keep pipes from freezing by leaving cabinets open to allow warm air to circulate and by allowing faucets to drip slowly to keep water moving.
- Make "Ready Kits" with basic essentials, including weather appropriate clothing and prescribed medications. Keep one at home and in the car.
- Never bring portable gas generators, camp stoves, and grills inside.
- Use space heaters as directed and plug directly into wall sockets, not into extension cords or power strips.
- Remove large tree branches that may get weighed down with ice or snow and fall on your house.
- Stay inside in extreme weather. Drive only if necessary.

accgov.com/ema | 706-613-3360

Number to Know

132,489

The number of paid admissions at Sandy Creek Park in Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25), which ran from July 1, 2024 until June 30, 2025.

Find accgov on



Other accounts linked at accgov.com/social