

# Grand Oak

BUSINESS PARK

*Where work comes to life*

Volume 8 – Winter 2012

## Eagan Energy Conservation Forum

In partnership with Senator Al Franken, the Eagan Energy & Environmental Advisory Commission, and the Dakota County Regional Chamber of Commerce, the City of Eagan recently hosted a forum regarding energy and environmental retrofitting for public and private buildings. Eagan business representatives, including Grand Oak Business Park's property manager, were in attendance to learn about recent successful Eagan retrofits, new energy conservation technologies, and potential financing options for energy retrofit projects.

BPG Properties and Cassidy Turley are constantly evaluating opportunities to improve energy efficiency at Grand Oak and will implement retrofit programs as warranted. Tenants can also make an impact, however, by implementing low/no-cost energy-saving solutions, such as turning things off and turning things down. Read on for some quick fixes recommended by Xcel Energy:

- **Turn Things Off.** This seems simple, but every 1,000 kWh saved by turning things off reduces a utility bill by as much as \$100, assuming average electricity costs of 10 cents per kWh. Occupancy sensors and timers help, but a less expensive alternative is to simply turn lights and office equipment off at the end of the day.
- **Computers and Monitors.** Significant energy savings can be gained by enabling power management settings on individual computers and monitors, forcing them to enter sleep mode after a specified period of inactivity.
- **Other Plug Loads.** Items such as computer speakers, radios, and coffee pots can burn a significant amount of energy. Power strips provide an easy way to switch off all often-forgotten energy users at the end of the day.
- **Water Coolers.** The average office water cooler consumes about 800 kWh per year. Because much of this energy is from standby losses, a simple method of cutting energy waste is to attach a timer so that the cooler only operates 10 hours a day, 5 days a week.
- **Window Shades and Blinds.** During warm weather, blinds can block direct sunlight and reduce cooling needs. In the winter, opening the blinds on south-facing windows will let in sunlight to help heat the space.

### TAKE NOTE OF THE UPCOMING DATES:

**Valentine's Day**

Tuesday, February 14

**President's Day**

Monday, February 20

**Daylight Saving  
Time Begins**

Sunday, March 11

**St. Patrick's Day**

Saturday, March 17

**Earth Hour**

Saturday, March 31

# Is Automatic Bill Payment For You?

When you set up automatic bill payment via your checking account or credit card, bills get paid automatically saving the hassle of buying stamps, writing checks, and worrying about late or missed payments. While automatic payment plans have grown in popularity, there are a number of drawbacks. Consider the following pros and cons before taking advantage of automatic bill payment:

## ADVANTAGES:

- **Convenience.** By setting all of your monthly bills to be paid automatically, you're not as pressured to keep track of what needs to be paid when and paying on time. Once an automatic payment is set up, your bank or credit card will handle the rest.
- **Rewards.** One of the biggest reasons to charge monthly bills is to earn reward points. These expenses can add up to hundreds of points each month that are credited to a rewards account. Use your bills to earn free travel, rewards, or even cash back.
- **Going Green.** The impact on the environment is reduced by eliminating paper bills and check writing. Not only do you save paper and trees, but you eliminate the carbon footprint left by snail mail.
- **Helps Your Credit Score.** When bills are set up to be paid automatically, you should rarely miss a payment. When credit scoring agencies see that your bills are always paid on time, it favorably impacts your credit score.
- **Reduced Chance of Identity Theft.** If bills are not mailed to your home and you are not mailing in payments with credit card or checking account numbers, there is less risk of identity theft.
- **Saves Money.** Since you'll no longer have to pay for checks, stamps, envelopes, or gas for trips to the post office, paying bills automatically saves money too.

## DISADVANTAGES:

- **Potential Cost.** Some companies charge a fee for automatic payments, which actually save them money in the long run. If your merchant assesses a fee for automatic payments, pay them the old-fashioned way and make them process a check instead.
- **Losing Track.** With automatic payment plans, it can be easy to forget what gets paid each month and when. This can lead to unnoticed bank errors or mistakes.
- **Overdraft Fees.** You still need to make sure you have enough money in your checking account to cover automatic payments. Otherwise, you will incur bank overdraft charges.
- **Stopping Payments.** Automatic payment plans can be set up in a matter of minutes, but canceling them can be more difficult. Sometimes you have to notify your bank and your merchant and you may even need to do so in writing. Closely monitor payments if you're transitioning between pay accounts.
- **Running up a Credit Card Balance.** If you aren't careful and don't pay off your bills, you could be left with credit card debt you cannot afford. To avoid this, add up the bills you have automatically paid and send the full amount to your credit card each and every month.

For many, the convenience of having bills automatically paid definitely outweighs the risks. But a certain amount of discipline is required to avoid trouble with automatic bill pay. Good financial habits are rooted in an awareness of what you're paying and when.

## Reminder: Earth Hour

On March 31, 2012, hundreds of millions of people around the world will switch off the lights in homes and businesses for one hour, Earth Hour, to display a universal commitment to protect the one thing that unites us all – the planet.

Join BPG Properties by shutting off your lights on Saturday, March 31, at 8:30pm. Show the world you care about the environment and the future of our planet. For more information go to [www.earthhour.org](http://www.earthhour.org).



# Not Losing Weight at the Gym?

Why is it that you go to the gym regularly, work out, but still don't lose any weight? It's a frustrating challenge, but one that can be overcome. Following are three keys to working out for weight loss:

- **Doing Enough (Intense) Cardio:** Aerobic activity is the most efficient way to burn calories, so it's important to be consistent with cardio workouts. Strive for at least 30-45 minutes of cardio, three to four times per week. Doing the right kind of cardio workout is also important. Studies show that faster-paced workouts help release fat-burning hormones in the body and that interval training is the key to losing belly fat. Additionally, a recent study found that a 45-minute vigorous workout yields three times the calories burned during a 45-minute walk; it also increases one's metabolic rate for up to 14 hours post-workout. To shed unwanted pounds, choose high-intensity workouts like intervals, running, boot camp, or spinning class.
- **Get Committed:** Losing weight takes more than just showing up at the gym – you need to maximize your time and effort while at the gym. Mindlessly walking on the treadmill while looking

at a magazine isn't the best way to go about weight loss and neither is talking yourself out of a challenging workout. Commit yourself by finding a specific goal or personal reason that will inspire you to lose weight and use that as motivation to maintain your workout routine. Along the way, set smaller goals for yourself and celebrate in a non-food related way when you meet each goal.

- **Strength Training:** While cardio is key to weight loss, a fitness program should also incorporate one to two strength training sessions per week. Strength training can reduce overall body fat by as much as 3% in just 10 weeks since muscle burns more calories than fat. An hour-long strength training session also delivers a significant after-burn – the average woman burns an extra 100 calories over the next 24 hours. Maximize your time by combining cardio and strength training into one workout. Circuit training intervals and boot camp workouts mix bursts of cardio with strength training moves. Perform supersets of compound moves on those occasions when you don't have time for a long workout.

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## Alternate Uses For Plastic Wrap

While plastic wrap is a “must have” in the kitchen, its usefulness extends well beyond sealing food in containers. Read on for some additional applications:

- **Store Paintbrushes.** Instead of cleaning paint brushes/rollers between coats, wrap them in plastic wrap to keep them from drying out. Similarly, left-over paint will keep better by stretching plastic wrap over the top of the can before replacing the lid.
- **Create a Mini-Greenhouse.** Plant seeds in a pot and tightly cover the pot with plastic wrap. The seal promotes humidity, helping to keep soil moist.
- **Improve Your Grip.** If the handle of your rake or shovel feels slippery, wind plastic wrap tightly around the handle for a better grip.
- **Make Temporary Booties.** Wrap a little plastic wrap around your shoes and you've got instant booties – great for newly-refinished or cleaned floors.
- **Carry a Bulky Package.** Twist a long sheet of plastic wrap tightly to make a rope. Then wrap the rope around a package and knot the ends into a handle.
- **Keep Out Drafts.** Stuff plastic wrap in gaps between the sash and frame of a window to help prevent cold air from getting into your home.
- **Decorate Your Walls.** Press a wrinkled sheet of plastic wrap against a freshly-painted wall while the wall is still wet. Then remove the plastic wrap to create a textured look known as “frottage”. Repeat for the entire wall.

# Recognizing Grand Oak Tenants

BPG Properties and Cassidy Turley extend special thanks to the following tenants for their commitment to Grand Oak Business Park during 4th Quarter 2011:

**Mayo Foundation** (Renewal)  
860 Blue Gentian Road

**PennyMac** (Renewal)  
860 Blue Gentian Road

**RLI Insurance** (New)  
860 Blue Gentian Road

**St. Paul Rheumatology** (Renewal)  
2854 Highway 55

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## New Property Manager at Grand Oak

Effective December 2011, Rebekah Buck was assigned as the new property manager for Grand Oak Business Park. A Senior Property Manager with Cassidy Turley, Rebekah has nearly ten years of experience – most recently having managed a Class A suburban office tower.

Rebekah is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Stout, where she majored in psychology and was a two-time recipient of the Chancellor's Award. In addition to holding a Minnesota Real Estate License, she is a member of the Institute of Real Estate Management and the Building Owners and Managers Association, organizations which provide educational opportunities that allow Rebekah to stay abreast of advancements in the industry.



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## About BPG Properties, Ltd.

BPG Properties, Ltd. is one of the nation's leading private equity real estate fund managers. BPG's portfolio consists of over 20 million square feet of office, retail, student housing, and industrial properties and more than 24,000 apartment units in more than 100 communities located throughout the United States. The firm is headquartered in the Philadelphia area with regional offices in Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington DC, Boston, Atlanta and Raleigh-Durham. For additional information, please visit the company's website at [www.bpgltd.com](http://www.bpgltd.com).



**MANAGED &  
LEASED BY:**

**Cassidy/  
Turley** / Commercial  
Real Estate Services

**IMPORTANT  
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**Property Management**  
Management Office  
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After Hours Emergencies  
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**Leasing**  
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