



# TOWN OF VERNON

## Office of the Mayor

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Vernon's Winterfest kicks off at 5 pm Friday at Henry Park *COVID-Safe event features lights, fire trucks, lasers, fire juggler*

**(VERNON, Connecticut)** – Vernon's Henry Park will sparkle with thousands of holiday lights and illuminated displays Friday evening for the community's annual Winterfest celebration.

The annual kickoff to the holiday season has traditionally been in downtown Rockville and featured a fire engine parade, but has been moved to Henry Park and converted to a drive-thru event from 5 to 7 p.m. to make it safe for everyone.

"It was important to continue this holiday tradition and to give our residents a special and safe way to mark the beginning of the holiday season," Vernon Mayor Dan Champagne said.

There will be thousands of lights. Vernon Parks and Recreation crews have been setting up displays and placing lights in trees for the event.

A special radio transmitter from Sunshine Entertainment will broadcast holiday music and information about Winterfest on 99.5 FM. People can tune in while waiting to enter the park and as they drive through Winterfest.

There won't be a fire engine parade this year, but firefighters from Vernon and other towns will still light and decorate their trucks. They'll be on display for people as they pass by during the reverse-parade.

In addition to the lighted and decorated fire engines, Winterfest will feature:

- Fire jugglers.
- A drone display at the Henry Park sledding hill.
- Thousands of holiday lights and decorations all through Henry Park.
- Decorated and lighted Public Works, Parks and Recreation trucks and police vehicles.
- Laser Lights.

- Ice carver.
- Light displays around Fox Hill Tower.
- Lighted and decorated displays by local organizations.
- Santa and Mrs. Claus waving to passing vehicles.

“Our goal is to create a safe, fun event for families to help them get into the holiday spirit,” said Amy Watt, Vernon’s Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation.

To ensure everyone’s safety, people must remain in their vehicles and vehicles have to keep moving through the park. People are asked to keep their windows closed. There will also be no pictures with Santa.

People will access the park off South Street and exit from Tower Road to Cedar Street. The park will close to the public at 4 p.m. Friday for final preparation and Winterfest begins at 5 p.m.

Winterfest at Henry Park is modeled on the wildly popular Trunk or Treat program the Parks and Recreation Department ran for Halloween.

### **About the Town of Vernon**

The Town of Vernon is a celebrated place to live, work and visit. From its beautiful parks and lakes, to its vast trails and historic homes and buildings, Vernon is a resilient and thriving community that promotes the health and wellbeing of its residents and values the natural environment. With a resident population of approximately 30,000 and occupying 18.03 square miles, Vernon combines a balanced appreciation of history, and a strong economic base for growth, both residential and commercial. Located 15 minutes east of the Connecticut capital of Hartford, and 25 miles from the City of Springfield, Massachusetts, the Town of Vernon is strategically located in “New England's Knowledge Corridor” with close proximity to some of the top colleges and universities in the country.

Recently designated as a certified Sustainable Community, the Town of Vernon offers a wide range of benefits and services to its residents. The Town of Vernon is a full-service municipality that practices a management philosophy of continuous quality improvement. To learn more about the Town of Vernon, please call (860) 870- 3670 or visit [www.vernon-ct.gov](http://www.vernon-ct.gov).

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