COVID-19 UPDATED INFORMATION – Each week the Hot Sheet will include updated information pertaining to the City’s response to the COVID-19 emergency. With few exceptions, this will be limited to new information only. If there is something we have previously published in this column that you need to access, please go to the City’s website at www.saintpetermn.gov and check out the Hot Sheet archives. Here is the latest information as of May 20, 2020:

- The peacetime emergency continues; however the Governor’s Stay at Home order has been turned into a Stay Safe order. For more information on what the ever changing rules are, go to the Governor’s Office website at https://mn.gov/governor/.

- Cancellations of summer events include:
  - Fourth of July parade and picnic
  - Ambassadors Bluesfest
  - American Legion Post #37 Memorial Day ceremony

- The Nicollet County Fair Board posted the following notice on their Facebook page..... “The Nicollet County Ag Society regrets to announce that we are cancelling the Spring of Destruction demo derby scheduled for June 6. It will be held on September 5th. Due to the Governor’s limitation of 10 people at a gathering and the very specific statement of not allowing fairs and spectator events, we will postpone this event until the fall (or at a time as these events are allowed legally to take place). As for the Nicollet County Fair, we will make a decision on July 1st based on the health guidelines at that time. We wish you all health and safety. Nicollet County Fair Board”

- Now that retail has been given the greenlight to reopen with conditions, here is a flyer to keep in mind to keep you safe while you shop:

- City buildings remain closed to the public tentatively until June 15th. Those needing assistance are asked to contact the specific department they need for additional direction or assistance. Numbers for all departments are listed on the front door of City Hall and on the City’s website at https://www.saintpetermn.gov/Directory.aspx.

- The verdict is still out on whether or not the City’s outdoor pool will open this season. CDC and Minnesota Department of Health recommendations will play a major role in making that decision and updates will be provided as soon as they are available.
Restrooms in City parks will be opened beginning June 1st.

Makes Me Wonder (by City Administrator Todd Prafke) - OMG! Have you seen the area around Hallett’s Pond? It has changed a bunch over the last month or so. Just a bunch of cool things coming together based on a plan the Council put together a number of years ago. It’s taken a lot of hard work; a bunch of writing and getting grant funds – all done through cooperative efforts by many folks including the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, the Lake Hallett Association and other more Ad Hoc groups. Some of these folks that use the area in and around the Pond on a regular basis helped install plantings, floating islands (plants that eat up nutrients or contaminants) and have helped keep the area free from litter.

If you have not been down there you should take a look. The Council’s goal has been to see this area improved as an amenity for the public, but it takes your work too. Help keep it clean and safe. Pick up after yourself. If you are walking a dog, please remember to stick to the trails and pick up after your dog. Share the space respectfully with others. Look for opportunities to make the place the gem that it is really starting to become.

Have you been there? It makes me wonder……

2020 Rain Barrel Rebates - Beginning May 15 – July 15, City utility customers may purchase a 45 – 50 gallon rain barrel or rain barrel diverter and parts kit from Arrow Ace Hardware. At the time of purchase, a rebate form will be filled out at the store and the form will be provided to the City for processing. Purchase of one of the qualifying barrels entitles the utility customer to either a $25 rebate on their utility bill or a $10 rebate on the utility bill for the purchase of a rain barrel diverter and parts kit. Rebates are available to the first 50 qualified purchasers and there is a limit of two rebates per household.

Why does the City offer this program? Here’s some reasons:

- Rainwater is great for gardens, houseplants, auto cleaning, window washing, and other household chores.
- Stores water away for a sunny day.
- Stops storm water from polluting neighboring waters by keeping it where it falls.
- Recycling rain water reduces personal energy consumption by using less treated water.
- Reduces erosion and increases water quality.
- It reduces stress on the municipal storm drain and sewer systems.

It’s that easy to have a positive impact on the environment. If you have questions about this program, please contact the City’s Public Works Department at 934-0670. (Please note….the rain barrel available from Arrow Ace may not look like the one pictured in the photo.)

Memorial Day Closures – Normally at this time of the year, we would include information on closure of City offices for Memorial Day, but as of now, all City offices remained closed to the public including the public library and the Community Center. When that changes it will be publicized through the usual channels.

Dogs Prohibited – More people are out and about with their four legged friends; sometimes in the wrong place at all times!

Dog owners please remember that animals are NOT allowed in City parks with the exception of the Mill Pond area of Riverside Park and the designated dog parks. AND…..and this is a big and….you must pick up your dog’s waste!

More complaints about violations to these regulations have been coming in to City Hall than we’ve had in a very long time and violators means citations will be issued. So please - be responsible and follow the rules.

City Council Actions – The City Council held a regular meeting on May 11, 2020 to consider the following actions: modification of the COVID-19 Micro Loan program to allow automotive repair services as an eligible business category for loans; award of three Central Business District/ADA
accessibility loans; and a closed session to discuss sale of the former wastewater treatment ponds.

The next regular City Council meeting will be Tuesday, May 26th beginning at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will only be held electronically as authorized under Minnesota Statutes 13.021. For log-in information, please visit the City’s website. The log-in information will be at the bottom of the meeting agenda page which will be available under the “meetings and minutes” section of the homepage the Friday before the Council meeting.

BE CAREFUL OUT THERE – For some a sign of spring is when annual flowers start blooming. For others it’s the sound of lawn mowers in the neighborhood. At City Hall it’s when the fountain in the Mill Pond starts flowing again. But for others spring heralds the start of construction season and with from City crews, a request to be careful in and around all construction zones.

The Streets crews have already started their milling work for full depth patching that will be done in large areas along the seal coating route. When work begins in any area, the crews outline the area to be milled with white paint. Then “No Parking” signs are put up and after several hours’ notice, (usually the next day), crews are hard at it milling the asphalt out of designated areas.

These areas are usually in need of more repairs than the seal coating can provide and so the old asphalt is removed, new put in, and then seal coating will be applied on top. For now though, these milled areas are deep enough that no one should drive over them and they are surrounded with cones to keep drivers away. Unfortunately that makes the drivable surface narrower and will require everyone - whether it be in a car, on a bike or even walking - to be even more careful.

Please obey all construction zone signage, slow down, and most importantly, pay attention to your driving! Thanks for helping keep our crews safe.

VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK PLAYGROUND – Big changes are in store for the playground at Vet’s Park. The old playground equipment was removed several weeks back and the Council awarded the bid for work to completely redo the area. Landscaping is being done, concrete is being poured and once that is all done, brand new play equipment will be installed. The playground will have new wood fiber fall protection to keep children safe and new, vibrant landscaping is being installed around the perimeter of the playground.

The project should be completed towards the end of May and will be a great addition for park users and families in the neighborhood.

GRASS CLIPPINGS – Green grass equals lawn mowing and it’s great to see so much grass so healthy in town. However…..(isn’t there always a however?)……residents are reminded that it’s against the law (both State and local) to mow grass clippings into the street.

When clippings end up in the street they become a source of phosphorus pollution that washes into the City’s storm drains and eventually into the river. One bushel of grass clippings contains enough phosphorus to grow 30 to 50 pounds of algae.

And not only do the clippings contribute to water pollution, but large amounts can also block storm drains causing localized flooding that can damage not only your property, but that of your neighbors.

How do you prevent this from happening? When mowing, direct the discharge chute on your lawn mower towards the lawn and away from paved areas. If grass clippings get on paved areas, sweep them up when the mowing job is done.

So please……keep those clippings where they belong…..on your lawn!

COVID-19 AND ME CONTEST – The Recreation and Leisure Services Department recently concluded their COVID-19 and Me writing contest. The contest asked participants to submit written works that were part of a journal, thoughts, or personal reflections during Minnesota’s stay-at home order.

A total of 17 people submitted entries and the Judges decided to split the Chamber Buck prizes amongst all 17 entries. In addition to two people who wish to remain anonymous, the following individuals submitted entries:

- Katherine Callahan
- Bob Douglas
- Ian Gerstbauer
Roan Gerstbauer  
Tara Harbo  
Mickayla Janzen  
Ellis Jones  
Larry Kiewel  
Emily Kretschmer  
Dustin Lenhoff  
Sophie Matarrese  
Raina Roemhildt  
William Shores  
Donna Thompson  
Terena Wilkens

The entries will be posted on the City’s website by the end of the week.

**Hallett’s Nature Area Park** – Thanks to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Outdoor Recreation grant program, funding was provided to construct a handicap accessible fishing pier at Hallett’s Pond.

With the COVID-19 emergency, the timing of the new amenity isn’t the best, but the pier is ready and waiting for use.

**Storm Sirens or Not?** – Summer storms can come up quickly and be quite violent and in the past the City has had questions from people about when storm sirens are used and what happens when the storm has passed.

Let’s start with the basics of severe weather lingo…..

- **Tornado/Severe Thunderstorm “Watch”** - means that conditions are favorable for the development of tornadoes or severe thunderstorms. When a watch is issued for our area, pay close attention to the weather and make sure that everyone in your family knows the correct action to take if the weather gets worse.

- **Tornado/Severe Thunderstorm “Warning”** - means a tornado or severe thunderstorm has been reported or is indicated by weather radar. Warning information includes the tornado or storm’s location, direction and speed. If the warning is issued for our portion of Nicollet County, residents should **TAKE SHELTER IMMEDIATELY**. Emergency sirens are only issued for Tornado Warnings…not for severe thunderstorms.

- **Emergency Alert Testing** – Testing of the City’s emergency sirens happens on the first Wednesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. However, if the weather is bad that day, the testing will not take place.

Now, with that knowledge in place, let’s think about how the National Weather Service issues their watches and warnings. For many years, warnings for tornadoes were issued for the entire county. That meant that if a storm was 40 miles away on the other edge of Nicollet County, the warning was issued for the whole of Nicollet County regardless of whether it would come near Saint Peter or not. That led to the sirens being activated a lot and people starting to ignore the sirens. When people stop paying attention it poses a danger.

Warnings by the Weather Service are now issued based on the geographic area of the storm and its predicted path. The “box” that you see on a radar screen for a warned area is oddly shaped to encompass only the area that is really in danger.

With all the apps available these days, many of us get notices of incoming storms on televisions or over our computers or smart phones; however, the Police Department gets notices sent directly from the National Weather Service.

When the warning is received, the Police Department reviews the more detailed information from the Weather Service, along with radar information from other sources including local television, to determine if City emergency sirens should be activated. If the direction and location of the storm indicate that a possible tornado will be near Saint Peter, the sirens are activated. If it looks like we are safe, sirens are not sounded, although Police Department personnel will continue to monitor the situation until any threat of tornados has passed our area.

Here are some more questions that we are frequently asked along with the answers we provide:

- **How are we supposed to know when to come out of our basement if there is no “all clear” siren?** **There isn't an “all clear” given.** Everyone should take a NOAA weather radio or a portable battery powered radio, or television into the shelter with them. That way you will know when the warning has expired and it is safe to exit your shelter.
There is no basement in my house. Where do I go in the event of a warning? That’s really something you need to determine before the weather turns nasty and there is no one good answer. Get to a windowless interior room, such as a bathroom, closet or inner hallway. Stay as far away from windows as possible. Go to the center of the room – corners tend to attract debris, and get under a sturdy piece of furniture, heavy table or desk. Protect your head and neck with a blanket, if possible. If you live in a rental property ask your landlord where the storm shelter is now….before you need it. If you live in a mobile home park, make sure your required emergency shelter is unlocked and accessible at all times and if not, check with the park owner to make sure that situation is changed before you need it. Traveling long distances across town to go to a shelter once the sirens have been activated is NOT a good idea, so make sure your emergency shelter is close at hand.

Can I bring my cat/dog with to the emergency shelter? That’s up to the rules of the shelter you use. But if you do, make sure the animal is in a crate or on a leash. Animals get scared during storms just like humans do. An unrestrained scared animal may bite or bolt. And if a storm is approaching it might be a good idea to wrangle your dog or cat into a crate before the sirens start going off. Then you can just grab the container and head to your basement or shelter.

You need to put in another siren tower because I can't hear it in my house. The outdoor emergency sirens are NOT designed to be heard indoors. The system is specifically for those who are outside. If you don’t already have one for your home, purchase a NOAA weather radio and keep it turned on at all times during severe weather season.

We all need to be weather aware. If the skies appear threatening, find a way to tune in to local TV or radio. If you are a fisherman, enjoy camping, or just enjoy outdoor activities, invest in a portable radio so you can tune into weather updates when the sky appears threatening.

The City will continue to do our part to monitor and warn residents when the need arises, but each of us as individuals also need to take responsibility for our own safety. And when those sirens do sound please…..

Don’t get in your car to chase the tornado. Head to your emergency shelter.

Don’t call the Police or City offices and ask why the sirens are going off. Head to your emergency shelter…that’s where most of the City employees will also be!

Board of Appeal and Equalization – The City Council will meet as the Saint Peter Board of Appeal and Equalization on Tuesday, May 19th beginning at 6:00 p.m. The meeting will be held virtually through the GoToMeeting platform. Information on how to log-in to that meeting will be included on the meeting agenda which is on the City’s website at https://www.saintpetermn.gov/AgendaCenter.

Property owners who believe the value or classification which has been assigned to their property by Nicollet County is incorrect are asked to first contact the Nicollet County Assessor’s office at 507-934-7060. After conferring with the Assessor, those who are still not satisfied may make an appointment through the Assessor’s office to appear before the Board. The Board will then review the valuation, classification, or both if necessary, and consider making corrections as needed. State law requires property owners to appeal to the local board before an appeal can be taken to the County Board of Appeal and Equalization.

For questions about this process, please contact the Nicollet County Assessor’s Office at 934-7060.

Is Your Cat a Criminal? – It’s official. If you haven’t applied for your cat license by now, your cat is officially a criminal. Or should you, the owner, be the criminal? Either way, the deadline has passed and now the license will include a penalty fee. And if you wait even longer and still don’t get the license you might even receive a formal citation from the Police Department.

Please apply now for your 2020-2021 cat license by contacting the Community Development Department (934-0661). They will walk you through what you need to do for no-contact issuance of the license. Cost with the penalty is now $10 for spayed/neutered cats or $30 for unaltered pets. The license is good for two years and you’ll need a current rabies certificate to get the license.
If you no longer have your cat please contact the Community Development Department so the information can be removed from the database.

HELP WANTED – The City of Saint Peter is now accepting applications for the following full-time position:

- LIBRARY SUPERVISOR - in the Recreation and Leisure Services Department. This position supervises the operation of the library and is responsible for assisting in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all Library programs and activities. Minimum qualifications: Bachelor's Degree in Library Media Science, Education or related field; Two years demonstrated programming experience in libraries, recreation, educational or related areas, or equivalent; Demonstrated personal computer experience; valid driver’s license; Experience working with the public. DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS include: Demonstrated experience of two or more years provision of library operations; Two or more years of demonstrated employee supervisory experience; Demonstrated experience in preparation and implementation of budgets; Two or more years’ demonstrated experience in provision of literacy enhancing programing, library program management, or delivery; Previous demonstrated experience with inventory or library materials circulation software; Demonstrated experience in the purchase of Library materials including books, periodicals, and digital materials. Starting wage $22.60-$25.24 per hour. Applicants must complete a City application form available from the City Administrator’s Office, 227 South Front Street, Saint Peter, Minnesota 56082-2538; by calling (507)931-0663; or on the City’s website at https://www.saintpetermn.gov/365/Employment. Completed applications will be accepted until 5:00 pm, June 12, 2020. Faxed or late applications will not be accepted. AAEOE

CITY MEETING CALENDAR —***PLEASE NOTE...Until further notice, all City meetings are being conducted electronically as authorized under Minnesota Statutes 13D.021. Log-in information for each meeting is included at the bottom of the agenda page. Agendas are all posted on the City’s website at www.saintpetermn.gov.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>May 22</td>
<td>8:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Tourism and Visitors Bureau</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>May 25</td>
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<td>MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY – All City offices Closed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>May 26</td>
<td>7:00 p.m.</td>
<td>City Council Meeting</td>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>May 27</td>
<td>12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Hospital Commission</td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
<td>May 28</td>
<td>12:00 noon</td>
<td>Economic Development Authority</td>
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<td>Monday</td>
<td>June 1</td>
<td>3:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Housing and Redevelopment Authority</td>
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<td>Monday</td>
<td>June 1</td>
<td>5:30 p.m.</td>
<td>City Council Workshop Session</td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
<td>June 4</td>
<td>5:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Planning and Zoning Commission</td>
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<td>Monday</td>
<td>June 8</td>
<td>7:00 p.m.</td>
<td>City Council Meeting</td>
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<td>Monday</td>
<td>June 15</td>
<td>5:30 p.m.</td>
<td>City Council Workshop Session</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>June 15</td>
<td>7:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Parks and Recreation Advisory Board</td>
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<td>Monday</td>
<td>June 22</td>
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<td>City Council Meeting</td>
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<td>June 24</td>
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<td>Hospital Commission</td>
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<td>Monday</td>
<td>June 29</td>
<td>3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>City Council Goal Session</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>June 30</td>
<td>5:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Heritage Preservation Commission</td>
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