

CITY OF SAINT PETER HOT SHEET



All the City news you need to know and a little bit more.
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The following information is a publication of the City of Saint Peter, City Administrator's Office, 934-0663, 227 South Front Street. To request an email subscription to this newsletter, or for more information, please contact us at barbaral@saintpetermn.gov www.facebook.com/cityofsaintpeter



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"BEST TASTING WATER IN MINNESOTA" - Officials at the Minnesota Rural Water Association (MRWA) have found the best-tasting water in Minnesota and its right here in Saint Peter!

On March 6, 2019 at the 35th Annual MRWA Water and Wastewater Technical Conference, the winner of a statewide competition was announced in an effort to identify the best tasting water in Minnesota and participants hope, in the nation. Water utilities from around the state submitted samples of their water, straight from the tap. The winner of the event was the City of Saint Peter, whose water sample was chosen by judges as the most appealing. "It tasted clean, pure and refreshing", stated the judges.

"Because of the quality of this water, Minnesota has a good chance at the national taste test in Washington, D.C." added Lori Blair, Executive Director of Minnesota Rural Water Association.

The competition is part of the "Quality on Tap!" campaign to emphasize the high quality, standards and taste of water. Winners of the state taste test will compete in a national contest at Capital Hill in Washington, D.C. in February 2020. This event is part of the Rural Water Rally, an annual legislative event for the 49 state affiliates of National Rural Water Association. Congrats to the City's Water Utility staff pictured here from left to right.... Foreman Chris Voeltz; Water Operator Jim Gruhot, and Water Operator Terry Kamm. Not pictured is Water Operator Curtis Thompson.



PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING CANCELLED – The regular Planning and Zoning Commission meeting scheduled for Thursday, April 4th has been cancelled due to a lack of agenda items.

The next regular meeting of the Planning Commission will be Thursday, May 2nd beginning at 5:30 p.m.

MAKES ME WONDER (BY CITY ADMINISTRATOR TODD PRAFKE) – So here we go.... The Pavilion has been in the works now for almost seven years. Yes, seven years!



One of the challenges with the project is the cost and it is sometimes hard to wrap our heads around the cost of things like this. How can it be \$1.6 million bucks? It just somehow doesn't seem right. It is an outside structure with no kitchen, no bathrooms, no Jacuzzi, no helipad, no lazy river.

These types of improvements are expensive, and as we take bids the private marketplace and privately owned contractors bid what they think the market will allow for them to get for the project based on materials and doing the work. Bidding is how we really find the true cost of things.

It is easy for me to say "it shouldn't cost that much", but I am not the carpenter, the roofer, or the mason that will be doing the work and bidding against others who may wish to do the work. I continue to believe that facilities and park amenities such as these bring value to communities and while I cannot tell you that this facility will bring \$1.6 million to the businesses downtown in the next year or in the next five, I remain confident that without these facilities our community is less. The places we gather, the events we share, whether it is Blues Fest, the Old Fashioned 4th of July, or Rock Bend Folk Festival are the things that contribute to the fabric of our community.

Do you see the importance of making that fabric stronger? It makes me wonder.....

CENSUS DAY 2020 – We're just under one year from Census Day 2020 when the United States Census Bureau will officially undertake Census 2020. Did you know the census is required by Federal law? Every 10 years, every single person

United States Census 2020

in the United States is counted and the information gained from the census is used to determine congressional representation, distribution of federal funds and all kinds of

other really important decisions.

The City of Saint Peter will work hard to make sure that every single resident of our community is counted. Keep your eyes open for ways that you can help as we spend the next year reminding everyone of the importance of this nationwide event.

NUISANCE ABATEMENT – It's the time of year again when the snow is melting and junk that was covered by crisp clean snow all winter raises it's ugly head. Yep....it's nuisance abatement time.

The City's Community Service Officer will soon be patrolling the alleys and roadways throughout St. Peter in search of violations of the City's nuisance regulations. If you have items of junk that have accumulated in your backyard, by your



garage, or even your front yard, now is the time to remove those items or face a notice to "abate" the nuisance.

As provided in Chapter 30 of the City Code, nuisances can

be either to the health and/or peace and safety of the public and the list of offending items is a long one. Old appliances, construction materials, unregistered/inoperable cars, trash, and litter are all considered nuisances when stored outside.

If you stored junk outside on your property through the winter, now is the time to "abate" that nuisance by removing the materials. The City's curbside appliance and furniture collection is still more than a month away, but any of the licensed refuse haulers (listed in the phone book) can work with you to haul away your items. Watch City utility bills and our social media pages (Facebook, Twitter, and the website) and this newsletter for more information on upcoming opportunities to get rid of junk.

For more information on what is considered a nuisance, check out Chapter 30 of the City Code (https://library.municode.com/mn/saint_peter/codes/code_of_ordinances) or contact the Community Service Officer at the Police Department (931-1550).

SUMMER REC BROCHURE - The summer activity brochure from the Recreation and Leisure Services Department and St. Peter Community and Family Education has been delivered to area mailboxes with lots of opportunities and activities for all.

If you didn't receive a copy in the mail you can view it on the City's website, www.saintpetermn.gov or pick up a copy at the Community Center. On-line, in-person, or over the phone registration is currently open so plan your summer fun today.

CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS – Action at the City Council meeting held on March 25, 2019 included approval for purchase of a replacement pool heater funded by the 2019 Equipment Certificate; authorization for City assistance for the Relay For Life event; and Mayor Ziemann proclaiming March, 2019 as "Women's History Month" in the community.

The next regular City Council meeting, will be Monday, April 8th beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Governors' Room of the Community Center.

FLOOD RECOVERY INFORMATION – The following information is provided by the Nicollet County Emergency Preparedness Coordinator.



The Minnesota River is just starting to recede in St. Peter this week, but problems are still rising for some property owners dealing with flood issues. Nicollet County Public Health offers simple tips on how residents can stay safe and healthy during clean-up and repair:

- Injury prevention: Stay out of flood waters; even the strongest swimmers can drown in flood waters. Do not drive through standing water. Never make contact with power lines or objects that are in contact with the lines. Wear rubber gloves and boots, as well as eye goggles to clear debris.
- Water: Check for local boil-water advisories. Do not use contaminated water to wash dishes, brush teeth, prepare food or baby formula, or make ice.

- Well water: If your well has been affected by flood waters, it is recommended to boil water for at least one minute at a rolling boil or instead purchase from a safe source. Before resuming normal use of the well, have the water tested for possible bacteria and pollutants. See <https://www.health.state.mn.us/news/pressrel/2019/wellflood031819.html>
- Food: Do not eat food that has come in contact with flood waters. Throw away any food that cannot be kept cold or properly heated due to lack of power.
- Carbon monoxide poisoning: Don't use a generator, pressure washer, charcoal grill, camp stove, or other gasoline- or charcoal-burning device inside your home, garage, or near a window, door or vent. Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas that can cause flu-like symptoms, illness or death. Seek fresh air and consult a healthcare provider immediately if poisoning is suspected.
- First aid: Immediately clean all wounds with soap and water. If your skin or eyes come in contact with hazardous materials, wash thoroughly with clean water. Make sure your tetanus vaccination is up to date. See: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/tetanus/tetanusfacts.html>
- Mental health: Floods and other natural disasters can create stress and anxiety for those affected and those who help. Talking to others, along with eating healthy and getting enough sleep can make a big difference. See: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/ep/behavioral/stress.html>
- Mold: Mold can begin to grow within 24 hours on items that have contact with floodwater. Remove it by washing with soap and water and letting surfaces dry completely. Bleach can be used to kill germs and mold on non-porous surfaces. Surfaces that hold food can be sanitized with a mixture of 1 tablespoon of bleach to a gallon of safe water, increasing to ¼ - to a ½-cup for items like walls, floors and tables that won't come in contact with food or mouths. Materials such as moldy clothing, ceiling tiles and sheetrock may have to be



replaced.

See:

<https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/mold/index.html>

- Free Salvation Army Clean-up Kits that include a 5-gallon bucket, bleach, sponges, and a mop are available at the Nicollet County Emergency Management Office in the basement of the Nicollet County Government Center (501 South Minnesota Avenue) during business hours. Information sheets on these topics can be obtained by Brown-Nicollet Environmental Health at 507-934-7089.

FLOODING UPDATE – We live on the Minnesota River. The Minnesota River occasionally floods. Bridges are occasionally closed due to flooding. Welcome to spring in Minnesota!

All kidding aside, Spring flooding has arrived and the City and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (they have control over bridge closures) are taking the necessary steps to keep residents safe.

So here's where we stand now:

- The river is going down, but that doesn't mean the flooding situation is over yet.
- Freeman Drive leading to Marwey Trailer Court was closed over the weekend due to rising water. The water has now receded and the roadway has been reopened.
- Highway 99 bridge remains closed to all traffic.
- The Mill Pond area of Riverside Park, including the boat landing and the campgrounds and the road around the Mill Pond, remains closed to all traffic.
- Also closed is the Dog Park on Highway 99 and the south portion of Riverside Park (Disc golf course and trails near Highway 22 bridge.)
- Other than park land, no City facilities or other structures are at risk at this point. Staff has sandbagged around the south lift station (located near the Marwey Trailer Court, but the water has not threatened it so far.

As tempting as it may be, it's just water folks so having pictures or video of it isn't that interesting. Do NOT go around barricades to get those selfies!

PEDDLERS NEED PERMITS – Tis the time of year when Peddlers arrive and we've already had at least one person call the Police Department.

Regulations for Peddlers, which were formerly referred to as "Green River" laws, have been in

place for decades. The term refers to the U.S. licensing law protecting residents from door-to-door solicitation. This ordinance grants protection to residents from unwanted peddlers and salespersons, by prohibiting door-to-door solicitations without prior consent and the City Code places restrictions on how these activities can be undertaken.

People who are going door to door in a residential area without a permanent and fixed business location within the corporate limits of Saint Peter are subject to permitting requirements.

When a Peddler applies for a permit, each individual who is going door to door must have their own permit with their own name on it. The Police Department does a background check on each of the individuals and then, if recommended for approval, the permit application goes to the City Council. Once issued, each Peddler must carry their permit on them and present it to anyone who asks to see it.

As part of the permitting process, Peddler's must issue a bond with the City. This helps ensure that anyone who might be swindled by the transaction can get a bit of relief.

But here's the thing about Peddlers....if you don't want to let them in your house, don't! There is no rule that says just because they have a permit from the City you must do business with them. While we do a background check on the applicants, it's still up to each of us to use our own best judgement when dealing with a salesperson that appears at the door.

If you do open your door to a Peddler, certainly ask to see their permit before inviting them into your home or ordering anything. If they can't or won't show you the permit, simply don't do business with them. And don't believe them when they say they don't need a permit or the company holds the permit. They DO need the permit no matter what other statute they might reference and it's the individual that receives the permit, not the company.

If someone comes to your door selling without the required permit, please feel free to call the Police Department at 931-1550 and provide a report. Give the Police the best description you can of the individual including what direction they were going; whether on foot or by vehicle and, if in a car, what make/model/color; what they were wearing; and what they were trying to sell you. An Officer will try and find them and if necessary, direct them in how

to obtain the proper permit or send them on their way.

FRONT YARD PARKING - The Saint Peter City Code includes regulations requiring that off-street parking be provided for each particular use of land and stipulating the number of required parking spaces for each of the various land uses and the location of the parking spaces, particularly in residential districts.

The regulations read in part: *"Within residential districts, no required off-street parking shall be located within any required front yard except as may be provided within the private driveway servicing a residential structure."*

The only exception to this section of the ordinance would be during snow emergencies declared by the City of Saint Peter.

The zoning ordinance also requires that any driveways or parking areas be surfaced with an asphalt, concrete or a similar hard surfaced material. Gravel does not constitute a "hard surfaced" material and is not acceptable given that the gravel often migrates into the City's drainage system impeding the flow of stormwater and resulting in added maintenance costs.

This section of the City Code was established when the zoning ordinance was comprehensively amended in 2007 and applies to parking areas established since that time. Those that had gravel parking areas prior to that time are considered to be "grandfathered" and can continue. The installation of a hard surface would be required should the use be enlarged or expanded due to new construction.

SQUIRRELS AND POWER OUTAGES

– A couple of weekends ago, there was a power outage that impacted a portion of the community. As people were chatting about it on social media, a few people jokingly suggested the City would claim a squirrel was the cause. This has been going on for years and we've even had a few Councilmembers tease staff about using that excuse. But little did you know that squirrels have oftentimes been found to be the culprits when the power goes out!



We are not the only ones experiencing this issue. In fact, "Minnesota Cities" magazine recently published the following news brief about that very thing.....

“The American Public Power Association (APPA) recently displayed some collaborative spirit when it reached out publicly to its arch nemesis: squirrels. On Squirrel Appreciation Day, January 21st, rather than berate the furry fiend, APPA wrote a blog post recommending a variety of power-grid approved tips for staying safe. The blog also linked to the association’s eReliability Tracker which reveals that in 2016, utilities reported 3,456 outages caused by squirrels. Read the acorn in cheek post at www.publicpower.org/blog/open-letter-squirrels.”

So the next time you experience a power interruption, think of our furry friends.

CITY COUNCIL ADVISORY BOARDS – This is the eighth in a nine part series on the City Council’s advisory boards. These boards are comprised of mostly citizen members and are tasked with various responsibilities....the most important of which is providing recommendations to the City Council. Applicants are recommended for appointment by Mayor Zieman and the full Council votes on each appointment. Last week’s article focused on the Parks Board and this week we’re highlighting the Planning and Zoning Commission.

The function and duties of the Planning and Zoning Commission include preparation of a Comprehensive Plan for the physical development of the City, including proposed public buildings, street arrangements and improvements, public utility services, parks, playgrounds, and other similar developments, the use of property, the density of population, and other matters related to the physical development of the City. Such plan may be prepared in sections, each of which shall relate to a major subject of the plan. The Commission may also prepare a revised Zoning Plan and an official map of the platted and unplatted portions of the City and adjoining territory, or portions thereof, indicating upon such map the proposed future extensions or widening of streets of the City. The Planning and Zoning Commission shall review all proposals for land development that are affected by zoning, conditional use permits, annexation, and subdivision regulations. Also, every proposed plat of land within the City or within two miles of the City limits and not within a town which itself requires the approval of plats shall be submitted to the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Council.

The Commission is comprised of seven members serving three year terms. Members include: Joseph Urban, Ken Rossow, Scott Fichtner, Kelly Henry, Andy Davis, John Kvamme, and Roger Parras. Serving as ex-officio to the Commission are the City Administrator, Community Development Director and

City Attorney.

The Planning Commission meets on the first Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m. in the Governors' Room of the Community Center.

If you are interested in applying to be on one of the many City Council advisory boards or commissions, applications are available from the City Administrator’s Office at City Hall (227 South Front Street) or by emailing barbaral@saintpetermn.gov.

To be eligible for appointment to an advisory board, applicants must live within the corporate limits of the City and must commit to making the regularly scheduled meetings of the board.

Next week’s edition of the Hot Sheet will provide information on the Tourism and Visitor’s Bureau.

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

- **ELECTRIC SUPERINTENDENT** - in the Department of Public Works. Responsibilities include but are not limited to planning, coordinating, directing, and monitoring the operation of the Electric Utility; planning and supervising construction of the electrical generation and distribution system; setting priorities to deal with emergencies; coordinating activities with other divisions, departments, and organizations; assisting with planning, design, and construction of projects; evaluate need for and prepare specifications for materials and equipment; maintain operating records; prepare specifications for electric utility services, equipment, and materials; prepare reports as requested; assist in annual budget preparations; set quality standards for work to be performed; set priorities. Minimum qualifications: high school degree and satisfactory completion of a technical school program for lineman electricians and completion of a recognized apprenticeship in electrical line work, including eight years of responsible experience in electrical distribution systems. An additional five years of experience may be substituted for technical training. Possession of, or ability to obtain, a State of Minnesota Lineman Electrician License issued by the State Board of Electricity. Possession of a valid State of Minnesota Class A Driver’s License with air brake endorsement or ability to obtain such within one month of the date of employment with the City. NOTICE: The successful candidate must complete and pass a pre-employment drug test and is subject to post-accident, random, reasonable suspicion, return to duty, and follow-up drug and alcohol

testing. Starting salary \$81,120 to \$86,320 per year. Applicants must complete a City application form available in the City Administrator's Office, 227 South Front Street, Saint Peter, Minnesota 56082-2538 or by

calling (507) 931-0663. Completed applications must be received by the City Administrator's Office no later than 5:00 P.M., Wednesday, April 17, 2019. Faxed, e-mailed, or late application will not be accepted.

CITY MEETING CALENDAR – For questions on meeting dates/times, please contact the City Administrator's Office at 934-0663. Full calendar available at www.saintpetermn.gov.

Thursday	April 4	5:30 p.m.	Planning and Zoning Commission
Monday	April 8	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Tuesday	April 9	6:00 p.m.	Library Board
Monday	April 15	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
Monday	April 22	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Tuesday	April 23	6:00 p.m.	City Board of Appeal and Equalization Meeting
Wednesday	April 24	12:30 p.m.	Hospital Commission
Thursday	April 25	12:00 noon	Economic Development Authority
Friday	April 26	8:00 a.m.	Tourism and Visitors Bureau
Monday	April 29	3:00 p.m.	City Council Goal Session
Tuesday	April 30	5:30 p.m.	Heritage Preservation Commission
Thursday	May 2	5:30 p.m.	Planning and Zoning Commission
Monday	May 6	3:30 p.m.	Housing and Redevelopment Authority
Monday	May 6	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
Monday	May 13	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Wednesday	May 15		POLICE OFFICER MEMORIAL DAY
Monday	May 20	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
Monday	May 20	7:00 p.m.	Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Wednesday	May 22	12:30 p.m.	Hospital Commission
Thursday	May 23	12:00 noon	Economic Development Authority
Friday	May 24	8:00 a.m.	Tourism and Visitors Bureau
Monday	May 27		MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY – City offices closed
Tuesday	May 28	5:30 p.m.	Heritage Preservation Meeting (location to be Determined)

Tuesday

May 28

7:00 p.m.

City Council Meeting