

# CITY OF SAINT PETER HOT SHEET



All the City news you need to know and a little bit more!

City Info Line 507-934-0675 TDD #711

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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. Please contact us at [barbaral@saintpetermn.gov](mailto:barbaral@saintpetermn.gov) [www.facebook.com/cityofsaintpeter](http://www.facebook.com/cityofsaintpeter)



05/04/16

**CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS** – Action taken by the City Council on April 25, 2016 included authorizing David Drown Associates to receive bids for the sale of general obligation housing Tax Increment Financing bonds for Traverse Green Subdivision; approval of the 2016 electric fund budget and an increase to electric rates; authorization to issue a “request for proposals” for lease of space in the Community Center that is expected to become vacant during summer 2017; approval for execution of a memorandum of understanding with School District #508 for City operation of certain School District programs; approval for receipt of bids for the 2016 equipment certificate; and approval of sales plans and policies and restrictive covenants for Traverse Green Subdivision.

The next City Council meeting is May 9, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the Governors' Room of the Community Center. For more information on City Council meetings, please contact the City Administrator's office at 507-934-0663. Copies of the Council packet are also available on the City's website at [www.saintpetermn.gov/city](http://www.saintpetermn.gov/city).



## **MAKES ME WONDER (BY CITY ADMINISTRATOR TODD PRAFKE) –**

“I never heard about that“.... Is a phrase I hear spoken to me almost on a weekly basis. Whenever I hear that phrase I often ask and try to analyze what we can do to get you the information you are seeking.

One of the challenges I see is that the din of information in our lives is so loud it is often hard to figure out what I need for my daily life and what is information chaff. We try to make sure we put out

good quality information in a number of different formats. There is often much to tell and in fact, so much, that the difference between transparency and invisibility is blurred brought on by the sheer amount of things we seemingly need to know.

I know that I cannot make you know something. We try very hard to be transparent, to not be invisible, but there is no way for me to give you information in such a way that you will know it, all of it, about the City. You have higher priorities for the information you just have to know, (your mom's birthday, your boss's phone number, your next dentist appointment) and that is how it should be.

The HOT SHEET is a great example of that. While other cities put out a newsletter maybe once per month, we do it weekly and deliver it to your email box (if you have asked for it). We put notices in your utility bill. We maintain a web site with Council packets and minutes (the same things that Councilmembers get). We put information on Facebook and we do a video blog on YouTube. We publish notices in the paper.

Besides what we do, the Saint Peter Herald covers just about every City Council meeting and it is rare that there is not a story on the front page about what the Council is doing. We are on the radio with Wendy Wild at KTOE and on KNUJ from time to time. The Chamber puts a link to our Council packets in their weekly newsletter. We speak at Lions, Rotary, Silver Seniors and Chamber of Commerce functions and many others. We respond to emails and phone calls. Our Council meetings are on cable TV. You can attend a Council meeting in person.

People ask me questions about all sorts of things at church, at Family Fresh, at Holiday when I get gas, and at ball games just to name a few.

So let me help you know more about the City. If you have an idea as to how we might be able to get information out let me know, but in the meantime if

you are going to take one or two steps to know more, this is what I would recommend. Sign up to get emailed the HOSHEET by contacting my office at [barbaral@saintpetermn.gov](mailto:barbaral@saintpetermn.gov), or "Like" us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/cityofsaintpeter](http://www.facebook.com/cityofsaintpeter), or check out our website at [www.saintpetermn.gov](http://www.saintpetermn.gov), or subscribe to the local newspaper.

Do you want to know more? If so, please give me a call. Will you try one of these easy and cheap opportunities to know more? It makes me wonder....



**POLICE OFFICERS MEMORIAL DAY** – May 15<sup>th</sup> is "POLICE OFFICER MEMORIAL DAY" in Minnesota and the entire week is celebrated as Police Week. This special time is an observance in the United States that pays tribute to the local, state, and Federal peace officers who have died in

the line of duty. The Memorial Day takes place on May 15th each year, and Police Week is the calendar week in which the Memorial Day occurs.

The holiday was created on October 1, 1961, when Congress asked the President to designate May 15th to honor peace officers. John F. Kennedy signed the bill into law on October 1, 1962. The Proclamation signed by President John F. Kennedy stated in part....*"To pay tribute to the law enforcement officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country and to voice our appreciation for all those who currently serve on the front lines of the battle against crime, the Congress, by a joint resolution approved October 1, 1962 (75 Stat.676), has authorized and requested the President to designate May 15 of each year as "Peace Officers Memorial Day," and the week in which it falls as "National Police Week" and by Public Law 103-322 (36 U.S.C. 175) has requested that the flag be flown at half-staff on Peace Officers' Memorial Day."*

President Obama honored Police Officers in 2013 by stating, in part... *"The 143 fallen officers we honor today put themselves on the front lines of that fight, to preserve that quality of community, and to protect the roots of our greatness. They exemplified the very idea of citizenship -- that with our God-given rights come responsibilities and obligations to ourselves and to others. They embodied that idea. That's the way they died. That's how we must remember them. And that's how we must live. We can never repay our debt to*

*these officers and their families, but we must do what we can, with all that we have, to live our lives in a way that pays tribute to their memory. That begins, but does not end, by gathering here -- with heavy hearts, to carve their names in stone, so that all will know them, and that their legacy will endure. We are grateful to them and we are grateful to you."*



Saint Peter residents are encouraged to recognize and thank our local Police Officers for their commitment to keeping us all safe as we honor their sacrifices on Police Officer Memorial Day

**BICYCLE SAFETY** - Summer's almost here and that means an increased number of bicycles on the roads and sidewalks. For many of us who haven't been on a bike in a while, a few safety tips might be helpful. These tips are provided by McGruff.org.....

Riding a bike can be fun, if you know how to stay safe. But if you don't follow the rules, it can be dangerous. To be safe on your bike, follow these tips:

- Always wear a helmet and fasten it. Helmets protect your head, and in many states it's illegal not to wear one!
- Wear bright clothing so drivers and other bikers can see you.
- If you want to ride after dark, ask an adult and remember to put reflectors on your clothes, helmet, and bike. Adults should wear the reflectors also!
- Obey the rules of the road. Bikers must stop at all stop signs and traffic lights and use turning signals, just like cars.
- Ride on the right hand side of the road, in the same direction as traffic.
- Look both ways. Most crashes happen at intersections or driveways so be on the lookout for people who may not see you.
- Ride on bike trails, roads with little traffic or in parks. If you do come to a busy road, walk your bike across intersections at a crosswalk.
- Keep your bike tuned up. You don't want to get a flat tire far away from your house!
- Protect your bike. Lock it up or keep it in a safe place when you're not using it. Don't leave your bike out in your yard because someone just might come along and ride away with it. Also, don't leave your bike in an open or unlocked garage.



when customers buy energy efficient products for your home or business is just one way we are helping saving money and keeping electric rates low.

In 2015, we provided City electric customers with \$82,029 in rebates to help invest in energy-efficient products. Those products saved enough electricity to power 94 homes per year, and provided the same carbon dioxide reduction as planting 130 acres of trees. Four-time ENERGY STAR Award Winners, SMMPA and its members are helping utility customers save money and protect the environment through energy efficiency.

And here's another way to save money on your energy costs.....Why not recycle that old energy wasting refrigerator and replace it with a new ENERGY STAR® certified model? You'll save energy and you can save even more with a utility rebate!



The City offers rebates of \$25 on the purchase of new ENERGY STAR refrigerators, plus an additional rebate of up to \$50 to pay for recycling your old working refrigerator.

Rebate forms are available from area retailers and from [www.SaveEnergyInStPeter.com](http://www.SaveEnergyInStPeter.com).

Refrigerators that are 15 years or older use twice as much energy as a new ENERGY STAR certified refrigerator. Replacing that old energy-wasting refrigerator with a new ENERGY STAR certified refrigerator could save you as much as \$260 in energy costs over the next five years.

Flip Your Fridge to ENERGY STAR, the simple choice for energy efficiency!

For a complete list of rebates available through the City of Saint Peter, check out this link... [http://www.saveenergyinmycommunity.com/media/42509/sp\\_res\\_rebate\\_summary\\_sheet2016.pdf](http://www.saveenergyinmycommunity.com/media/42509/sp_res_rebate_summary_sheet2016.pdf).

**JUNK COLLECTION REMINDER** – It's not too late to sign up to dispose of appliances and furniture curbside, but time is running short! The deadline to sign up for the May 25th **curbside appliance pickup** is Monday, May 23rd. Cost is \$15 for each appliance. Sign-up takes place in the Finance Department at City Hall (227 South Front Street) and payment must be made at the time of sign-up. Appliances must be curbside by 8:00 am on the collection date or the fee will be forfeited.

The curbside furniture collection deadline is May 25th for the Friday, May 27th collection. As with the appliance collection, the item must be registered and paid for in the Finance Department

at City Hall by no later than Wednesday, May 25<sup>th</sup>. The item must be placed curbside (not in the street) by 8:00 a.m. on May 27th or the fee will be forfeited. Cost is:

Hide-a-Bed	\$35
Chest and Mirror	\$25
Recliners	\$22
Desk	\$22
Sofa	\$22
Cabinet	\$22
Carpet rolls	\$20 a roll
Mattress/Box spring	\$20
Chairs	\$18
Headboard	\$15
Footboard	\$15
Miscellaneous	\$12

For those with electronics to dispose of, an electronics collection will take place on Saturday, May 21st, from 9:00 am-2:00 pm at the City's wastewater treatment plant located at 400 West St. Julien Street. No registration is necessary for this collection and the collection company will accept payment at the time of drop off. Costs are:

Monitors up to 20"	\$10	Large Printer/Copier	\$25
LCD monitor	\$5	DVD/VCR/cable box	\$5
LCD/Plasma TV	\$15	Stereo system/home electronics	\$5
TV - 19 or 20 inch	\$10	Appliances	\$15
TV - 25 or 26 inch	\$15	Microwave	\$5
TV - 27 or 36 inch	\$20	Computer tower, computer components, keyboard, mouse, laptop, cell phones, small electronics, batteries (excluding alkaline), heaters	Free
Console/big screen TV	\$30		
Small Printer	\$5		

And finally, if you have a bike to recycle, Saturday, May 21st, from 9 am-2 pm is the date you will want to mark on your calendar. Bicycle recycling will take place along with the electronics recycling at the City's wastewater treatment plant at 400 West St. Julien. All bicycles and bike parts will be accepted. Bikes will be refurbished or recycled by an area non-profit organization.

**ADOPT A PARK PROGRAM** - Have you or a group you belong to ever thought about contributing back to the community? How about adopting a City park?



The City has an "Adopt a Park" program and two of our parks (the 5 acre Dog Park and the 80 acre Riverside Park Extension) remain orphans with no one to adopt them.



Groups interested in the program need to make a commitment to clean the park twice a year (spring and fall). The City provides garbage bags and gloves and then picks up the bags of trash that are collected by the group for disposal.

If you are interested in adopting one of these two parks, please contact the Public Works Department at (507)934-0670 to sign up or for more information.

**ELECTRIC RATES** - Electric rates will be changing starting May 1st for bills that are due in July. The table below illustrates changes within our four largest rate classes. Those classes are Residential, Small Commercial, Large Commercial and Industrial.

The table shows the impact of the users in each class that use the lowest (LOW) amount of power and the highest (HIGH). So, as an example... the impact for residential customers will be between \$.94 per month up to \$11.88 per month depending on your usage.

RES 1	current monthly	after increase	DIFF
LOW	\$ 25.89	\$ 26.83	\$ 0.94
HIGH	\$ 327.07	\$ 338.95	\$ 11.88
<b>SM COMM 3 4 41</b>			
LOW	\$ 29.30	\$ 30.35	\$ 1.05
HIGH	\$ 392.82	\$ 406.86	\$ 14.04
<b>LG COMM 5 6 17</b>			
LOW	\$ 58.15	\$ 60.76	\$ 2.61
HIGH	\$ 11,487.20	\$ 12,002.25	\$ 515.05
<b>INDUSTRIAL 7</b>			
LOW	\$ 14,455.10	\$ 15,130.46	\$ 675.36
HIGH	\$ 93,120.52	\$ 97,471.25	\$ 4,350.73

No one, including the City Council, is happy about rate changes and, in fact, this year the Council chose to use some reserve funds to moderate increases. However, that is not sustainable given that we are likely to see energy costs continue to go up in the 2017 year and 2018 year. While it may be no consolation, the system that provides power

to your home or business is very, very dependable. In an upcoming Hot Sheet article we will explain the data behind that claim.

If you want to know about the "Why" of a rate increase and "How" it works and "Who" it will impact, please look at the Council packet that is found on the City of Saint Peter's website at <http://www.saintpetermn.gov/sites/default/files/meetings-agendas-packets/CITY%20COUNCIL%20MEETING%20OF%20APRIL%2025%2C%202016.pdf> starting on page 43.

Based on the proposed budget, we anticipate that the City's unrestricted cash position will decrease from a projected \$965,540 at the end of 2015, to an estimate of \$682,576 at the end of 2016. The expenditures (without capital) for 2016 are \$11,168,530; which puts the reserve at 6.1% of the current year budget.

The 2016 projected unrestricted reserve of \$682,576 does not meet our targeted amount of \$1,200,000. The reserve target has been set based on a risk analysis and projections in an effort to cover emergency repairs and to make planned capital purchases using cash when possible.

If you have additional questions please give us a call at 934-0663 (Administrator's Office) or 934-0664 (Finance Department).

**WATERING TIPS FOR YOUR LAWN AND GARDEN –**

*(This information is provided by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency)* - Household water use swells in the summer due to irrigation of lawns and gardens, but according to the U.S. EPA as much as 50% of the water we use outdoors is wasted from inefficient watering methods and systems.

Quell the swell! Conserve Minnesota's limited freshwater resources by using efficient watering methods this summer. Before you even turn on the hose, determine if you even need to water.

Trees and native plants do quite well with only rainwater. Except in times of drought, you don't need to irrigate these areas. Consider adding more of these plants to your yard. Find plant suggestions at [www.BlueThumb.org](http://www.BlueThumb.org).

Grass also does quite well with only rainwater. According to Minnesota Extension, lawn irrigation is optional in Minnesota's climate. If you choose not to irrigate your lawn, it may be brown for several months. But when the temperature cools in the late summer, the grass will green up and grow again.



Garden beds with non-native flowers or vegetables usually need some water in the driest months. Though plants vary, a rule of thumb is to water one inch a week (minus rainfall). Keep track of rain and watering using a rain gauge placed in the garden. Also apply a layer of mulch around plants to reduce evaporation.

In the spring, look for leaks. Check the hose for leaks at its connection to the spigot. If it leaks, replace the nylon or rubber washer and ensure a tight connection to the spigot using pipe tape and a wrench. To check for leaks in an in-ground irrigation system, contact a certified irrigation professional.

Water in the early morning. The wee hours of 4-8 a.m. are best for watering. Set up your sprinkler or irrigation system before you go to bed. In the morning, turn on the water while you get ready for the day. If the morning is too busy to add watering to the list, try a hose timer.

When hand watering, use a spray nozzle. A hose can waste 6 gallons per minute if you leave it running. A nozzle will stop the water until you are ready to use it.

Install micro irrigation along garden beds, shrubs, and trees. Micro irrigation—such as a soaker hose or drip tape—delivers low volumes of water directly to plants' roots, minimizing the water lost to wind, runoff, and evaporation. Simply run the irrigation hose along a row of plants and leave it there all season. Connect your main hose when you need to water. More complicated systems are available for larger areas.

Use a timer. It's easy to forget that you've turned on the water. A kitchen timer or hose timer can help you.

Don't sprinkle the driveway and sidewalk. It helps to select a sprinkler that matches your garden shape and size. Also choose a sprinkler that throws large drops, instead of a misty spray. This will ensure more water reaches plants and less is lost to evaporation and wind.

Consider an irrigation system. If maintained and properly set with a WaterSense labeled irrigation controller, an irrigation system—including in-ground sprinklers and/or micro irrigation—will water at the ideal time of day, adjust the amount of water according to the soil moisture, and will not keep running if you forget that it is on. An irrigation controller uses local weather and landscape conditions to tailor watering schedules to actual conditions on the site. These can also be added to older, existing systems.

Catch the rain. When the rain does come, saving rain water in rain barrels or cisterns is a great way to harvest rain water for irrigation. If the barrel is

next to a garden, you can attach a soaker hose to the barrel and simply turn it on to let the water run.

\*The information above was provided by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

**PREVENTING RUNOFF** - Have you ever considered keeping the rain in your yard by using permeable pavers to let rain flow straight into the soil? When it rains, water can't soak into impervious surfaces like rooftops, driveways, and roads. Instead, it runs off into streets and storm sewers creating stormwater. From our streets to our streams, stormwater picks up nutrients, dirt, salt, fertilizers, pesticides, oil, bacteria, and garbage.

Reducing runoff is critical to minimizing the impact our yards and gardens have on the surrounding lakes and streams. There are many ways to encourage rainwater to soak into the ground. Or you can capture rainwater for use in your yard. Either way, stormwater is reduced and our lakes and rivers stay clean.

Rain will soak in to the ground where there are gardens and other vegetation. These surfaces are permeable, meaning they let the water through. Rain will not soak through your roof, most driveways, or roads. These surfaces are impermeable.

When you are planning changes to your house or lot, think about reducing the size of hard surfaces. In areas where hard surfaces are necessary, consider pavers or pavement that lets water through. There are now a variety of permeable pavements on the market that are specifically designed to increase infiltration into the ground. Ask your contractor or home and garden supply store for water-friendly pavers, or porous pavement or asphalt.

Rain gardens and native plants are beautiful solutions to water pollution. A rain garden is a popular landscaping choice that prevents water pollution by allowing stormwater to soak into the ground before it runs off. Rain gardens and native plants also:

- Prevent erosion by holding soil in place with their deep roots.
- Attract birds and butterflies.
- Require little watering and maintenance once established.

Rain gardens are concave gardens that collect runoff from downspouts or driveways. Plants that tolerate "wet feet" should be planted in the bottom, while plants that need less water are planted on the edges. For information about rain gardens, check out the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources websites.

They take a little work to install, but a do-it-yourselfer can do it.

\*\*This information was borrowed from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency website.

**CALL BEFORE YOU DIG!** – If you are doing any kind of digging on your property it's really important to find out where underground utility lines are on the property **BEFORE YOU DIG!** In fact, it's the law in Minnesota that you contact Gopher State One Call 48 hours before you begin your project. Gopher State will ask lots of questions such as the location of your property and the area you would like to dig in and then they will notify all utility operators in our area of your locate request. The utility operators will come out to your property and mark the area to let you know where utility lines are that might impact your project. (If you are contracting for the work to be completed, the contractor is responsible for calling Gopher State.) Call 811 or 800-252-1166 before you dig for this free service! (\*\*Please note....underground irrigation systems are not located as part of this service!)



**STORMWATER WATCH** - An illicit discharge is defined as “any discharge into a municipal storm sewer system that is not composed entirely of stormwater”.

These are pollutants that end up, untreated, in the Minnesota River. Some of these pollutants are car wash wastewater, gas or motor oil, grass clippings, household cleaners, paints, pesticides, pet waste, solvents, and weed killer. Sometimes these pollutants are carried through the storm drainage system by rain, wind, or by improper disposal from area residents. This can result in serious health



and water quality problems and eventually wildlife and the overall appearance of the river are adversely affected by the illegal dumping.

To help combat this illegal activity, City staff relies strongly on participation from the public. Residents who observe illegal dumping or observe pollutants within waterways or storm sewers are asked to contact the Public Works Department by phone at 934-0670 or use the City's website ([http://www.saintpetermn.gov/sites/default/files/documents/public-works/ComplaintForm\\_Stormwater2.pdf](http://www.saintpetermn.gov/sites/default/files/documents/public-works/ComplaintForm_Stormwater2.pdf)) to complete a stormwater violation form. This program cannot succeed without strong public participation. With your help, we can continue work to clean up the Minnesota River.

Thank you for your cooperation.

**COMMUNITY CENTER GYM CLOSURE** – The Community Center gym will be closed for annual maintenance from May 16-21, 2016. The gym will re-open on May 23rd. We apologize for the inconvenience.

**FLUORESCENT BULB RECYCLING 2016-** City residential or small business utility customers (defined as organized for profit and less than 20 full-time employees), can recycle fluorescent bulbs on Wednesday, May 4th at the City's Wastewater Treatment Facility, east entrance, located at 400 West Saint Julien Street. Collection hours will be 7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

A recycling info form will be included in the May 1st utility bills. The form should be completed and returned with the bulbs when they are dropped off.

The first 10 bulbs are free, but there will be a small fee for recycling of bulbs in excess of 10. Please place the bulbs in the original containers if possible, but refrain from taping the bulbs together.

**CITY MEETING CALENDAR** - This calendar is subject to change. Should you have a question on a meeting date/time, please contact the City Administrator's Office at 934-0663 or visit the City's website at [www.saintpetermn.gov](http://www.saintpetermn.gov).

Thursday	May 5	5:30 p.m.	Planning and Zoning Commission
Monday	May 9	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Tuesday	May 10	5:30 p.m.	Library Board
Monday	May 16	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
Monday	May 16	6:30 p.m.	Tree Advisory Board
Monday	May 16	7:00 p.m.	Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Monday	May 23	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting

Wednesday	May 25	12:30 p.m.	Hospital Commission
Thursday	May 26	12:00 noon	Economic Development Authority
Friday	May 27	8:00 a.m.	Tourism and Visitors Bureau
Monday	May 30		MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY – LEGAL HOLIDAY - City offices closed
Tuesday	May 31	3:00 p.m.	City Council Goal Session
Thursday	June 2	5:30 p.m.	Planning and Zoning Commission
Monday	June 6	3:30 p.m.	Housing and Redevelopment Authority
Monday	June 6	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
Monday	June 13	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Monday	June 20	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
Monday	June 20	7:00 p.m.	Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Wednesday	June 22	12:30 p.m.	Hospital Commission
Thursday	June 23	12:00 noon	Economic Development Authority
Friday	June 24	8:00 a.m.	Tourism and Visitors Bureau
Monday	June 27	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Tuesday	June 28	5:30 p.m.	Heritage Preservation Commission