

# 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)



04/01/2015

**CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS** – Action taken by the City Council at the regular meeting of March 23, 2015 included final acceptance of the Broadway Generation Plant Equipment project; approval of the concept design of the Veteran's Memorial in Minnesota Square Park; adoption of several resolutions and ordinances related to stormwater regulations; approval of modifications to the job descriptions for Water Resources Superintendent and Assistant Lead Librarian; authorization for purchase of replacement pool controllers funded by the 2015 Equipment Certificate; approval for extension of the rain barrel rebate program in 2015; approval of the sale of the 430 Ritt Street property to Marv Kottke; approval for changes in the membership composition for the Human Rights Commission and the Hospital Commission.

The next regular meeting of the City Council will be Monday, April 13th 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 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)** - *Did you know....* I was at a celebratory dinner a week or so ago and one of the other attendees mentioned that she really likes the HOT SHEET and

reads "Makes Me Wonder".

I said "Thanks for reading. The HOT SHEET is one of those ways we try to push information out so that people can know or at least have a sense of what is going on with the City."

As I thought about our interaction it reminded me about the many ways we put out information so that everyone can have at least some idea about what is going on in the City. I often hear about transparency or lack of it. At least a couple times a week I have people say to me, "I didn't know that was happening."

Well I know you didn't know because we are all so busy in our lives that I can't keep track of when my dog needs a rabies shot let alone when I had my last tetanus shot! We all live in a very busy world; one that is getting busier each day. A world that is filled with all kinds of information pushing in on us. A world where we now have apps to sort the information we are interested in for us. One where the din of information is so loud it is often hard to figure out the difference between transparency and invisibility brought on by the sheer amount of things we seemingly need to know.

I know that I cannot make you know something, but we try very hard to not be invisible and there is no way for me to give you information in such a manner that you will know it, all of it, about the City. You have higher priorities for the information you just have to know, (your wife's birthday, your boss's phone number, your next dentist appointment) and that is how it should be. So while we may not exactly stick out over that din, we try to do a number of things to make it easy for you to get information when you are ready for it.

The HOT SHEET is a great example of that. While other cities put out a newsletter maybe once a 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 website with pdf's of the same meeting packets and minutes that Councilmembers are provided. We put information on Facebook and we do a video blog on YouTube. We publish notices in the paper. Besides what we do, the St. 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 KTOE radio with Wendy Wilde 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 Saints, Chamber of Commerce functions and many others. We respond to emails and phone calls. Our Council meetings are on public access cable TV. And everyone can attend Council meetings or workshops 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 HOT SHEET by sending an email to [barbaral@saintpetermn.gov](mailto:barbaral@saintpetermn.gov) or calling my office at 934-0663. Like us on Facebook at <https://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? Give me a call at 934-0663. Will you try one of these easy and cheap opportunities to know more? It makes me wonder....

**BOARD OF APPEAL AND EQUALIZATION** – The City Council will meet as the Saint Peter Board of Appeal and Equalization on Tuesday, April 7th beginning at 6:00 p.m. at the Nicollet County Government Center.

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.

**HYDRANT FLUSHING** - The Public Works Department will be flushing hydrants beginning April 13th through approximately April 24th. Flushing will take place between 8:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. to minimize

inconvenience to residents. Flushing could make water cloudy or discolored for a short time, so please check your water clarity before doing laundry.



There are numerous benefits from hydrant flushing including:

- Improved water quality. Hydrants are flushed at least twice yearly to remove residue from the main pipe system which helps keep City water clear.
- Fire safety and fire rating – The Water crew tests the flow at hydrants to ensure it is adequate to pump to the City's fire tanker truck. Hydrant flow is also important in helping control fire insurance costs.
- Economic development – Accurate flow information is made available to prospective businesses and industries that may consider locating in Saint Peter.

If you have any questions about this process, please contact the Public Works Department at 934-0670.



**SCAM PREVENTION REMINDER** - During spring and summer, many individuals are swindled and defrauded by transient/traveling criminal groups performing what are sometimes known as "bunco" or "gypsy" scams. In most cases, the perpetrator approaches a homeowner and offers to provide low-cost home improvements.

One of the most common types of scams involves asphalt paving. The perpetrator tells the homeowner they have asphalt left over from another job in their neighborhood and offers to resurface their driveway or sidewalk at a reduced cost. When the homeowner agrees, the con artists proceed to either apply a thin layer of asphalt that breaks away in a few days, or use a substance other than asphalt. The perpetrators then collect their money and leave before the homeowner is aware of the substandard work.

This scam can also involve the perpetrator partially completing a job, requesting payment and then never returning to finish the work.

Some traveling criminals have also been known to perform exterior home improvements without the permission of the homeowner. This has occurred in cases where the perpetrator made contact with the homeowner, but the homeowner simply took the

perpetrator's business card without requesting their services. The following day the perpetrator performs part of the work, and demands payment for the entire job.

These types of crimes are known to increase during the spring and summer months. In these types of cases the elderly are often an easy target. Victims often feel foolish about being taken advantage of and these crimes often go unreported.

Another scam that is often seen in Saint Peter is the door to door magazine selling scam. Young people will show up at the door saying that he/she is "collecting points" by people donating book or magazine subscriptions to achieve a college scholarship. This is typical of scamming agencies and the magazines never appear.

If someone appears at your door to sell you anything, ask the solicitor for their contact information and City of Saint Peter permit to conduct door to door sales. (All those doing sales in residential areas, who don't have a permanent fixed office in Saint Peter, are required to have a permit from the City.) If the solicitor won't provide contact info, or doesn't have a City permit, or is hesitant to leave, this is a good sign they are not a legitimate company. Close the door and call the Saint Peter Police immediately at 931-1550. Be ready to provide as much information as you can about the solicitor including description, clothing, vehicle license, make and model, and direction they were going.

**REFUSE REMINDER** – If you can't close the lid of your refuse (garbage) curbie, it might not be collected. The City's refuse hauling contract only provides for collection of refuse from curbies that can fully close. Those who have excess refuse are required to purchase a special pink trash bag which



covers the extra cost of collection for overflow materials.

Bags are available for purchase at City Hall, where you can buy as few as one bag, or at Arrow Ace Hardware where you will have to buy bags in a package of 10. Cost per bag is:

- 15 gallon bags - \$1.09 (includes tax) per bag
- 30 gallon bags - \$1.65 (includes tax) per bag

Residents who consistently overflow their carts might want to consider switching to a larger size curbie, or signing up for an additional cart. The

Finance Department can provide information on costs for both options. (Larger or additional recycling curbies are available at no additional cost!)

In addition, residents are reminded that curbies need to be placed ON the boulevard and NOT in the roadway. Placing the carts in the roadway creates a hazard for vehicles and pedestrians alike so please make sure that the cart is placed ON the boulevard and NOT in the street.

For more information, please contact the Finance Department at 934-0664.

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE** - Domestic violence is more than just a "family problem", it is a CRIME. The Saint Peter Police Department knows that domestic violence is a major problem here and throughout the country. Each year, more than a million women are the victims of domestic violence, and one million children are physically abused.

In Minnesota, it is a crime for any person to threaten, beat, sexually assault or otherwise harm another person, even if they are married. Battering is not exclusively a crime against women, but they are the majority affected.

One of every two families in the U.S. is involved in domestic violence at some point. Domestic violence is a repetitive pattern in people's lives. Victims or witnesses of domestic violence in childhood are most likely to repeat such acts as adults.

If you are the victim of domestic violence, now is the time to start thinking about protecting yourself. Calling the police, telling a friend, or contacting a shelter is the first step. Please don't wait until it is too late. Many studies show that an uninterrupted cycle of violence only worsens over time. Hotlines and shelters are there to be used and counseling is available. It's as close as a phone call and it's free.

**BUILDING PERMIT?** - As of January 14, 2015 the State of Minnesota has adopted the 2015 Minnesota State Building Code. Within this Code there are some minor changes to what is exempt from needing a building permit. Those changes include:

- Storage sheds – The rule used to be that if the shed was bigger than 120 square feet a permit was needed. Now sheds can be up to 200 square feet before a permit is needed.
- Fences – Permits used to be needed if the fence was over six feet tall. That has been changed so that permits are needed only if the fence is more than seven feet tall.

The following exemptions from permit requirements of the Code apply to existing single

family dwellings. These exemptions do not authorize work to be done in any manner in violation of the Code or any other laws or ordinances of the City of Saint Peter (Minnesota Rules 1300.0120). This list is not meant to supersede the Minnesota State Building Code. If a construction project is not exempt per Minnesota Rules, Chapter 1300.0120, then a building permit is required.

- Building permits are **not** required for the following projects. (Unless otherwise exempted plumbing, electrical and mechanical permits are required.)

- (1) One-story detached accessory structures, used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses, and similar uses, provided the floor area does not exceed **200** square feet.
- (2) Fences less than **seven feet** high. Zoning restrictions apply so please contact the City's Community Development Department (934-0661) before installation of fences.
- (3) Retaining walls that are not over four feet in height measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall (unless supporting a foundation).
- (4) Sidewalks and driveways that are not part of an accessible route.
- (5) Platforms not more than 30 inches above adjacent grade and not attached to a structure with frost footings and which is not part of an accessible route or used as a landing. **Please note a storm water utility permit is required if you are planning to disturb more than 120 square feet of area.**
- (7) Painting, wallpapering, paneling over existing sheetrock walls. Repairing minor holes, cracks and nail popping in sheetrock and plaster.
- (8) Tiling, carpeting and other floor covering and preparation. Cabinets, countertops and similar finish work.
- (9) Interior door replacement. **A permit is required for exterior doors, windows and replacing doors between a house and an attached garage. If door openings are enlarged, a permit is required.**
- (10) All automatic garage door opening systems must include an attached edge sensor, safety beam, or similar device that when activated causes a closing door to open and prevents an open door from closing. This device is to be designed and

built so that a failure of the device prevents the door from closing. (Minnesota Statutes, Sections 325F.82 and 325F.83) **Overhead garage door installation or replacement requires a permit. If opening is enlarged and a new overhead door is installed a permit is required.**

(11) Gutter replacement.

(12) Dropped ceilings and ceiling tile.

- Gas permits are **not** required for portable heating, cooking, clothes drying appliances or minor repairs.
- Mechanical permits are **not** required for portable ventilation appliances and equipment, portable cooling units, or minor repairs.
- Plumbing permits are **not** required for the clearing of stoppages, provided the work does not involve or require the replacement or rearrangement of valves, pipes or fixtures.
- Emergency repairs. If equipment replacements and repairs must be performed in an emergency situation, the permit application shall be submitted to the building official within the next business day.
- Permits are not required for ordinary repairs to structures. Ordinary repairs **do not** include the following which do require a permit:
  - (1) Cutting away of any wall, partition, or portion of a wall or partition.
  - (2) Addition to, alteration of, replacement, or relocation of electric wiring, or mechanical or other work affecting public health or general safety.
  - (3) Add or removal of any wall, beam or load bearing support.

For questions on electrical issues, please contact State Electrical Inspector Chris Gappa at 507-317-7289.

For questions about projects on this list, or any building related matters, please call the Building Department at 507-934-0662.



**SMOKE DETECTORS** - How long does a smoke detector last? Good question. As with other electronic devices, smoke detectors don't last forever and they need to be replaced on a regular basis to ensure operation. When a detector is purchased, the packaging will provide information on the life expectancy of the detector. If you don't have that packaging, most companies will provide similar information on the back of the unit. But as a rule of thumb, fire and smoke detectors last from five to seven years before they need to be

replaced. It is a good idea to check all your detectors at least once a month and to change the batteries every six months to ensure your family is safe.

**HELP WANTED** – The City is now accepting applications for the following positions:

- **ASSISTANT LEAD LIBRARIAN** - in the Recreation and Leisure Services Department. Minimum qualifications: High school diploma or equivalent; Ability to operate a PC and use internet and related programs; Ability to use on-line cataloging system; and experience working with the public. **DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS:** Bachelor’s degree in Education, Media or Library Sciences or equivalent; three or more

years of public library experience in patron service related or youth related position; advanced education in library operations, media resources or related field; and demonstrated ability to provide children’s programming and services. Beginning wage \$15.59 per hour. Applicants are required to complete a City application form available in the City Administrator’s office at 227 South Front Street between the hours of 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon and 1-5:00 p.m. or by calling (507)934-0663. Completed applications must be received by the City Administrator’s office by 5:00 pm on Friday, April 17, 2015. Faxed, emailed, and/or late applications will not be accepted. AA/EEO

**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	April 2	5:30 p.m.	Planning and Zoning Commission
Monday	April 6	3:30 p.m.	Housing and Redevelopment Authority
Monday	April 6	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
Tuesday	April 7	until 1:30 p.m.	City Offices Closed – Staff Training
Tuesday	April 7	6:00 p.m.	Board of Appeals and Equalization
Monday	April 13	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Tuesday	April 14	6:00 p.m.	Library Board
Monday	April 20	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
Monday	April 20	7:00 p.m.	Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Thursday	April 23	12:00 noon	Economic Development Authority
Friday	April 24	8:00 a.m.	Tourism and Visitors Bureau
Monday	April 27	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Tuesday	April 28	5:30 p.m.	Heritage Preservation Commission
Wednesday	April 29	12:00 noon	Hospital Commission