

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 www.facebook.com/cityofsaintpeter



08/26/15

CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS – Action taken by the City Council at the regular meeting of August 24, 2015 included approval for execution of a renewal contract with the Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association to provide safety training services for City staff and approval for submission of grant applications to the Department of Transportation Office of Transit for 80% funding for the operational and capital expenses of the City's transit service in 2016.

The next regular meeting of the City Council will be Monday, September 14th 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.

MAKES ME WONDER (BY CITY ADMINISTRATOR TODD PRAFKE) – *Comments and more....* School is starting soon. Wow a fast summer for sure! If you have not heard yet, the City and School District are doing

great cooperative and collaborative work on the properties we each own west of town. The goal is to have a new high school and City park facilities that can be enjoyed by all while avoiding redundant and duplicative space and continuing to plan for the future including moderate growth and the changing wants and needs of the community.

Lots of work is being done on this and lots of money and time is being spent, so it is an issue you will want to watch for. There will be an Open House in the near future (September 9th) to show

folks the plans, so watch for the notices and come down and see more.

The School, the City and the County Highway Department are all participating at the Open House so there will be information ranging from the "look" of the new building, to where trails will be located, to a picture of improvements to Gardner Road and the Fort Road. Watch for updates. We hope most will be pleased by the work that has been done.

Will you attend? It makes me wonder.....



ELECTRICAL PRODUCTION - Did you know that coal still provides 34% of all electricity used in the United States? In 2003, 629 coal plants supplied 50% of all power produced. In 2015 there are just 491 coal plants remaining. While coal still remains the largest producer of electricity, it is easy to

see that coal production has been reduced due to many changes in our methods of finding energy.

So what happened? During the last ten years fracking has been the focus and with this method comes the finding of natural gas which can produce electricity cheaper than coal. Natural gas accounts for 30% of all electricity produced and experts believe it may soon surpass coal as the number one source. Nuclear still produces about 20% of our power with 61 plants scattered throughout the United States. Although most nuclear facilities are located along the east coast, there are two located in Minnesota.

Hydropower accounts for roughly 7% of the nation's power production with a total of 1,420 plants. One hydro plant located on the Grand Coulee Dam in central Washington State produces about one-third of the hydropower nationwide.

Wind power production has increased coming in at a 1% pace in 2008 up to 4.9% in 2015. This is due in part to the federal government providing tax

credits and subsidies. Couple that with the requirement placed on utility companies to purchase a percentage of their power from renewable sources and a sudden increase is realized.

Solar has been the latest to benefit from technology changes producing .6% of all power needs. City of Saint Peter staff has been preparing for solar challenges by examining “net-metering” and other benefits to customers. Solar is predicted to change the landscape of electrical production over the next few years as technology improves and option become available.

For more information on this topic, please contact the Public Works Department at 934-0670.

LABOR DAY



LABOR DAY CLOSURES – All non-emergency City offices, including the Library, Community Center and transit system, will be closed on Labor Day. In addition, the

Community Center will be closed over the Labor Day weekend, (Saturday, September 5th–Monday, September 7th) and the Library will also be closed on Saturday, September 5th.

Regular Community Center (non-summer hours) hours start Tuesday, September 8th. The revised hours will be:

Monday through Friday: 6 a.m.–10 p.m.

Saturday: 8 a.m.–8 p.m.

Sundays noon–8 p.m.

THE THIRD FLOOR YOUTH CENTER COORDINATOR NEEDED - The City of Saint Peter is looking for a Part-time Coordinator for The Third Floor Youth Center. The position begins in September.

The Third Floor is located at North Intermediate School and serves youth in grades 3 through 6 Monday through Friday from 3-5 p.m. The Coordinator works 12.5 hours/week and the wage is \$13 per hour.

The Coordinator is responsible for the operation of the youth center including scheduling and supervising Gustavus Adolphus College work study students. If interested please contact Recreation and Leisure Services Director Jane Timmerman by email, jane@saintpetermn.gov, or phone, 507-934-0667.

“A MATTER OF BALANCE” – Join this program geared for older adults that emphasizes practical strategies to manage falls. Learn to improve balance, flexibility, and strength. The program runs on Thursdays from September 3rd through November 12th in the Saint Peter Public Library

meeting room. There is no charge and participants may register by calling 934-7434. The program is sponsored by the Saint Peter Senior Center, the MN River Area Agency on Aging, and VINE.



BACK TO SCHOOL SAFETY – Schools starts soon for Saint Peter students. That makes it a great time to review back to school safety tips for drivers and pedestrians alike.

This information is a compilation of materials put out by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety

and the Minnesota Crime Prevention Association.

If your child is going to ride the bus to school you probably already know that buses are safer than cars. However, that doesn't mean the bus won't pose a danger for your child. To help prevent injuries involving school buses, here are some tips to pass on to your children:

- Have a safe place to wait for your bus, away from traffic and the street.
- Stay away from the bus until it comes to a complete stop and the driver signals you to enter.
- When being dropped off, exit the bus and walk ten giant steps away. Remember that the bus driver can see you best when you are back away from the bus.
- Use the handrail to enter and exit the bus. Backpacks are heavy and can throw a child off balance when climbing steps. Using the handrail provides an extra measure of safety.
- Be aware of street traffic around you. Drivers must follow certain rules concerning school buses, however, not everyone does and it's better to wait until you see cars come to a complete stop before you try and cross the street.
- Only cross the street at corners in the crosswalk.

Not all children will be bused to school and if your child lives close enough to walk or bike to school, here's some tips to help limit their danger:

- Instruct your child to follow traffic signals and instructions from the crossing guard and never cross the street against the light.
- Know your child's route to and from school and the time it takes. Ask them to not deviate from the established path or timeline. If your child rides a bike to school or home, practice the



route before the start of school and know where any crossing guards or help might be.

- Instruct your child to walk their bike through intersections.
- Instruct the child to walk with a buddy.
- Outfit your child with reflective material to make them more visible to traffic. Putting this material on their backpacks is also helpful. Remember that once daylight savings changes in the fall it might be dark in the mornings when they go to school or when they are coming home.
- Teach your children to lock up their bikes when they get to their destination, including when they get home. Bikes are often stolen from yards and unlocked garages.
- Get your child in the habit of always wearing a helmet when they get on their bike. Make yourself an example by wearing your helmet too.
- Ride with your child! Parents can always use the extra exercise, and a bicycle ride creates an opportunity for parent-child involvement and good quality conversation time.
- Have a safety contingency plan...just in case! Does your child know a certain neighbor whose home can be considered a "safe house" in the event of a bike or safety issue? Could your youngster carry a walkie-talkie or, if an older child, a cell phone (even if it's only for emergencies)? Parents should provide their kids with "what if" scenarios they can think through...just in case the unthinkable happens. When it comes to your child's well-being, there is no such thing as being over-prepared.

As the driver of a vehicle, whether you are taking a child to school or not, it's important to be even more alert and aware because once school begins there will be significantly more traffic in and around school zones. Here are some tips to help everyone be safer:

- Wear your seat belt! Seat belts are the best form of protection in the event of a crash. And everyone needs to be buckled up properly. That means older kids in seat belts, younger kids in booster seats and little kids in child safety seats. And you, the driver? Set an example for your children and remember to buckle up yourself.

- Remember that in Minnesota it's illegal to pass a school bus with flashing red lights. And don't think you can get away with violating this rule just because there aren't any Police Officer's around! Bus drivers



can and will pass on the license number of a driver violating this rule to the Police!

- Reduce your speed in a school zone. Legal speed limits in these areas will be posted, but you can make it even safer by slowing down even further.
- Be alert for children who might dart out between parked cars. Remember they are smaller than most vehicles and you might not see them until it is too late. And parents, teach your child to always cross at the crosswalk so that this situation doesn't happen.

That's a lot of things to think about, but parents and children also need to be aware of personal safety. Here are a few more tips to keep your child safe:

- Never label or print your child's name on the outside of backpacks, lunches or clothing. Doing so will make it possible for criminals to learn your child's name and trick them.
- Establish a "SECRET CODE WORD" with your child. Explain to your kids never to go with anyone that does not know the "code word" regardless of the circumstances.
- Explain to your children to:
 - Never talk to strangers.
 - Never get in a car with strangers.
 - Never let a stranger into their home.
 - Never let a stranger touch them.
- Never allow your child to play in a dimly lit or unsupervised



CHILD SAFETY TIP

Before departing with children/ grandchildren/kids to any event, take a second, pull out your cell phone and take individual pictures of each child. That way, if the unthinkable happens and a child gets lost, you have a picture of how they are dressed and what they looked like that day.

The photo can then be immediately sent to police to aid in locating the child. Seconds can be precious in this scenario, so take a second, make it a habit and take a picture!

place.

- Remind your child to play and walk in a group. There is safety in numbers.
- Take a current photo of your child. Should the child go missing, having a current photo will help the Police.

This is just a sampling of ideas that you can use to keep your children safe as they go back to school. Talking to your children before school starts, and giving them gentle reminders throughout the year is a good start to ensuring everyone has a safe and enjoyable school year!

OPTIMAL FLUORIDE CONCENTRATION - In April, federal health officials changed the recommended amount of fluoride in drinking water for the first time since 1962. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is now recommending as the optimal fluoride concentration 0.7 parts per million (ppm) instead of the previous range of 0.7 to 1.2 ppm.

According to a press release by the HHS, the change in the recommendation was made because Americans now have access to more sources of fluoride, such as toothpaste and mouthwash, than they did when water fluoridation was first introduced in the United States. As a result many Americans are getting too much fluoride, with the result being increased cases of fluorosis. Dental fluorosis is a cosmetic condition in which the effects can range from barely noticeable white spots in mild forms to staining and pitting in more severe forms.

The 1962 recommendation was given as a range because the recommendation varied by region of the country based on climate, with warmer areas having lower requirements because it was assumed that people in warmer climates drank more water than those in colder climates. This

assumption turned out to not be true, and so the new recommendation is the same for all areas of the country.

The HHS, along with the American Dental Association, believes that the new recommended level will maintain the protective decay benefits of water fluoridation and reduce the occurrence of fluorosis.

So, what does this mean for Saint Peter? The natural occurring fluoride level in our area ranges is 0.4 ppm. We have been adding fluoride to bring the level to 1.2 ppm in accordance with state law. It is expected that the state will lower the required level, but the rule-making process will take several months and perhaps as much as a year. Meanwhile, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) has set up a system to allow cities to request a variance to the current rules to allow a reduction in fluoridation while the new rules are still being finalized. The City of Saint Peter applied for and received the variance. In June, we turned our fluoride pumping equipment down to meet the 0.7 ppm level.

For more information on this topic, please contact the Public Works Department at 934-0670.

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.

Wednesday	August 26	12:20 p.m.	Hospital Commission
Thursday	August 27	12:00 noon	Economic Development Authority
Friday	August 28	8:00 a.m.	Tourism and Visitors Bureau
Monday	August 31	3:00 p.m.	City Council Goal Session
Thursday	September 3	5:30 p.m.	Planning and Zoning Commission
Monday	September 7		LABOR DAY HOLIDAY – City offices closed
Tuesday	September 8	3:30 p.m.	Housing and Redevelopment Authority
Tuesday	September 8	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop Session
Monday	September 14	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Tuesday	September 15	5:30 p.m.	Library Board
Monday	September 21	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
Monday	September 21	7:00 p.m.	Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Thursday	September 24	12:00 noon	Economic Development Authority
Friday	September 25	8:00 a.m.	Tourism and Visitors Bureau

Monday	September 28	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Tuesday	September 29	5:30 p.m.	Heritage Preservation Commission
Thursday	October 1	5:30 p.m.	Planning and Zoning Commission