

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



5/21/2014

**CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS** – Action taken by the City Council at the regular meeting of May 12, 2014 included award of the bids for the Nicollet Avenue Electric Materials project; adoption of the 2014 electric fund budget and an electric rate increase for large commercial and industrial customers; approval of the 2014 budgets for the Water and Wastewater funds; authorization to execute a contract for an update to the City's housing study; approval for an "administrative lot split" and sale of five feet (5') of City owned property to Hendrickson Organ Company which will allow reconstruction of their facility; approval for requests for City assistance for the Ambassador's Bluesfest and American Cancer Society Relay for Life events; and correction of a previous action related to construction standard details.

Due to the Memorial Day holiday, the next regular meeting of the City Council will be Tuesday, May 27th 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).



**MEMORIAL DAY CLOSURES** – All non-emergency City offices will be closed on Monday, May 26, 2014 in recognition of Memorial Day. Regular office hours will resume on Tuesday, May 27th. The City Council meeting that is regularly scheduled for May 26th will take place on Tuesday, May 27th beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Governors' Room of the Community Center.

**CONSUMER CONFIDENCE REPORT** – As part of the Consumer Confidence rules of the United States

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the City is required to send out information about our water quality to the public. This is done by issuance of a Consumer

Confidence Report (CCR) which summarizes information regarding the sources for City water (i.e. rivers and aquifers) and any detected contaminants, as well as providing compliance and educational materials.

The City's 2013 report is now available in the lobby at City Hall (227 South Front Street) or the Public Works Department (405 West St. Julien Street), or electronically from the City's website at [http://www.saintpetermn.gov/Water\\_Consumer\\_Confidence\\_Report.pdf](http://www.saintpetermn.gov/Water_Consumer_Confidence_Report.pdf).

For more information on the 2013 report, please contact the Public Works Department at 934-0670.

**LIBRARY BOARD MEETING CHANGE** – The Library Board meeting regularly scheduled for June 10th has been rescheduled for Tuesday, July 22nd at 5:30 p.m. For more information on Library Board meetings, please contact the Recreation and Leisure Services Department at 934-0667.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (EDA) MEETING CHANGE** – The EDA meeting regularly scheduled for Thursday, May 22nd has been rescheduled for Thursday, May 29th at 12:00 noon. For more information on EDA meetings, please contact the Community Development Department at 934-0661.



**ROUTE BUS FARES** – The Saint Peter City Council recently approved a discounted fare on the ROUTE bus for students ages 5 to 17. Beginning on June 9<sup>th</sup> and ending August 29<sup>th</sup>, students in that age group may ride the ROUTE bus for a \$1.00 cash fare. The ROUTE bus deviates up to two blocks from the path between scheduled stops to pick up or drop off passengers. This means that passengers may be picked up and dropped off at stops that are not on the schedule such as Jefferson Fields, the swimming pool or Gault Park.

A passenger wishing to be picked up at a location other than a scheduled stop simply needs to call 934-6070 and request the ROUTE bus pick up at their location. Once on the bus the passenger should tell the Driver where he or she wishes to go, if it is not already a scheduled stop.

The City hopes the discounted fare will assist parents with their transportation needs over the summer and also encourage those who do not already use public transit to give it a try.

Please call Transit Coordinator Wayne Albers at 934-0668 with any questions concerning how the transit system can best serve your needs.

**ELECTRIC RATE INCREASES** – The City Council has passed a rate increase of \$.0024 per kilowatt hour for Large Commercial and industrial classification electric customers. The increase is effective with bills due on August 15<sup>th</sup>. (Residential and small commercial customers aren't affected by this rate change.)

To identify which classification of rate payer a business is, customers should refer to their electric bills or contact the City's Finance Department at 934-0664.

**SUMMER SAFETY TIPS** – Summer vacations are right around the corner. Here are some safety tips to keep the whole family safe this summer:

- Swimming – Limit swimming activities to the City's outdoor pool where Lifeguards are on duty to keep everyone safe. Never swim alone and never leave children unattended while swimming. If children can't swim, make sure they are wearing a lifejacket when participating in all water-related sports or activities. Avoid "floaties" (inflatable floating aids), which offer a false sense of security; they do not substitute for lifejackets. If your child doesn't know how to swim, enroll him or her in American Red Cross sanctioned swimming lessons.



- Recognize the signs if someone is drowning. The wild flailing and screaming that you see in the movies? Unfortunately, you won't often get those cues. People are too busy to scream; they're trying to breathe. Their mouths begin sinking underwater, so they can't call out. They won't wave for help; their arms instinctively push downwards to help propel their bodies higher above the surface. Watch for glassy or unfocused eyes, hyperventilation or gasping, hair over the face, or head too low in the water. Instinctively, drowning people remain upright and forget to kick in order to stay afloat—remind them to kick, or (if possible) to relax and float on their back. They often have only 20-60 seconds before submersion, unless rescued.

- Keep your doors and windows locked – Many residential and vehicle thefts occur in homes or cars that were left unlocked. Keeping your property securely locked helps deter would be thieves who are looking for easy pickings. Keep your garage door down when not in the garage and if you have to leave something of value in your vehicle, make sure it is kept out of sight. Remove keys from the ignition (even when the vehicle is in the garage) and lock the door between the garage and the main part of your home. And keep those doors locked while you are home too. We spend a lot of time in the back yard during the summer months and it's easy for a thief to walk in the home from an unlocked front door when the family is out back.



- Never leave a child alone in the car. Aside from abduction dangers, in the summertime, car temperatures can soar very quickly -- even if it the temperature isn't ridiculously hot. Even with the windows down, a car can get very warm, very fast. Best bet; take your child with you, even if you are going into a store for just a minute. (And remember the same rules for pets. Leave them at home rather than risk leaving them alone in a scalding hot vehicle.)
- If you are headed to a place where you know there will be lots of crowds, review some ground rules before you get there. Make sure your child knows what to do in case you get separated or lost from one another. Teach him to look for a person who can help them like a uniformed police officer, park worker or even a mother with children. Pick a spot upon your

arrival and designate it as your meeting place in case someone gets lost.

- Children who are home from school may be left alone more hours than they are during the school year. Make sure their internet use is monitored and they know the dos and don'ts about providing personal information over the internet.
- Make sure your children know not to open the hopefully locked door of your home to strangers.
- Bike safety is an important part of summer. Always wear your helmet and obey bike traffic laws....stopping at stop signs, signaling turns, riding with traffic, etc.... Make sure your bike is the proper fit; oversized bikes are particularly hazardous for children. Use reflectors and lights when riding at night.
- Teach children not to cross roadways in the middle of the road or from between two parked vehicles. They are small enough that drivers might not see them crossing in these unexpected areas.
- When vacation time rolls around, don't post your plans on Facebook and make sure your children refrain from doing so also. You never know which of your "friends" has a "friend" who might see it and turn out to be a thief while you are gone. Save your social media posts for when you come back.
  - Set indoor lights on timers.
  - Ask a trusted neighbor to pick up your newspaper or mail (or stop delivery of these items while you are gone).
  - Arrange for someone to mow your lawn while you are away.
- Wear sunscreen if you are going to be outside, even on cloudy days. Burns can happen in just a few minutes and have lifetime consequences.



- Picnics and barbecues can be fun for the whole family, but keep your food safe. Cook meat thoroughly and avoid cross-contamination by using separate plates for raw meats and the final product. Use a meat

thermometer to check doneness. Ground beef should reach an internal temp of 160°. Keep food stored in a cool and dry place and remember a full cooler is colder than a half-empty one. Summertime is also a time for lots

of mayo based salads. Make sure that these products stay cold and promptly refrigerate leftovers or throw them away.

- **Pet Safety...**It's equally important to keep our pets safe during the hot summer months.
  - Provide a shady spot for your pet to rest when outdoors; doghouses can trap heat and get really uncomfortable. Don't overexpose them to hot sand or asphalt which can burn their paws.
  - If you own a dog with a short- or flat-face, which can't pant as effectively as long-jawed dogs, make sure to provide it with a cool indoor space.
    - Ensure the pet's vaccinations are up-to-date since your pet will probably spend more time outdoors and in contact with other animals.
    - Keep pets away from chemically-treated lawns, as well as toxic plants and flowers.
  - Use a vet-recommended preventive to keep parasites like fleas, ticks, and mosquitoes at bay.
  - Provide water and a regular shower (or dousing with a hose). Or buy a shallow children's pool and let your dog use it to cool off.
    - If your dog is outdoors most summer days, try putting a large chunk of ice in the pet's water dish to help keep the water cool.
  - Don't force your pet to swim and never leave it unattended in the water. Some dogs are not natural swimmers.
  - Be on the lookout for heatstroke: heavy panting, quick or labored breathing, bright red tongue and gums that may be dry to the touch, woozy movements. If your pet is experiencing these systems, call your Vet immediately for assistance and directions on how to safely lower the pet's temperature. Heat stroke can be just as deadly for pets as it is for people and these symptoms require immediate attention.
  - Don't ignore your daily walks, but if need be, change the time so that you are walking in the cooler early morning or late evening hours.



(Great idea for people too!) And remember to always leash your pet when leaving your property. This protects not only the public, but also protects your pet.

**STORM SIRENS** – Last week’s (May 8th) severe weather had some people questioning why the outdoor emergency sirens were not sounded on Thursday.

In the last few years, the National Weather Service (NWS) has modified how they declare severe weather warnings. Previously the warnings were issued county-wide. That meant that a severe storm could be just touching the western tip of Nicollet County and the warning would be issued for the entire county sending thousands of people who were not in the path of the storm to their emergency shelters for no reason.



So, the NWS changed how they issue warnings and now create “boxes” that are shaped like polygons (irregular shapes) to more accurately reflect the path of the storm. As with the storm on

Thursday evening, the warning was issued for only a portion of Nicollet County to the west of Saint Peter and, therefore, no sirens were activated.

We’re not sure why the change was made, but perhaps it’s because as we found out before, during and after the 1998 tornado, a lot of people ignore the emergency sirens. Whether that is because the sirens were sounded so frequently with no actual severe weather or not, is anyone’s guess. But narrowing down the focus of the warnings may help people realize that when the sirens go off, it’s time to head to the basement.

Here’s a little refresher on the storm siren system:

- Sirens are sounded once. The siren sounds for about three minutes. If the siren sounds again, the severe weather threat continues and people should stay in their shelters.
  - To find out when it is safe to leave the shelter, take a battery powered radio or cell phone to the shelter with you.
  - (And here’s a handy tip...if bad weather is predicted, make sure your family’s cell phones are fully charged. If the power goes out it might be some time before you can get to a source to recharge your phones.)
- There is no “all clear” siren. If the siren sounds more than once, it means the danger is still in the area.
- Outdoor emergency sirens are meant for just the outdoors. They are not designed or placed to be heard indoors. The public is encouraged

to use a NOAA weather radio for emergency notices while inside buildings or to sign up for any of the numerous electronic apps that provide those services.

- Area counties may have different policies regarding sounding the outdoor sirens. Some may trigger the siren when hail or strong winds that may create property damage are imminent. Saint Peter only sounds the sirens when a tornado warning has been issued for our direct area.

City staff takes our responsibility to protect the public very seriously and we will continue to do our best to warn the public when the threat of severe weather is in the Saint Peter area.

**ENERGY UPDATE** - For an easy way to save money on your water heating bill, check your electric water heater thermostat. Many manufacturers set thermostats to 140°F, although most households only need a setting of 120°F. It’s an easy thing to change and could save you some money!



**CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) DETECTORS** - State law requires a carbon monoxide detector near every bedroom of your home. Each year, more than 200 Americans die and several thousand individuals are treated in emergency rooms for CO poisoning. The risk of CO poisoning increases during the winter, as more people run furnaces and space heaters and use fireplaces, but they are still needed all year long.



Minnesota law requires CO detectors within 10 feet of every sleeping room in all existing single-family homes. If you haven’t installed a detector yet, please don’t wait. Lives may depend on it. For more info on the regulations relating to carbon monoxide detector installation, please visit [www.dps.state.mn.us/fmarshall/PublicEducation](http://www.dps.state.mn.us/fmarshall/PublicEducation) or call the State Fire Marshal’s office at 651-201-7200.



**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!)

**WHAT CAN BIRDS DO**

**FOR YOU? –** According to the Garden Club of America, here is just a sampling of what having birds in your neighborhood can do for you:

- A Baltimore Oriole can consume 17 hairy caterpillars in a minute.



- A house wren feeds 500 insects to its young every summer afternoon.
- A pair of flickers considers 5,000 ants a mere snack.
- A swallow can devour 1,000 insects every 12 hours.
- A brown thrasher has been known to eat 6,180 insects in one day.
- A pair of scarlet tanagers have been seen eating 630 newly hatched caterpillars of the gypsy moth in 18 minutes.

To attract a healthy bird population you need a couple of things....cover for the birds and a source of water year round. The National Arbor Day Foundation publishes a Tree City USA bulletin with all kinds of helpful information including what you can do to make your yard more bird and wildlife friendly. The bulletin on this topic (#13) is available online at [www.arborday.org](http://www.arborday.org)

**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).

Friday	May 23	8:00 a.m.		Tourism and Visitors Bureau
Monday	May 26			MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY – City offices closed
Tuesday	May 27	5:30 p.m.		Heritage Preservation Commission
Tuesday	May 27	7:00 p.m.		City Council Meeting
Wednesday	May 28	12:00 noon		Hospital Commission
Thursday	May 29	12:00 noon		Economic Development Authority
Monday	June 2	3:30 p.m.		Housing and Redevelopment Authority
Monday	June 2	5:30 p.m.		City Council Workshop
Tuesday	June 3	5:30 p.m.		Planning and Zoning Commission
Monday	June 9	5:00 p.m.		Human Rights Commission (may be cancelled)
Monday	June 9	7:00 p.m.		City Council Meeting
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>June 10</b>	<b>6:00 p.m.</b>		<b>Library Board (rescheduled for July 22 at 5:30 p.m.)</b>
Monday	June 16	5:30 p.m.		City Council Workshop
Monday	June 21	7:00 p.m.		Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Monday	June 23	7:00 p.m.		City Council Meeting
Tuesday	June 24	5:30 p.m.		Heritage Preservation Commission

Wednesday	June 25	12:00 noon	Hospital Commission
Thursday	June 26	12:00 noon	Economic Development Authority
Friday	June 27	8:00 a.m.	Tourism and Visitors Bureau
Monday	June 30	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop