

# CITY OF SAINT PETER<sup>©</sup> 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.  
To request an email subscription to this newsletter, or for more information, please contact us at [barbaral@saintpetermn.gov](mailto:barbaral@saintpetermn.gov)  
[www.facebook.com/cityofsaintpeter](http://www.facebook.com/cityofsaintpeter)



9/23/2020

**TEMPORARY CITY OFFICE CLOSURE** – ALL non-emergency City offices will be closed on Tuesday, October 6<sup>th</sup> until approximately 1:30 p.m. for staff training. We apologize for this inconvenience.

**CENSUS 2020** – The U.S. Census Bureau will be wrapping up the 2020 census at the end of September. If you haven't yet responded either online, by phone, by mail, or by talking to a Census worker, please do so! Minnesota needs everyone to be counted and missing someone has a negative impact for the next ten years. At risk? A congressional seat, funding for hospitals, schools, roads, bridges, and so much more.

Visit [www.2020census.gov](http://www.2020census.gov) for information on how you can respond before it's too late

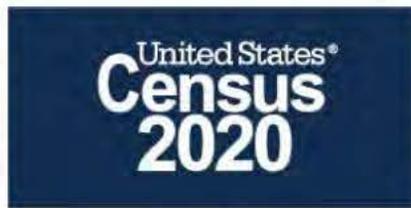
**HYDRANT FLUSHING** - Public Works will begin fall hydrant flushing and flow testing on October 5<sup>th</sup>. The work is being done overnight between the hours of 8:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. to minimize disruption to customers. The work will continue until all hydrants are flushed, but is expected to end by October 16<sup>th</sup>.

Hydrant flushing could temporarily make water cloudy so please make sure to check the water before doing laundry.

Hydrant flushing is done twice a year (spring and fall) and has several benefits:



- Improved Water Quality - Hydrants are flushed at to remove residue from the main pipe system which helps keep the water clear.
- Fire Safety and Fire Rating – During the flushing process, the hydrant flow is tested to ensure it is adequate to pump to the City's fire tanker. This information is provided to insurance companies and helps control fire insurance costs for every property owner.
- Economic Development - Accurate flow information is also provided to any business or industry that might be considering locating in Saint Peter.  
For questions about the hydrant flushing process, please contact the Public Works Department at 934-0670.



We support the 2020 Census.

Learn more at [2020census.gov](http://2020census.gov).

**PROVIDING ANIMALS WITH SHELTER WALK** – Are you ready for the 20h Annual P.A.W.S. Walk?

This year's walk takes place October 24, 2020. Registration begins at 9:30 am at the Mill Pond area of Riverside Park.

Start your fundraising efforts by asking family, friends, co-workers, neighbors and even complete strangers for donations for this year's P.A.W.S. fundraiser.

The walk involves stopping at stations along the designated route and collecting donated items from generous sponsors. Pets and people alike are encouraged to dress for Trick or Treating and take part in the costume contest. And when you're dressing your pet up (or even if they come only in their fur), remember to put them on a leash. All pets must be leashed for the walk.



It's never too early to start your fundraising efforts. Walkers raising \$20 or more will receive a trick or treat bag to participate in the treat stops and those raising \$35 or more will also receive a free P.A.W.S. t-shirt.

All proceeds generated from this fundraiser are used to provide medical care and shelter for abandoned or surrendered animals while they wait for adoption by their forever families. The funds are sometimes also used to buy down the cost of adoption for animals that have been in the pound a long time.

For more information on this event, or to pick up a pledge sheet, please visit City Hall (227 South Front Street), the Police Department (207 South Front Street), or Kind Veterinary Clinic (109 West Grace Street). For more information check out the City's website at

<https://www.saintpetermn.gov/171/Providing-Animals-With-Shelter-PAWS>.

Don't worry if you don't have a pet to walk! If you love animals and want to help out, register to walk and make friends with someone else's pet or just make a donation. Donations are always welcome!

**DO YOU HAVE A VOTING PLAN?** – That's a question that has been floating around the internet for a few months now for several reasons including expected higher than normal voter turnout; COVID-19's impact on voting; and even changes at the U.S. Postal Service that are expected to slow mail delivery.

The City of Saint Peter, working in conjunction with our election partners at Nicollet County, want to make this election as easy as possible for voters but we can't do it alone. Here are the steps you should be taking now:

- Make sure you are registered to vote. If you have never registered, have moved, have changed your name, or even if it has been several years since you last voted, you need to make sure you are registered and at the correct address. This will eliminate standing in at least one line on Election Day and it will also prevent any delays in receipt of an absentee ballot if you request one. You can check the status of your registration at <https://mnvotes.sos.state.mn.us/VoterStatus.aspx>.



- Request an absentee ballot if you can't or don't want to go to the polling place on Election Day. Absentee ballots are available to any eligible voter in Minnesota, but you have to apply for it. You can do so in person at the Nicollet County Government Center (501 South Minnesota Avenue (use the Mulberry Street entrance) or online at <https://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/other-ways-to-vote>. Once your application has been received, your personal information will be verified and if you are eligible, an absentee ballot will be mailed to you with a return envelope. But here's the thing...your completed ballot must be postmarked by November 3<sup>rd</sup> **AND** received within seven days of the election to be counted. Postal service delays make it imperative that anyone voting by mail do so as early as possible. Don't wait until the last minute to request your absentee ballot because we want every vote to count.

- a. If you don't trust the mail, you can show up in person at the Government Center, fill out the application, and receive your ballot that same day. Fill it out, seal it in the envelope and hand it back to the clerk who will ensure everything is done correctly so your ballot can be counted.
- b. Are you someone who tends to procrastinate? If you have your ballot mailed to you and there is not enough time to mail it back, you can always drop it off in person at the Government Center as long as that is done by Election Day. **(Special note....do NOT bring an absentee ballot to a City polling place. Election Judges are NOT allowed to accept them.)**

- Not interested in voting by absentee? That's fine too, but be aware we are expecting long lines due to social distancing regulations and limits on the number of voters who will be allowed in the polling place on Election Day. Bring a mask and something to occupy your time while you stand in line and the City's Election Judges will be ready to help you once you get inside. We're taking every precaution to keep voters and staff healthy like providing each voter with a pen that has been sanitized for your safety, having sanitizer available for everyone as

they come and go from the polling place; placing sneeze guards in front of most Election Judges; sanitizing hard surfaces throughout the day; only using ballot secrecy sleeves once; and providing masks to every voter who needs one while making sure Election Judges are all wearing masks.

There's a lot going on for this election and this year like never before, voters need to make a plan of action for casting their ballot. Make yours now and have a backup plan just in case.

Minnesota voters, and especially those in Saint Peter, can proudly boast of historically high voter turnout and for an election that will surely see a record number of voters across the country, we want to continue that trend.

We hope that you will be part of that and however you choose to cast your ballot, the important thing is always to VOTE on November 3<sup>rd</sup>!

**CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS** – The City Council meeting of September 14, 2020 included adoption of the 2021 preliminary levy; authorization for issuance of the permanent debt for River's Edge Hospital Expansion Project (and refinancing of the original debt) through the USDA; and authorization for execution of a renewal contract with Minnesota Municipal Utility Association (MMUA) for administration of the City's employee safety program.

The next regular City Council meeting will be Monday, September 28<sup>th</sup> beginning at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will be held electronically as authorized under Minnesota Statutes 13.021. For log-in information, please visit the City's website. The log-in information will be at the bottom of the meeting agenda page which will be available under the "meetings and minutes" section of the homepage the Friday before the Council meeting.

**2020 FALL BRUSH COLLECTION** - The City will be collecting branches/brush and garden waste such as tomato plants, flowers, etc. at curbside the week of September 28<sup>th</sup>. (\*\*Please note, this is NOT the leaf and grass collection!!) Branches, brush and garden waste must be at curbside by 7:00 A.M. Monday, September 28<sup>th</sup>. Crews will only go past each property one time so the materials must be out by the deadline.

Please place your materials parallel and adjacent to the curb but not on the street. Crews prefer the materials be placed in one big pile, the higher the better but no bigger than 15' X 8'. Please help us serve you better by placing the materials away from

curbies, light poles, mailboxes, signs, trees, posts, utility boxes/pedestals, etc.

These materials will not be collected after the week of September 28<sup>th</sup> but can be brought to the City's drop-off site at 1128 North Swift Street. This site is open 24-7 year-round for the convenience of St. Peter residents living within the corporate boundaries of the City. Brush and tree trimmings need to be cut shorter than 6 feet and there is a separate bunker provided for dropping off fill (rocks, dirt, etc.).

This service is provided and funded by the environmental service fee on City residential utility customer's bills.



**NIGHT TO UNITE** - Minnesota has a statewide Night to Unite celebration on the first Tuesday in August; but due to COVID-19, it has been switched to October 6. If you are interested in being a block party captain, please contact Officer Jon Hughes at the Police Department. Have a BBQ, pizza party or whatever your neighbors would enjoy! First responder personnel will make rounds to each registered party.



Night to Unite helps strengthen neighborhood and community partnerships particularly among residents and their local law enforcement. Are you interested in hosting a neighborhood block party? Contact Officer Hughes by email and using the [Form](#) or by email [Email Officer Hughes](#).

Registration begins Monday, August 3 at 8:00 a.m. and closes at 5:00 p.m. on Friday, September 25<sup>th</sup>. The program is limited to twelve neighborhood parties and just a few spots remain.

Those who sign up to be party captains will receive a gift card to help with party supplies courtesy of River's Edge Hospital.

Don't delay. Sign up now to make this the best Night to Unite ever!

**RECREATIONAL FIRE STANDARDS** - Are you getting ready for a backyard recreational fire? Unfortunately we are getting more and more calls from Saint Peter residents concerned about the amount of smoke being generated from some recreational fires. Whether that is caused by burning materials that

aren't allowed, having too big a fire, or whatever, it's important to make sure everyone is playing by the same rules which should help cut down on the complaints generated when a neighbor has a recreational fire. Please review the standards and guidelines for having a recreational fire.

- Recreational fires must be at least 25 feet from all buildings or combustible materials. Combustible materials are things such as wood, paper, and plastics.

- Conditions which could cause a fire to spread within 25 feet of a structure shall be eliminated prior to ignition.



- Recreational fires must be constantly attended until the fire burns out completely or is extinguished.
- A minimum of one portable fire extinguisher complying with MSFC (07) Section 906 with a minimum 4-A rating or other approved on-site fire extinguishing equipment, such as dirt, sand, or garden hose shall be readily available at all times until the fire is extinguished. Examples of other approved fire extinguishing equipment would be a charged garden hose, dirt, or sand (and a means of applying it).
- The only materials permitted in a recreational fire are wood from trees, small branches, brush, or charcoal. Treated lumber materials, construction debris, garbage, plastic materials, or waste materials are not allowed to be burned in recreational fires.
- Recreational fires must be immediately extinguished if they pose a fire safety risk, if they are not in compliance with the above, or when directed to do so by a Police Officer, Firefighter, Fire Warden, or DNR Officer.
- The MSFC (07) does not contain any regulations for immediate extinguishment if the smoke from a recreational fire is a nuisance to an adjoining property.

Also please note that Minnesota Statutes define a campfire as: "Campfire" means a fire set for cooking, warming, or ceremonial purposes, which is not more than three feet in diameter by three feet high, and has had the ground five feet from the base of the fire cleared of all combustible material."



And finally, please help stop the spread of Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) by only using firewood that is from the local area. As required by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, residents are not allowed to import materials to Minnesota that could harbor EAB such as ash firewood. Residents are not supposed to move firewood unless it's MDA Certified firewood (look for the MDA Certified Seal shown here) and are asked to remember that it is illegal to move all hardwood firewood outside of EAB quarantine areas. Let's work together to protect our urban forests from Emerald Ash Borer.

**COLD WEATHER RULE NOTICE** - The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule provides that from October 15th through April 15th, the City of Saint Peter, (the utility provider for Saint Peter residents), cannot disconnect a residential utility customer for nonpayment if **all** of the following four requirements are met:

- The account is current for the billing period immediately prior to October 15<sup>th</sup>.
- The electric disconnection would affect the customer's primary heat source.
- The customer's household income is less than 185% of the federal poverty level, as documented by the customer to the City.
- The customer has filed a "declaration of inability to pay" form with the City.

For the cold weather period October 15<sup>th</sup> to April 15<sup>th</sup> of each year the City of Saint Peter will install a limiting meter rather than disconnect service for a customer whose account has become delinquent.

The limiting meter will only allow customers to run their furnace, refrigerator and one or two lights. Customer's whose service is limited must pay all past due amounts plus a reconnection charge of \$70.00 plus tax prior to reconnection. The charge for reconnection after 3:30 pm or when the Finance Department is otherwise closed is \$300 plus tax.

What should a customer do if they can't pay their utility bill? A customer with a delinquent account may request a payment arrangement. The payment arrangement will require the customer to pay the current bill each month and make payments on the unpaid portion on a payment schedule limited to six (6) months. If payment is not made on the date agreed to by the customer and the current utility bill is not paid by the fifteenth of each month, service will be immediately disconnected. During the cold weather period, a limiting meter will be installed.

Customers needing help paying utility bills may qualify for state or federal fuel assistance. For complete qualifications and application information, please contact the Nicollet County Social Services office (934-8559) or the Minnesota Valley Action Council (934-5224). The Salvation Army Heat Share program might also be able to help. Reach them at 326-5017.



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

- **VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER** - The City of Saint Peter is currently accepting applications for the position of VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER in the Fire Department. Up to three (3) Firefighters will be hired. Minimum qualifications: High school diploma/GED; at least 18 years of age; reside within a six (6) minute response time from the Fire Station; possess a valid driver's license; and ability to read and write the English language.

Successful candidates must also pass pre-employment physical, drug and alcohol tests. An open house for interested



candidates and their significant others will be held on September 23rd from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. at the Fire Station (227 West Mulberry Street). This event provides an opportunity for prospective candidates and their family members to ask questions and learn more about what is involved in service as a Volunteer Firefighter. Successful candidates will begin service December 1, 2020 and will be required to successfully complete required Firefighter schooling within one year. Applicants are required to complete a City application form which is available in the City Administrator's office at 227 South Front Street, or online at <https://www.saintpetermn.gov/365/Employment>, or by calling (507)934-0663. Complete position descriptions for Firefighters are also available in the City Administrator's office. Completed applications must be received by the City Administrator's office by 5:00 p.m. on October 2, 2020. Faxed and/or late applications will not be accepted. AA/EEO

- **PART-TIME BUS DRIVERS** - The City of Saint Peter is currently accepting applications for the position of Part-time Bus Drivers for the Minnesota River Valley Transit system. This position will work varied shifts including day, nights and occasional weekends. Positions in Saint Peter. Successful candidates for this position must have, at a minimum, a High school diploma or equivalent and a valid State of Minnesota CDL minimum of Class C Driver's License with passenger endorsement. Candidates will have thirty (30) days from the date of employment to obtain the required driver's license and the City will help the new employee train for the license test. Candidates who possess the following desired experience or education will qualify for additional points towards an interview: previous experience working with the public; training in vehicle mechanics; experience operating a two-way radio/phone; and prior bus driving experience. Starting wage \$16.72 per hour. Applicants are required to complete a City application form which is available in the City Administrator's office at 227 South Front Street, by calling (507) 934-0663 or online at <https://www.saintpetermn.gov/365/Employment>. Completed applications must be received by the City Administrator's office by 5:00 p.m. September 24, 2020. Faxed and/or late applications will not be accepted. **\*\*NOTE:** The successful candidates for this position will be required to successfully complete and pass a pre-employment drug test. The position is also subject to post-accident, random, reasonable suspicion, return to duty, and follow-up drug and alcohol testing required by **USDOT 49 CFR Part 655** (Federal Transit Administration) and **USDOT 49 CFR Part 40**. In addition, successful candidates for this position must have a vehicle driving record which is clear of revocations, suspensions and cancellations for the past three (3) years. Applicants may be required to submit to a criminal background check and be clear of convictions for crimes or anticipatory crimes (as defined in M.S. 609.17 and 609.175) within the previous fifteen (15) years. AA/EEO

**CITY MEETING CALENDAR** –\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE...Until further notice, City meetings may be conducted electronically as authorized under Minnesota Statutes 13D.021. Log-in information for meetings being held either virtually or as a hybrid virtual/in-person will be included at the bottom of the agenda page. Agendas are all posted on the City's website at [www.saintpetermn.gov](http://www.saintpetermn.gov).

Wednesday	September 23	12:30 p.m.	Hospital Commission
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
Monday	October 5	3:30 p.m.	Housing and Redevelopment Authority
Monday	October 5	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
Tuesday	October 6	until 1:30	City Offices Closed for Staff Training
Monday	October 12	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Monday	October 19	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
Monday	October 19	7:00 p.m.	Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Thursday	October 22	12:00 noon	Economic Development Authority
Friday	October 23	8:00 a.m.	Tourism and Visitors Bureau
Monday	October 26	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Tuesday	October 27	5:30 p.m.	Heritage Preservation Commission
Wednesday	October 28	12:30 p.m.	Hospital Commission