



CITY MATTERS

The Official Newsletter of the City of St. Charles



Winter 2011

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City Matters is published by the City of St. Charles

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For after hours
Non-emergencies call
932-4500.

City Hall Hours:
Monday-Friday
8 a.m.-5 p.m.

City Matters

PAGE 2

- * I-90 Project
- * BTYR-Winona Region

PAGE 3

- * Cat Licenses
- * Park/Rec
- * X-mas Light Recycling
- * Winter Parking

BACK PAGE

- * Cold Weather Rule
- * Energy Saving Tips

NOTICE TO RESIDENTS



Effective February 2012, St. Charles Public Utilities will be transitioning to monthly water utility billing, a change that will allow customers to better manage their budgets and water usage. Early leak detection helps save residents money, which is one more reason to switch from quarterly to monthly billings. Often water leaks go unnoticed until a customer receives a larger than usual bill. By that time, thousands of gallons of water have been wasted.

In order to begin this process, the January 2012 bill will be a transition bill in moving from quarterly to monthly billing. Residents will see the sewer services consumed from September 20th thru December 19th, which is historically billed over three months, charged on your January 2012 bill. Your February 2012 bill will consist of services consumed from December 20th thru January 19th. From then on, your utility bill will show monthly readings for water and sewer.

As an added convenience to customers and City staff, the City offers online Bill Pay and a Direct Pay service. For Bill Pay, go to www.stcharlesmn.org to setup your account. The Direct Pay service requires a customer fill out an ACH Authorization Agreement and return it along with a voided check to City Hall. Once set up, customers never have to worry about dropping off or mailing a check again. Payments will automatically be withdrawn from the account on the 15th of the month (following business day if the 15th lands on Saturday/Sunday).

If you have any concerns or questions please feel free to contact us at City Hall. We appreciate your patience and understanding with this change.

2010 Consumer Confidence Drinking Water Report Available

Dear RESIDENT: The City of Saint Charles is issuing the results of monitoring done on its drinking water for the period from January 1 to December 31, 2010. The purpose of this report is to advance consumers' understanding of drinking water and heighten awareness of the need to protect precious water resources.

The water provided to customers may meet drinking water standards, but the Minnesota Department of Health has also made a determination as to how vulnerable the source of water may be to future contamination incidents. If you wish to obtain the entire source water assessment regarding your drinking water, please call 651-201-4700 or 1-800-818-9318 (and press 5) during normal business hours. Also, you can view it on line at www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/swp/swa.

Call 507-932-3020 if you have questions about the City of Saint Charles drinking water or would like information about opportunities for public participation in decisions that may affect the quality of the water. The full report can also be found on the City's website at www.stcharlesmn.org.

Join almost 1,100 residents and become a City of St. Charles FAN on Facebook!!!

Events, updates, and notifications can now be sent directly to your Facebook account from the City of St. Charles. Come check out all the excitement on

www.facebook.com/stcharlesmn.

Check out our WEBSITE!!!
www.stcharlesmn.org

What's Happening in St. Charles?

Interstate 90 Project Nearing Completion

Driving south on Highway 74 residents have no doubt noticed the changing landscape along the northeast corner by I-90. Elcor Construction will have completed a large percentage of the infrastructure for St. Charles' new 35-acre commercial and industrial park by mid-November. Infrastructure including water, sewer, electric, and telecommunications from two companies will be complete with natural gas lines to be installed in the spring. Elcor Construction will continue to work on finishing various pieces throughout the winter and will return in the spring to finish a final lift for the bituminous street.

The park has been designed with an electrical loop system that will provide the most reliable service to any potential business and industrial customer.



Economic Development to field inquiries regarding the facility.

High speed fiber optic connection will be available from both Hiawatha Broadband Communications and Century-Link (formerly Qwest Communications), which will provide potential customers with the greatest access and service for their growing telecommunications needs. Final details and alterations to the park will be made in the spring of 2012, but the main objective of the campaign was to complete the majority of the infrastructure in order to make it accessible to potential business projects.

While no definitive agreements have been made, staff are encouraged by the continued interest in the park. The St. Charles Economic Development Authority, through the direction of Cris Gastner with Community Economic Development Associates (CEDA), continues to work with his counterpart at the Minnesota Department of Employment of



Governor Dayton designates Beyond the Yellow Ribbon to City of St. Charles

As part of the August 31, 2011 ceremony held at the Rochester Arts Center, Governor Mark Dayton proclaimed that the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon-Winona Region program was accredited. For almost a year, community members from Winona County developed an action plan as a way to help provide a network of resources for service and their families throughout the deployment and activation cycle.

The program pulled resources from numerous sectors of the county including: education, local governments, businesses, public safety/judicial, social services/medical providers, veteran/civic organizations, as well as the faith based community. Various objectives for the campaign were identified as follows: create and facilitate opportunities for activities/events, educate the public about the challenges, act as a referral service, and provide a communication support of all focus areas.

Just one of the events that the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon-Winona Region helped to organize was the May 31, 2011 deployment ceremony for the Minnesota National Guard's Charlie Company, Second Battalion, 135th Infantry held at Veterans Memorial Park Band Shell in Winona.

Over 25 organizations and government units including St. Charles, Winona, and Goodview each volunteered either an ambulance, fire truck, or police squad to help lead the



Representatives from the BTYR Winona Region receiving the honor from Governor Mark Dayton.

procession with members of local VFWs, American Legions, and Honor guards greeting the 100 members of the 135th Infantry.

Donations can be made to the Winona County Chapter of the American Red Cross as a tax free deduction. To date, \$1,500 has been donated to the all volunteer organization which will be used to help support families through various events and programs like Daddy-dolls that will be distributed to the children of soldiers.

Community members are encouraged to check out www.btyrwinonaregion.org to find out more information on the program and how you can help.

City of St. Charles Cat Clinic

Cat Licenses due Jan. 1, 2012

The City of St. Charles Cat Clinic will be held Tuesday, November 15th from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. at the St. Charles Vet Clinic located at 106 West Circle Drive.

The rabies vaccination is \$17.00 and the cat license is \$12.00 with a 50% reduction in cost if your pet has been spayed or neutered.

Cat licenses are due by January 1, 2012 and are valid for 2 years. Licenses are also available at City Hall during normal business hours Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.



St. Charles Park & Recreation 2011 Winter Activities

Girls Basketball

Ages: 3rd & 4th Grade
 Dates: Saturday, November 12th – Saturday, December 17th
 Time: 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
 Location: St. Charles Elementary School Gym
 Cost: \$20.00 per person
 Deadline: November 9th

Boys Basketball

Ages: 3rd & 4th Grade
 Dates: Saturday, November 12th – Saturday, December 17th
 Time: 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
 Location: St. Charles Elementary School Gym
 Cost: \$20.00 per person
 Deadline: November 9th

Girls Traveling Team (Basketball)

Ages: 5th & 6th Grade
 Dates: Saturday, November 19th, 2011 – March 2012
 Time: 11:00 a.m. – Noon
 Location: St. Charles Elementary School Gym
 Cost: \$40.00 per person
 Deadline: November 16th

Boys Traveling Team (Basketball)

Ages: 5th & 6th Grade
 Dates: Saturday, November 19th, 2011 – March 2012
 Time: Noon – 1:00 p.m.
 Location: St. Charles Elementary School Gym
 Cost: \$40.00 per person
 Deadline: November 16th

Parent volunteer coaches are needed. If you are interested, please contact Rick Schaber at City Hall at (507)932-3020.

**Trim your tree and
Trim your electric bill...**

Get a rebate when you purchase LED Lights and Decorations to save energy & money—and give a little back to the environment

<p>Energy efficient – LED lights use up to 90% less electricity compared to incandescents.</p> <p>Safe – There's no chance of combustion since the bulbs are cool to the touch, regardless of how long they are left on. The epoxy lenses are virtually indestructible.</p> <p>Save money – Using LED holiday lights can save you up to \$21 per month.</p>	<p>Long life – LED lights last up to 50,000 hours outdoors and 100,000 hours indoors.</p> <p>Lamp replacement – If a bulb burns out, the other bulbs stay lit making replacement easy.</p>	<p><i>Lights must be purchased in 2011 and you must be an electric customer of City of St. Charles Utilities to be eligible for the rebate and lights must be used in their service territory. Rebate cannot exceed purchase price. Rebate request must be submitted no later than December 31, 2011.</i></p>
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A maximum rebate of \$200 per customer. Check out www.stcharlesmn.org for full details.

Winter On-Street Parking Restrictions

To ensure that our snow plowing crews are able to clear snow off city streets St. Charles has ordinances that govern on-street parking in the winter. No person shall park a vehicle on any City street between the hours of 2 and 6 a.m. when it is snowing or threatening to snow, for the period starting **November 1** and running through **April 1** without prior exemption granted by the City Council. Vehicles parked in violation of the restrictions may be ticketed or towed. For more information on the City Code check out www.stcharlesmn.org.

OPEN GYM

The **St. Charles Elementary School Gym** will be open for recreational purposes. There will be a \$3.00 fee per adult & \$2.00 fee for students in high school or younger.

The gym will be open to youth **8th grade & under from 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm & adults from 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm**. Parents are able to be with their kids during either session, as long as you are playing with them.

Open Gym starts on Sunday, Jan. 8th, 2012 & ends Sunday, March 25th, 2012.

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830 Whitewater Avenue
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PRSR STD
ECRWSS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
EDDM RETAIL

THE ST. CHARLES
PUBLIC LIBRARY
Hours of Operation:
Monday
1 p.m.— 6 p.m.
Tuesday
1 p.m.— 8 p.m.
Wednesday
10 a.m.— 6 p.m.
Thursday
1 p.m.— 8 p.m.
Friday
1 p.m.— 6 p.m.
Saturday
10 a.m.— 1 p.m.

St. Charles Public
Library is located at
125 W. 11th Street.
For more
information, please
call 932-3227.

*****ECRWSS****

**Local
Postal Customer**

**LOW COST/NO COST ENERGY
EFFICIENCY TIPS**

- * Caulk and weather strip cracks around doors and window frames. Block openings at bottom of doors to prevent drafts.
- * Lower the setting on your thermostat at night and dress warmly.
- * Lower the setting on your water heater to 120 degrees F (normal/medium).
- * Run dishwasher only when it is full.
- * Open shades during winter days to let the warm sunlight in and close the shades at night.
- * Wash clothes with warm water and rinse them in cold water.
- * Leaking faucets should be repaired promptly, especially hot water.
- * Turn off all unused lights and appliances.
- * Close all windows tightly and use locks to prevent cold air leaking in. Cover all windows with plastic.
- * Broken windows should be repaired immediately and close all storm windows.
- * Window air conditioning units should be covered or removed during the heating season.
- * Furnace filters should be kept clean.
- * Furnaces should be checked for safe and efficient operation at least once a year.
- * Vacuum refrigerator and freezer coils every six months to improve efficiency.
- * Close off unused rooms.

COLD WEATHER RULE

Can my heat be shut off in the winter?

YES, unless you take steps under the Cold Weather Rule (CWR) to protect yourself. You must contact your utility company to apply for protection from having your heat shut off.

When is the Rule in effect?

From October 15 through April 15 each year.

What are the income guidelines?

Income is the total household income from all persons living with you. Household income does not include any amount received from energy assistance. The total household income must be less than 50 percent of the state median income.

Can my electricity be shut off if I heat with LP gas or oil?

If you are eligible for protection under the Rule, and you are making reasonably timely payments under a payment arrangement, your electricity cannot be shut off if it affects your heat. For example if you use electricity to operate the controls on your oil system, your electricity cannot be shut off.

I need help paying my bill. Who do I call?

SEMCAC:	(800) 944-3281
Winona County Human Services:	(507) 457-6200
SE MN Resource Center:	(507) 932-5203
Salvation Army:	(507) 288-3663

**After Hour Problems?
507-932-4500**

The City of St. Charles would like to remind all City of St. Charles residents that if you are having problems with electric, water, sewer, or anything else normally taken care of by the Public Works Department before or after normal City Hall hours, please call 507-932-4500. This connects you to the Law Enforcement Center in Winona and they will dispatch your request to the proper department. If your situation is an emergency, please call 911.