CITY OF ST. CHARLES
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THE DEN

FEBRUARY 2013

NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE CITY OF ST. CHARLES
More at www.stcharlesil.gov

**February**
**City Council and Committee Meetings**

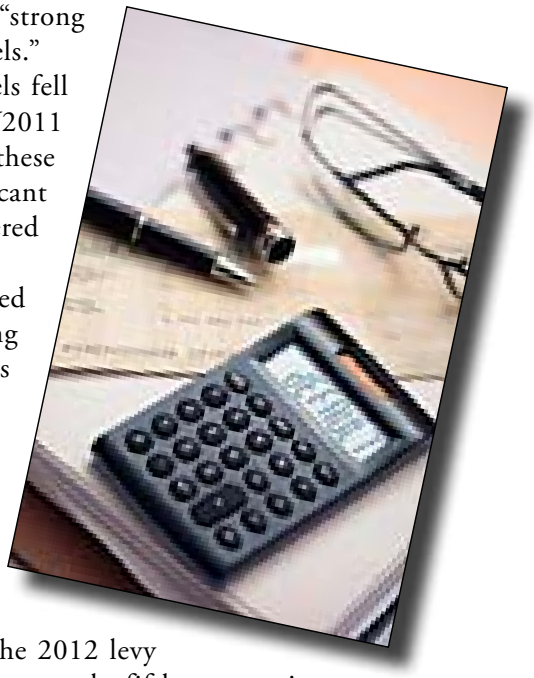
| | |
|---|---|
| City Council 7 p.m. | 4 |
| Planning & Development 7 p.m. | 11 |
| City Council 7 p.m. | 19 |
| Government Operations 7:05 p.m. | 19 |
| Government Services 7 p.m. | 25 |

A complete list of meetings, including Commission, Board & Task Force meetings is @ www.stcharlesil.gov/meetings

**Curbside Yard Waste & Brush Pick Up April 2013 Collection Resumes**

# City "Walks the Walk" on Fiscal Responsibility

Throughout 2012, the City of St. Charles stayed committed to following a fiscally prudent path to keep a line on expenditures and tax levels. The success of these strategies is evident in our continued strong financial performance, which recently was recognized by Moody's Investor Service with an Aa1 debt rating. In their report, Moody's cited the City's "strong financial operations and solid reserve levels."



In fiscal year 2012, expenditure levels fell to $38.58 million, 3.50% less than FY2011 and nearly 10% below 2008 levels. And these reductions have been made with no significant impact on the services and programs offered by the City of St. Charles.

Additionally, the City's revenues continued their record of strong performance ending at $38.65 million, resulting in a surplus of more than $120,000 for the fiscal year. Sales and Use Tax revenues increased by 3.80% to $14.6 million as the economy continued its slow but steady recovery.

These financial results were achieved while holding the City's property tax levy at a consistent level. The 2012 levy that the City will collect during 2013 represents the fifth consecutive year that the City's operating property tax levy remained at $12 million.

General Fund reserves now stand at a level of approximately $16.2 million, representing 42% of expenditure levels. This level of reserves is well in excess of the required 25% policy maintained by the City Council and provides an adequate cushion against future fluctuations in revenue levels.

In addition, taxpayers also will save more than $2.4 million in interest costs between now and 2025, due to recent refinancing activity. That's an average of almost $190,000 annually.

The City is proud of these fiscal achievements in the midst of a difficult economy, and will continue to remain responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars. For more information, visit the City Administrator's blog **www.insidestcharles.com**.

## Early Voting

Early voting for the April 9 Consolidated Election is available at City Hall for Kane County residents March 25 to April 6, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

## Restaurant Week is Back!

### Enjoy Local Flavors of St. Charles, Feb. 18-22

The 3rd Annual St. Charles Restaurant Week returns! From February 18-22, you can visit more than 25 participating restaurants and receive a 25% discount off your bill when you present a special coupon. Whether you're visiting an old favorite or looking to try something new, St. Charles offers one of Chicagoland's best dining scenes. Also, Restaurant Week is a great opportunity to support your local businesses. There are three easy ways to get your hands on a coupon:

- **Watch your mailbox**. A postcard will be mailed to St. Charles residents in early February. It can be presented at any participating restaurant for the discount.
- **Read your local newspaper**. Look for Restaurant Week ads in the *Daily Herald* beginning Sunday, Feb. 10 and in the Thursday, Feb. 14 issues of the *Kane County Chronicle* and *St. Charles Republican*. Simply clip out the ad and bring it to a participating restaurant.
- **Go online.** Visit **www.stcharlesil.gov/restaurant-week** to download your coupon and see a list of participating restaurants and their menus. You can download and print as many coupons as you like.

Please note only one bill per table is eligible for the discount, a minimum purchase of $20 is required, and the 25% discount excludes tax, tip, and alcohol. This offer is not valid with other promotions the restaurants may be running. The offer also is for dine-in only. Our local businesses greatly appreciate your patronage and support of their efforts to make St. Charles an eclectic place to shop and dine.

Come on out for the St. Patrick's Parade Saturday, March 16 at 2 p.m. The parade runs right down Main St./Rt. 64 and features Irish dancers, authentic Irish music, floats and more. Get into the Irish spirit and join us in downtown St. Charles! For more information, visit the Downtown St. Charles Partnership website at **www.downtownstcharles.org/stpats.**

## Celebrate Arbor Day 2013

Join the City of St. Charles in celebrating Arbor Day on Friday, April 26 at 4:00 p.m. The event will take place at Lincoln Park on Main Street, between 4th and 5th Streets.

Arbor Day has been celebrated in the United States for more than 100 years and has gained worldwide recognition. Celebrate with citizens of the world and the City of St. Charles, and enjoy this free, fun event. The City's Arbor Day celebration will include live music, delicious cookies, a tree raffle, tree care demonstrations, contests and prizes!

For information visit the Arbor Day page on the City website **www.stcharlesil.gov.**

# Be Sure to Complete the Water Survey You Received in the Mail

## Survey Required Every Two Years

The City of St. Charles is conducting a Biennial Water Use Survey of all City of St. Charles water customers. The survey is being conducted by Aqua Backflow, a company contracted with the City to gather the survey data.

The survey is required every two years by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, the Illinois Plumbing Code, and City Ordinance. The information obtained is used to ensure safe drinking water for all users by documenting if a homeowner has certain devices, such as a lawn irrigation system, and if a backflow prevention device is installed on the internal water system.

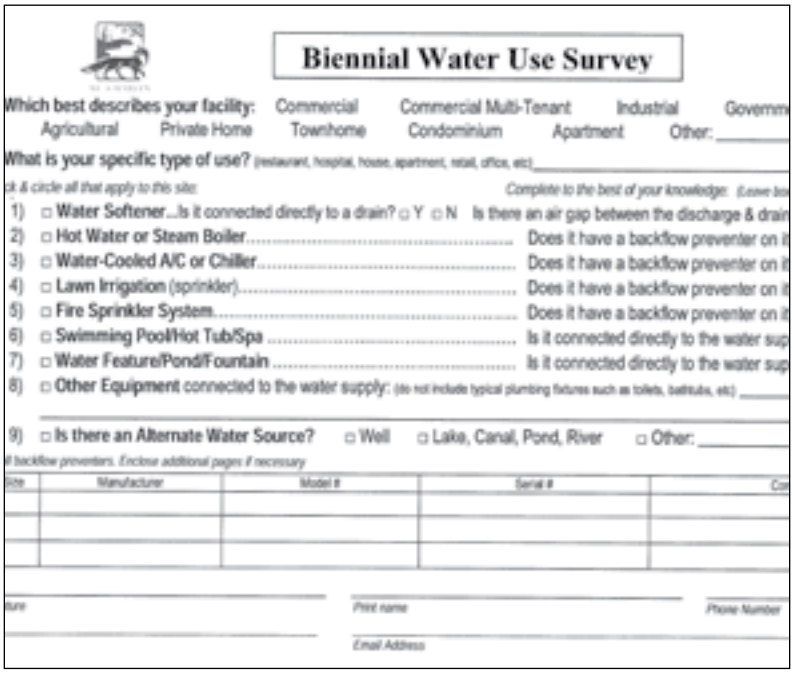
All water customers are required to complete and return this survey, which takes only a few minutes. Reminders will be sent to follow up on unreturned surveys.

Once you complete the survey, to submit it, simply:

- Mail it back to the address on the form
- Drop it off at City Hall or at the Public Works facility
- Fax it (both sides) toll-free to 866-777-2125.

The survey also can be completed online. Go to **www.aquabackflow.com**, click on the Forms tab, enter the password of "stc," and complete the appropriate survey. Please note there are some required fields but not all fields need to be filled in.

If you have questions, please contact the City of St. Charles Public Works Department at 630-377-4405 or Aqua Backflow toll-free at 866-777-2124.



**Biennial Water Use Survey**

Which best describes your facility: Commercial Commercial Multi-Tenant Industrial Governm
Agricultural Private Home Townhome Condominium Apartment Other: _____

What is your specific type of use? (restaurant, hospital, house, apartment, retail, office, etc) _____

k & circle all that apply to this site: Complete to the best of your knowledge: (Leave bla

1) ☐ Water Softener...Is it connected directly to a drain? ☐ Y ☐ N Is there an air gap between the discharge & drain
2) ☐ Hot Water or Steam Boiler..... Does it have a backflow preventer on it
3) ☐ Water-Cooled A/C or Chiller..... Does it have a backflow preventer on it
4) ☐ Lawn Irrigation (sprinkler)..... Does it have a backflow preventer on it
5) ☐ Fire Sprinkler System..... Does it have a backflow preventer on it
6) ☐ Swimming Pool/Hot Tub/Spa ..... Is it connected directly to the water sup
7) ☐ Water Feature/Pond/Fountain ..... Is it connected directly to the water sup
8) ☐ Other Equipment connected to the water supply: (do not include typical plumbing fixtures such as toilets, bathtubs, etc) _____

9) ☐ Is there an Alternate Water Source? ☐ Well ☐ Lake, Canal, Pond, River ☐ Other: _____

f backflow preventers. Enclose additional pages if necessary

| ite | Manufacturer | Model # | Serial # | Co |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

ure Print name Phone Number

Email Address

# Winter Traffic Safety Reminders

## From the St. Charles Police Department

The winter weather finally caught up with us. And when the cold winds blow, people often leave their cars unattended to warm the engines or "run into a gas station just for a minute." Illinois law states: No person driving or in charge of a motor vehicle shall permit it to stand unattended without first stopping the engine, locking the ignition, and removing the key from the ignition." Also, car thieves look for vehicles left running and unattended, especially around convenient stores and gas stations.

The City would also like to remind you that snow routes and parking restrictions are in effect:

- From November 1 to April 30, it is unlawful for any vehicle to be parked on any streets designated as a snow route when an accumulation of snow is two inches or more, until the street has been cleared.
- It is unlawful for any person to park a vehicle on any public street or other public place for a period of longer than 24 consecutive hours. It also is unlawful to park on a sidewalk (except between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. when vehicles may be parked in residentially zoned districts on that portion of the sidewalk, which connects the driveway and the driveway apron).

By not parking on snow routes when there is freshly fallen snow, you allow the swift clearing of our streets, which makes traveling safer. Also, vehicles must be moved every 24 hours to ensure they are in proper working order and to allow city workers to clean or plow side streets.

# Be Aware of Utility Fraud Scam

The City of St. Charles would like to remind our customers that we NEVER accept payment of a utility bill over the phone, using a credit or debit card.

Also, if an account is in disconnect status, no utility payments are taken over the phone, online, or through prepaid money cards. If a resident or business is in disconnect status, they will receive a courtesy phone call, but payment would only be accepted at the Utility Billing office in City Hall.

## FEMA Offers a Smartphone App

The FEMA App (smartphone app for mobile devices) contains disaster safety tips, interactive lists for storing your emergency kit and emergency meeting location information, and a map with open shelters and open FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs). The app is free to download through your smartphone provider's app store. More information is at **www.fema.gov/app**.

**Effective immediately Veolia ES Solid Waste ("Veolia") has joined with Advanced Disposal Services, Inc. ("Advanced Disposal") for your refuse services. The joint company will operate under the Advanced Disposal name. Residents will still be able to pay bills online from the company's website www.advanceddisposal.com. The phone number remains 630-587-8282.**

## Substantial Building Improvement and Floodplain Management Standards

The National Flood Insurance Program requires that if the cost of improvements to a building or the cost to repair damages (from any cause) to a building exceeds 50% of the market value of the building (excluding land value), the entire building must be brought up to current floodplain management standards. Building improvement projects include exterior and interior remodeling, rehabilitation, additions, repairs, and reconstruction projects. Additionally, the cost of currently planned improvements will be added to the cost of previously made improvements and compared to the existing market value to determine if the improvements exceed 50% of the structure's value. Please contact the Public Works Engineering Division at 630-377-4486 for further information.

## Electric Outage Reporting System

### Register Today

If you are a St. Charles Electric Utility customer, then be sure to register your phone number with the automated telephone notification system.

Based on caller I.D. technology, the system links customers' phone numbers to their accounts so the location of the outage can be identified automatically when they call to report an issue. It also allows customers to receive updates regarding the outage and a return call to confirm power restoration.

The system can handle heavy call volumes and quickly relays outage information, reducing crew response times.

Residents can register up to three phone numbers by calling the Utility Billing office at 630-377-4426 or registering online at **www.stcharlesil.gov**.

GREEN ST. CHARLES TIP...

If you have a wood-burning fireplace, save your ashes in a tin instead of throwing them away. Cold wood ashes can be mixed in your compost heap to create a valuable soil amendment that provides nutrients to your garden.

# 50/50 Parkway Tree Program PRE-ORDER Approval Form

The City again is offering trees for planting in the parkways through its "50/50 Parkway Tree Planting Program." Please contact the Public Works department to request a review of your parkway if you are interested in participating. All requests must have an approved parkway review before an order will be placed. Please do not send payment at this time. Once approved, residents will receive a confirmation letter, approved order form, and details on how to order a parkway tree.

## Available Trees and Costs for the Spring 2013 Program

Prairie Fire Crabapple $130 - *Good under power lines*
Red Jewel Crabapple $130 - *Good under power lines*
Accolade Elm $165
Chanticleer Pear $160 - *Spring Only*
London Planetree $170
Redmond Linden $165
Skyline Honey Locust $165
State Street Maple $165
Swamp White Oak $215 - *Spring Only*

More information regarding the specific species is available on the 50/50 Parkway Tree page of our website **www.stcharlesil.gov**. Larger size trees are available at an additional cost of $100 per ½ inch diameter upgrade. If you have any questions, please contact the Public Works department at 630-377-4405 or email pw@stcharlesil.gov.

## Guidelines

1. To begin the Approval Process, complete the form below and send it to the City of St. Charles Public Works Department, Attn: Public Services, 2 E. Main Street, St. Charles, IL 60174
2. Once we receive your completed pre-order form, a Public Services team member will conduct a parkway review to determine tree spacing, soil condition and existing underground utilities. All of these factors impact planting a new tree. Our team looks forward to helping you select the best tree for your parkway.
3. After the parkway review, a letter is sent detailing approval status. If your request has been approved, you also will receive an order form and instructions on where to send your order with payment.
4. If at any time you have questions, please contact Public Works at 630-377-4405.

*Pre-Order forms received as of March 1 will be considered for planting in the spring. Forms received by August 1 will be considered for planting in the fall.*

| | |
|---|---|
| **Date** | |
| **Name** | |
| **Address** | |
| **Phone # (Daytime)** | |
| **Comments:** | ***Please provide us with your recommendation regarding the location of where you would like to have the new tree placed in your parkway. Due to space requirements for healthy growth of trees, we cannot guarantee that the tree will be planted exactly where you recommend.* |

***** PLEASE DO NOT SEND PAYMENT AT THIS TIME *****

| **PUBLIC WORKS INTERNAL OFFICE USE ONLY** | | *To be completed by Public Services Staff* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Approval Status: | ☐ Approved | ☐ Declined | Date: |
| Completed by: | | Pkwy Location: | ☐ Front ☐ Side ☐ Rear |
| Markings for Planting: | ☐ Yes (in white paint) Location: | | ☐ Not Marked |
| Species Recommendation: | | Comments: | |

## Diversity is Important to a Healthy Tree Population

As many residents are sadly aware, the City has lost numerous parkway trees to the Emerald Ash Borer infestation. While the removal of infested ash trees will continue throughout 2013 and 2014, the City will replant new, healthy trees. The new parkway trees will reflect the City's move toward a diverse tree population or "urban forest."

One of the many benefits of having a variety of different parkway trees is the prevention of widespread, species-specific diseases and/or pestilence. For example, as the name indicates, the Emerald Ash Borer targets and destroys only ash trees. There are other diseases and pests that specifically impact certain other types of trees as well. By diversifying the City's parkway trees, our urban forest will be better protected against species-specific destruction and help prevent the mass-removal of trees.

Residents may soon enjoy some little known, yet beautiful trees including: bald cypress, coffeetree, and swamp white oak, to name a few. Soil conditions, power lines and other criteria are considered by the City when planting trees in parkways. We look forward to our healthy and varied urban forest!

## 2013 IMUA Scholarships

### Deadline for Applications is March 8

The City of St. Charles, in partnership with the Illinois Municipal Utilities Association (IMUA), is offering four, $500 scholarships to eligible high school students. Applicants must be high school seniors whose parents or legal guardians are residential customers of City of St. Charles utilities. Students must submit an application and essay of 500 words or less addressing their choice of one of three utility-related questions. Applications are due March 8.

Applications and questions are available on the City website **www.stcharlesil.gov** and also at the reception desk at City Hall, 2 E. Main St.

The scholarship program promotes and recognizes scholastic achievement, and creates awareness of the issues facing consumers and public power municipalities.

"Today's energy providers, including municipally-owned and operated utilities, face a myriad of challenges which warrant creative and innovative solutions," said Tom Bruhl, Electric Services Manager for the City. "Creating awareness among tomorrow's leaders can be the first step in helping determine effective, long-term solutions." This is the thirteenth year IMUA has offered the program.

## Citizen Police Academy Coming in March

### Applications Due Feb. 26

Ever wonder what it's like to be a part of the Law Enforcement Profession? The St. Charles Police Department is once again hosting their annual Citizen Police Academy, which begins March 5 and runs through April 30. The CPA is meant to give its students a better understanding of how the St. Charles Police Department operates. Some topics covered include:

- Criminal & narcotics investigations
- Arrest and courts procedures
- Traffic stops
- K-9 unit
- SWAT Team
- Crime scene processing
- Domestic violence
- Firearms Training Simulator

The class meets Tuesdays & Thursdays, 7 to 9 p.m. for eight weeks. The class is open, free of charge, to St. Charles residents, property and business owners and their employees, and approved St. Charles high school juniors and seniors. Applications can be picked up at the Police Department or downloaded from the crime prevention page on the City website, **www.stcharlesil.gov.** All applications are subject to approval. The last day to submit an application is February 26. Drop off or mail applications to:

St. Charles Police Department
c/o Officer Bill Tynan
211 N. Riverside Avenue
St. Charles, IL 60174

For more details, contact Officer Bill Tynan at 630-443-3730 or **btynan@stcharlesil.gov**.

## Looking to Avoid Paying at the Pump?

With gas prices over $3 a gallon and continuing to fluctuate, many residents are looking to Pace Suburban Bus to save money on their workday commutes. Pace offers innovative transit programs to meet a variety of transportation needs. According to the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), households that use public transportation and live with one less car can save an average of $9,000 every year.

Pace's fixed route bus system is an affordable option for suburban commuters. To find out if a Pace bus can take the place of your car for your daily commute, visit **PaceBus.com** to view schedules and maps or use the trip planning tool goroo® for step-by-step directions using Pace, Metra and/or the CTA.

## Do You Receive Community eNews?

Stay up on the latest happenings in and around St. Charles with Community eNews. It features news from the City, park district, library, school district, Chamber of Commerce, Greater St. Charles Convention & Vistor's Bureau, and the Downtown St. Charles Partnership. Sign up at **www.st-charles.il.us** and click on the "Subscribe to eNews" tab to have Community eNews emailed directly to you.

## City of St. Charles Directory

| | |
|---|---|
| Building & Code Enforcement | 377-4406 |
| City Administrator | 377-4422 |
| Community Development | 377-4443 |
| Development Engineering | 443-3677 |
| Economic Development | 443-4093 |
| Electric Division | 377-4407 |
| Engineering Division | 377-4486 |
| Emergency Management Agency | 377-4416 |
| Flood Protection Assistance | 377-4486 |
| Finance/Accounting | 762-7002 |
| Fire Administration | 377-4458 |
| Fire Prevention Bureau | 377-4457 |
| Human Resources | 377-4446 |
| Mayor Donald P. DeWitte | 377-4444 |
| Police Admin./Investigation/Crime Prevention | 377-4435 |
| Public Works-Water/Sewer/Street | 377-4405 |
| Refuse Pickup Info. | 587-8282 |
| TDD | 800-526-0844 |
| Utility Billing - Electric/Water/Sewer | 377-4426 |
| **Electric Outage Hotline** | **866-444-0016** |

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#1 City for Families