



COVID-19 Update

On April 23, 2020, the Governor extended the Stay-at-Home order through May 30, 2020, with some modifications. A few highlights:

Face Coverings

- Individuals over the age of two who can medically tolerate a face-covering will be required to wear a face-covering or mask in public places where they cannot maintain a six-foot social distance.
- Face-coverings will be required in indoor public spaces, such as stores.

Outdoor Recreation

Visit the St. Charles Park District for information about local parks and facilities www.stcparks.org

- State Parks will begin a phased reopening on May 1. More details on which parks will reopen are available on the [Illinois Department of Natural Resources website](http://www.idnr.gov).

- Fishing and boating in groups of no more than two people will be allowed.

- Golf will be permitted under strict safety and social distancing guidelines.

New Essential Businesses

- Greenhouses, garden centers, and nurseries may reopen.
- Animal grooming services may re-open.

Non-Essential Retail

- Retail stores designated non-essential businesses may reopen to fulfill telephone and online orders through pick-up and delivery.

For the full announcement outlining the modifications, including those regarding manufacturing businesses, schools and hospitals, [read the Governor's Order here](#).

City Council Meetings may be Conducted as Teleconferences

We continue to work to serve our citizens amid the coronavirus outbreak. Therefore, some City Council Meetings could be conducted as teleconferences. Please check our website at www.stcharlesil.gov/meetings for the latest updates. If a meeting is to be conducted as a teleconference, our website will include instructions on how to participate. If you have any questions, contact us at cao@stcharlesil.gov.

Ask Us

Have a question you would like to ask? Send it to info@stcharlesil.gov, **Subject: Ask Us** and it could be answered in an upcoming issue of The Den.

Meetings

To see a complete list of upcoming public meetings, including City Council, Committee and Commission meetings, visit our website at www.stcharlesil.gov/meetings. Agendas are generally posted the Friday prior to the meeting. Minutes are posted after they are approved.



CITY OF
ST. CHARLES
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Heritage. Community. Service. Opportunity.

Contact Us

[Click to view a complete list of City Contacts](#)



From the Mayor's Desk



On April 23, Mayor Ray Rogina and City Administrator Mark Koenen gave an update on the Coronavirus situation and what it means for St. Charles.

[Click here to watch.](#)

Help for Residents & Businesses During COVID-19

For Residents

To help residents struggling to pay their utility bill:

- The City is not assessing late fees at this time
- We have temporarily suspended disconnecting utility service
- We will allow residents additional time to pay their bills once this crisis has stabilized.
- We encourage residents to contact our Utility Billing office (630.377.4426 or utilitybilling@stcharlesil.gov) to set up partial payments
- Other agencies also may be able to provide energy payment assistance:
 - Salvation Army: 630.377.2769
 - LIHEAP Energy Assistance Program: 847.697.4400
 - Kane County 211: 888.865.9903

Kane County Treasurer Waives Late Fees

The Kane County Treasurer has waived late penalty fees for first installment of property tax payments made on or before July 1, 2020. More at www.kanecountytreasurer.org/Pages/press.aspx

For Businesses

The City works closely with the [St. Charles Chamber of Commerce](#) and [St. Charles Business Alliance](#), which have shared information and resources for small businesses to their constituents.

Other Actions the City has Taken

- Disaster Relief - The Mayor declared a Local State of Emergency on March 18, 2020. This makes St. Charles eligible for any available disaster relief from the federal or state governments. The City participates in official updates from the State of Illinois and the White House to keep up on this and other aspects of the COVID-19 responses.
- City Budget Reductions - The City currently is combing through its budget to identify savings through:
 - Instituting a freeze on hiring – only essential positions will be filled
 - Evaluating and postponing certain capital projects
 - Postponing/or canceling select non-essential annual operation programs for FY 2020-21

Outdoor Cooking Safety Tips



When the weather warms up, that means it's time to get grilling. By following some simple safety tips and guidelines you can reduce the risk of injuries.

SAFETY TIPS

- Five percent of outside or unclassified grill fires occurred in a lawn, field or open area
 - Propane and charcoal BBQ grills should only be used outdoors.
 - The grill should be placed well away from the home, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.
 - Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the grill area.
 - Keep your grill clean by removing grease or fat buildup from the grills and in trays below the grill.
- Never leave your grill unattended.
 - Always make sure your gas grill lid is open before lighting it.
 - Use long-handled grilling tools to give the chef plenty of clearance from heat and flames.
 - For campfires, douse the fire with water and make sure the area is cool to the touch before going to sleep or leaving the area.

CHARCOAL GRILLS

- Charcoal chimney starters allow you to start the charcoal using newspaper as a fuel. Use a long match to avoid burning your fingers when lighting the paper.
- If you use starter fluid, use only charcoal starter fluid (not gasoline). Never add charcoal fluid or any other flammable liquids to the fire.
- Keep charcoal fluid out of the reach of children and away from heat sources.
- There are also electric charcoal starters, which do not use fire. Be sure to use an extension cord for outdoor use.
- When you are finished grilling, let the coals completely cool before disposing in a metal container. Never empty coals directly into a trash can.

PROPANE GRILLS

- Check the gas tank hose for leaks before using it for the first time each year. Apply a light soap and water solution to the hose.
- A propane leak will release bubbles. If your grill has a gas leak, turn off both the gas tank and the grill. If the leak stops, get the grill serviced by a professional before using it again. If the leak does not stop, call the fire department.
- If you smell gas while cooking, immediately get away from the grill and call the fire department. Do not move the grill.

Source: <https://www.nfpa.org>

The Latest Crime Prevention Newsletter is Out

The crime prevention newsletter from the St. Charles Police Department, offers helpful crime prevention tips, public safety information, quarterly stats, and police news. **Read it here.** For more information, contact Crime Prevention Officer Jim Burden at jburden@stcharlesil.gov.

Swanson Appointed Fire Chief



Scott Swanson was appointed Chief of the St. Charles Fire Department, effective April 27, 2020. Swanson had been serving as Acting Fire Chief since October 2019, when former Chief Joseph Schelstreet retired.

Swanson joined the St. Charles Fire Department full-time in 1988. He was promoted to Lieutenant in 1992, Captain in 2003, Battalion Chief in 2009, and Assistant Fire Chief in 2013. Swanson also previously served as Acting Fire Chief in 2007, during the transition between previous fire chiefs.

Swanson holds a Bachelor Degree in Fire Service Management from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Ill., and a Master Degree in Management and Organizational Behavior from Benedictine University in Lisle, Ill.

“Scott has provided exemplary service to the St. Charles Fire Department and community for many years,” said City Administrator Mark Koenen. “He has shown he has the skills and abilities to effectively lead the department now and into the future.”

As Fire Chief, Swanson will maintain the high quality of fire and emergency medical services for the St. Charles community, oversee the Tri-City Ambulance Service, represent St. Charles on the Tri-Com 911 Board of Directors, and work collaboratively with neighboring fire departments and other emergency services agencies.

The St. Charles Fire Department provides fire suppression, rescue, emergency medical, emergency management, fire inspection, and public education services to the St. Charles community. The Department earned a Class 1 PPC ISO rating and is fully accredited by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International and the Center for Public Safety Excellence, Inc.

St. Charles Firefighters Honored by American Red Cross of Chicago & Northern Illinois



Lt. David Chmelar and Firefighter/Paramedic Chad Tinsley of the St. Charles Fire Department have been honored as 2020 Everyday Extraordinary Firefighter Heroes by the American Red Cross of Chicago & Northern Illinois. Each year, the organization honors individuals for acts of bravery, dedication, and service to the community.

Lt. Chmelar and Firefighter Chad Tinsley are being recognized for a river rescue that occurred last summer in which they saved two adults and a teenager from plunging over the Fox River dam in a boat. The boat had become disabled, and a major storm with strong winds began blowing the boat towards the dam. The firefighters launched a rescue boat and reached the disabled boat just as it approached the dam. The three people in the boat were

rescued; 40 seconds more and three terrified boaters would have plunged over the dam.

Watch a video of their story on the American Red Cross of Chicago & Northern Illinois Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/chicagoredcross/videos/1121534901544904/>

“We are so proud of Lt. Chmelar and Firefighter Tinsley,” said Fire Chief Scott Swanson. “Their quick thinking and decisive action was instrumental in a situation where every second counted. River rescue is something we train for regularly and that training was key in this situation.”

Normally, those who are nominated for these awards are recognized at a special Heroes Breakfast. But due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Chicago & Northern Illinois Red Cross is unable to host this event in person and instead are honoring this class of heroes via social media @chicagoredcross on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram.



PUBLIC WORKS NOTES

2020 Street Rehabilitation Project Underway

The City has contracted with J.A. Johnson Paving for the 2020 Street Rehabilitation Project. This year’s project locations:

STREET	FROM	TO
Fairview Drive	Oak Street	S. 19th Street
S. 19th Street	Oak Street	Walnut Street
Horne Street	S. 5th Street	Ash Street
Tradition Boulevard	Red Gate Road	Grandview Court
Fox Glen Drive	IL Route 25	Fox Glen Court
Pinelands Road	Weber Dr.	City Limit
Killdeer Lane	Thornhill Farm Lane	Cul-de-sac
Edward Avenue	S. 7th Avenue	S. 13th Avenue
S. 12th Street	Indiana Street	Prairie Street
N. 2nd Avenue	IL Route 64	Cedar Avenue
Heritage Court	Heritage Street	Cul-de-sac
Heritage Street	Peck Road	End
King Richard Circle	King James Avenue	King Alford Court
Queen Elizabeth Court	King Richard Circle	Cul-de-sac

Work is anticipated to start in early May. All roadway work is scheduled to be completed mid-August with parkway restoration in September. For residents on streets scheduled to be resurfaced, keep an eye out for a letter from Public Works with additional information. If you receive an orange parking pass, work is anticipated to impact access to your driveway.

Visit the [2020 Street Rehabilitation Program page on the City’s website](#) for construction updates.

7th Ave. Resurfacing Project Begins in May

The City is resurfacing the entire length of S. 7th Avenue, from IL-64 to Division Street. Work is anticipated to begin in early May, with all roadway work scheduled to be completed by mid-August. J.A. Johnson Paving is the general contractor for the resurfacing project.

“The City is utilizing a \$500,000 grant from the Surface Transportation Program for this project,” said Ken Jay, Public Works Manager – Engineering. “Maintaining the City’s infrastructure is an essential service and S. 7th Avenue is a major collector street in St. Charles.”

S. 7th Avenue will remain open to traffic throughout the project, but be alert for lane closures, construction flaggers and electronic message boards to manage traffic patterns. Letters were sent to residents on S. 7th Avenue to notify them in advance.

Visit the [South 7th Ave. Resurfacing Project webpage](#) on the City’s website for weekly construction updates. For more information, contact Chris Gottlieb, Civil Engineer II, at 630-377-4486 or cgottlieb@stcharlesil.gov.

Brush Collection Schedule

The complete schedule and more details about brush pick up is at www.stcharlesil.gov/services/brush

EAST SIDE OF RIVER

May 18

WEST SIDE OF RIVER

May 26

Yard Waste & Composting

Yard waste & compost are picked up on your regular refuse days. More information is at www.stcharlesil.gov/services/seasonal-services/yard-waste-collection

If you have any questions about these programs, contact Public Works at 630.377.4405 or pw@stcharlesil.gov

**Refuse
Collection
Delayed One
Day due to
Memorial Day**

A Reminder About Balloons

Article submitted by Andrew, a Student Commissioner on the Natural Resources Commission



For decades, balloons have been used to add color and excitement at a variety of events. Balloons exemplify anticipation as they are released just before the start of the Indianapolis 500, as they

have been for the last 80 years. Since the 1960s, they have signified excitement as they rush into the sky after the first touchdown of every season at the University of Nebraska. On a smaller scale, they represent new beginnings at weddings, commemoration at memorials, and of course, celebration at almost any birthday party.



More recently however, this long tradition has proved not to be a sustainable one. Once balloons are released into the air, they don't disappear. They can come back in ways that are very

harmful to the environment. Many fall back to the ground or into the water where wildlife can get tangled in them or mistake them as food. In addition, they can get caught in trees and electrical wires, or litter parks and streets.

Most balloons are made of latex, which actually is biodegradable. However it can take many months or even years for them to break down. That leaves a lot of time for the waste to negatively affect biodiversity. As a result, many events have stopped the tradition of releasing balloons. In fact, some states have even banned intentional balloon releases as their potential harm to nature seems to outweigh the positives that can come from their one-time use.

There's no doubt balloons can be fun, colorful decorations at a special celebration. But it's important to remember that they need to be used thoughtfully and disposed of properly.

City Finance Reporting Awarded

City of St. Charles financial reporting practices have earned recognition from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). Two financial reports—the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report and the streamlined Popular Annual Financial Report—have received awards from the GFOA.

The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report

This is the 34th year the City's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) was awarded the prestigious Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the GFOA. The award is the highest form of recognition in government accounting and finance. It recognizes the City of St. Charles for showing a spirit of full disclosure in clearly communicating the City's finances. This latest award is for the fiscal year ending April 30, 2019. [Review the CAFR.](#)

The Popular Annual Financial Report

The City's first-ever Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) recently received the Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Financial Reporting from GFOA. The PAFR highlights important elements from the lengthier Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year ending April 30, 2019, and is designed to make the City's finances easily understood. Producing a PAFR is not required; it is something the City elected to do. In publishing a PAFR, the City of St. Charles joins an exclusive group of progressive governments making an extra effort to communicate clear and concise financial information to its constituents. [Review the PAFR.](#)

“The City is committed to following fiscally prudent policies and maintaining transparency, accountability, and ease of understanding of our financial documents,” said Director of Finance Christopher Minick. “We are gratified to have received the CAFR award 34 years in a row and are proud to be recognized for our first Popular Annual Financial Report.”

Historic Landmark of the Month

“Jesse Ayers House”



May's Landmark of the Month is the Jesse Ayers House, built in 1852 and located at 411 S. 1st Street. The house is a wonderful example of the eclectic style of Folk Victorian architecture. It has a front gabled roof and full width porch with spindle work detailing that is more typical for this style in the northeastern part of the country. This style of home

was most popular during the 1870-1910s and then was replaced by Craftsman and Colonial Revival styles. The exterior of this home includes the majority of the original clapboard siding and windows. For more information about historical preservation, visit www.stcharlesil.gov/historic-preservation



*Jesse Ayers House - 411 S. 1st St.
Built ca. 1852*



PUBLIC SERVICE RECOGNITION WEEK

MAY 3-9, 2020

Submitted by Susan Kempf in Human Resources on our [Inside St. Charles blog](#)

Thomas Jefferson said, “Whenever you do a thing, act as if all the world were watching.” Public service often feels like we are doing our jobs in a fishbowl, where everything we do or don’t do or do right or do wrong is noticed publicly and can affect the health, safety, and well-being of thousands. It’s tricky in the best of circumstances, but it’s also exhilarating when we rise to such challenges as recession, natural disaster, and pandemic to serve, protect, provide for, and care for our citizens.

Working in public service requires the resilience to pivot when changes occur, the forethought to prepare for and react quickly to disasters of all kinds, and the integrity to “do the right thing, even when no one is watching” (C. S. Lewis). It is in public service that you will find the highest concentration of professionals with these often-rare qualities.

May 3 through 9 is Public Service Recognition Week, a time set aside to recognize and honor all of the public servants who provide the best public services at the local, state, and national level. It’s also a time to connect you, the citizens of St. Charles, with your government and the folks that serve you.

As your public servants, we are grateful for the opportunity to do the important work of public service and serve you with integrity and pride. We hope you will take a few moments of gratitude for all of the public servants in all areas of government who have shaped and continue to shape our community into the amazing place we all treasure. If you are moved, we welcome you to our Facebook and Twitter community to share those thoughts and experiences of gratitude, as many public servants miss the opportunity to connect with the citizens they serve but are inspired and motivated by the impact they can have.

[We wanted to share some of the reasons why we serve in this video.](#) To all those in public service, THANK YOU!

4 Ways To Support Local Businesses During COVID-19

The coronavirus (COVID-19) health crisis is having a significant impact on businesses as Illinois residents are encouraged to shelter-in-place. Many local businesses are modifying the way they do business. You can continue to support businesses in St. Charles.

1. Before you go online, check with a local store first. If you’re thinking of placing an online order for an item you ordinarily purchase from a local retailer, contact the local vendor first. Many local businesses are offering alternative shopping experiences that weren’t previously offered such as online or over-the-phone orders with free shipping or curbside pick-up.

2. Order delivery or take-out. Tired of cooking or just really missing your favorite restaurant? Check to see if they are offering curbside pickup or delivery. Many restaurants have adjusted their business model to include these options while dining-in is currently not possible for customers. The [St. Charles Business Alliance](#) and the [St. Charles Chamber of Commerce](#) have both put together guides to local restaurants serving food for delivery, take-out, and curbside pickup.

3. Buy gift cards. Buying a gift card can be a great way to support a local business immediately, even if the brick and mortar store is not currently open. Purchasing a gift card provides valuable revenue to businesses that have had to shut their doors. The great thing about gift cards is that they don’t lose value so you can redeem them at a later date or hold on to them to give as gifts to friends and family. What kind of gift cards can you buy? Think of activities you would like to do once businesses reopen such as going to a movie, bowling or golfing. Or maybe services you will need such as haircut, massage or an oil change. For some local ideas, check out this list that the St. Charles Business Alliance has put together: www.stcalliance.org/gift-cards-and-certificates.

4. Spread the word. Leave a positive review for your favorite local spots on Yelp or Google. Have you ordered great take-out recently or found an awesome local deal online? Share it on social media or tell a friend you think would be interested.



White Ribbon Campaign Honors Essential Workers



Diane Cullen organized the White Ribbon Campaign, along with fellow resident John Stock

Healthcare workers, first responders, grocery employees, delivery drivers, electric line workers, cleaning crews. These are just some of the essential workers who continue to report to their jobs as the COVID-19 public health crisis continues to grip the nation.

To honor this vital group of workers who provide valuable services that are fundamental to the St. Charles community, residents Diane Cullen and John Stock organized a White Ribbon Campaign. Volunteers from the community and America in Bloom St. Charles are adorning the light poles on Main Street with white ribbons. Everyone is invited to be a part of the effort and show their support by tying a white ribbon outside their home or business.

“We rely on essential workers every day,” said Cullen. “We wanted to thank them for continuing to provide the services that hold our community together throughout this difficult time. If you don’t have a white ribbon, any color ribbon, or even a picture of a white ribbon displayed in your front window will show them your support as well.”

For more information, contact Cullen at 630.440.6706. [Click here for a ribbon pattern to print out.](#)

Kane County Hosts Listening Sessions on Zoom

Kane County is hosting listening sessions to better understand residents’ concerns about the coronavirus pandemic. The sessions are conducted with Zoom. The upcoming dates are May 5 and May 12, from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

For more information and to register, visit the Kane County website <https://www.countyofkane.org/Pages/default.aspx>

No Memorial Day Events This Year

Due to the Governor extending the Stay-at-Home Order through May 30, Memorial Day events will not be held this year. Event organizers have cancelled Memorial Day activities in order to practice proper social distancing in support of public health safety during the COVID-19 pandemic.