



City of  
*St. Francis*

# NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2017 | VOL. 2, NO. 4

## Message from your Mayor

Well it looks like winter is here and that of course brings the holiday season with it. I like the holiday season but I am not that fond of winter. Let me bring you up-to-date on what the city has been doing since our last newsletter.

The council approved the company that does our yearly audits to do a thorough rate study in order to see what can be done with the rate tiers and to lower the water rates. A full in-depth study like this was never done before proceeding with the construction of either the water treatment plant or the wastewater treatment facility.

I have mentioned before about the new city website. We have had a few delays in getting it up and running, but I can tell you that it should be in place by the end of November. The site will have a lot to access and all within one to two clicks of your mouse. You will be able to subscribe to alerts and get notifications, look at current building codes and see what events are going on in our city. This is another way for you to be informed and to communicate with the city.

If you haven't heard by now the council has approved a site plan for the construction of a Kwik Trip on Highway 47. The company will be taking down the old car wash site right away and their future construction of the site is planned for 2019 or earlier.

Our economic development authority (EDA) is in the midst of purchasing two properties on and off Bridge

Street in order to make way for the future development of that street into a retail district. This goes hand-in-hand with the city's Comprehensive Plan and the St. Francis Forward plan that we have been working on with our planning company, HKGI, and input from residents. Our community development director is and has been in communication with developers on the properties that the city has for sale to bring those plans into reality.

The city has to date, 62 new building permits this year versus 37 permits for all of last year. This is because our city has affordable lot prices and our existing homes are affordable to purchase versus other cities. The one area we need to make affordable, of course, is our water rates and that is why we are doing the rate study. As I have mentioned, this is a top priority. I am not a professional politician, but I can tell you that one of my main frustrations with government is the length of time it takes to get something done. Rest assured this council and staff will not stop until we get those rates reduced.

Finally I would like to remind everyone that with daylight savings time in effect, please watch out for our children and pedestrians crossing the streets.

***I hope all of you have a happy Thanksgiving, a very Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year!***

Regards,  
Mayor Feldman

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE



[WINTER DRIVING TIPS | PAGE 2](#)



[SNOW REMINDERS | PAGE 6](#)

[BUILDING AND PROJECTS | PAGE 2](#)

[VISIT AND SUBSCRIBE | PAGE 2](#)

[CITIZEN AWARENESS | PAGE 3](#)

[ACD TREE SALE | PAGE 3](#)

[WINTER SAFETY | PAGE 4](#)

[VISIT WITH SANTA | PAGE 5](#)

[CHAMBER CURRENTS | PAGE 7](#)

Visit us on social media!



## Building and Projects

New home construction permits started early and have continued until the end of the year. St. Francis has over 60 new single family homes. This is the highest year of new homes in over 10 years. Two builders showcased St. Francis in the spring and fall Parade of Homes and we have continued to see success in building. Overall the building department took in over 350 permits total for new construction, remodeling and repairs. As new single family housing continues to grow, development is moving in the commercial and retail areas. Kwik Trip applied for a land use permit at the dilapidated gas station site on St. Francis Boulevard and was approved. A new fueling station will go in and give life to a prime location. Other land use permits

in process are a Verizon tower on the west side of town, a senior living facility on 229<sup>th</sup> Avenue and a potential new housing development. Increased development is key toward assisting with the overall cost of the water/sewer utilities. City staff continue to have conversations regarding housing and commercial development. As the new homes and projects come forward, staff works with the Comprehensive Plan and Redevelopment Plan to put pieces together between land use and the input we heard throughout the planning process. If you are interested in watching how projects and development progress, check out the *City Projects Directory* on the new website!

## Visit and Subscribe!

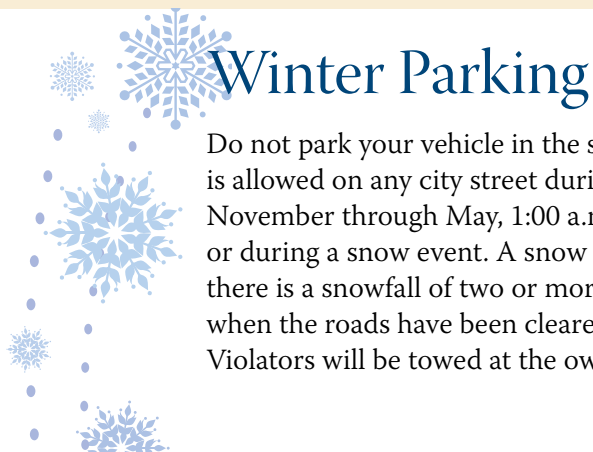
The city has launched a new website ([stfrancismn.org](http://stfrancismn.org)) and invites you to take a look and subscribe for alerts and updates. With a new look and feel, there is more information for everyone.

At the top there are four main areas that offer information as it relates



to city government, the community, doing business and How Do I. With these tabs you can locate department information, links to public safety, resources, bids and projects. These links bring up the available pages and information found within the city website.

As you scroll down the main page you will find the calendar, a link to our newsletter, information about the park system, online bill payment and how to connect with us. These options are also available through easy tab links on the right side of the page that bring you directly to the topic you are looking for. These are the most frequently used and now easy to find. One new and improved feature includes Connect With Us—subscribe and choose information you would like to know more about. Select the email subscriptions you would like and add your email for updates, job opportunities and alerts sent by the City of St. Francis. Take a look, we hope you like what you see!



## Winter Parking

Do not park your vehicle in the street. No parking is allowed on any city street during the months of November through May, 1:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. and/or during a snow event. A snow event occurs when there is a snowfall of two or more inches and ends when the roads have been cleared to full width. Violators will be towed at the owner's expense.

## Winter driving tips

- Always buckle your seat belt!
- Brake properly to avoid skidding. If driving on snow or ice, start slowly and brake gently. Begin braking extra early when approaching an intersection.
- If you start to slide, ease off the gas pedal or brakes. Steer into the direction of the skid until you regain traction, then straighten your vehicle. If you have anti-lock brakes, apply steady pressure.
- In fog, drive with headlights set on dim or use fog lights.
- In rain, fog, snow or sleet, stay within the limits of your vision. If it is too difficult to see, pull off the road and stop. Turn on hazard blinkers.
- Decrease speed and increase following distance on hazardous roads. Your speed should adjust for conditions without becoming an impediment to traffic flow.



Visit <http://hsem.dps.mn.gov> for the winter safety checklist.

## Citizen Awareness – Lift Station Pump



Just a reminder that in the last couple of months, our city staff has had to pull lift station pumps more than usual due to plugging. This can lead to an added expense for the city and potentially the homeowner. Please make sure that you are flushing only human waste and toilet paper. We are finding more disposable wipes and clothing that will not dissolve and will plug pumps. This leads to reduced pumping and more maintenance cost. This problem could potentially cause a backup of wastewater into homes causing an unwanted expense to the homeowner and to the city. With your assistance, we can correct this issue. Thank you.

## Anoka Conservation District Tree Sale

The Anoka Conservation District (ACD) promotes the restoration of native ecosystems by offering native species trees and shrubs for sale. Native plants offered are best suited for Anoka County's conditions and can survive the soils, moisture and climate without needing additional care. They naturally grow well together and complement each other's characteristics. They are capable of forming the most complex and resilient ecosystems supporting local wildlife. If you are planning a spring planting project, consider checking out the ACD tree sale at [www.anokaswcd.org](http://www.anokaswcd.org)



## Chlorides in Wastewater

As many of you know, when the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency renewed our wastewater permit in 2015, we were given a chloride limit; this is where we need your assistance. High chloride levels can have a negative effect on the ecosystem of streams, rivers and lakes. The main cause of high chlorides in wastewater is from water softeners. When a water softener goes into regeneration mode, the salt water (chlorides) used to regenerate the softener is discharged into the city's wastewater system. Public Works staff would like to remind residents to make sure their water softeners are operating efficiently. The drinking water in St. Francis is around 13 grains per gallon. Adjusting your softeners accordingly will help in keeping chloride levels down.

## Upper Rum River Watershed Management Organization

### Local Plan for Lakes, Waterways Near Completion

A new local plan for the Rum River, Lake George and other local waterways is in its final stages. The plan focuses on water quality, but also addresses stormwater management, flood prevention and other topics. Once approved by the state, this management plan outlines projects that will be led by the Upper Rum River Watershed Management Organization (URRWMO) over the next 10 years.

The URRWMO is comprised of representatives from the cities of Bethel, East Bethel, Oak Grove, Nowthen, St. Francis and Ham Lake. Its purpose is to address water management issues which often cross city boundaries. The organization,

and its new plan, put emphasis on implementing already-existing rules and finding the highest priority problems upon which to focus limited funding. The plan positions the organization to compete for state water quality grants to fund larger projects. Work outlined in the plan includes water quality improvement projects, fixing shoreline erosion, culvert and stormwater inspections, and regular water quality monitoring.

The Rum River and Lake George are two high priorities in the new plan. The Rum River is in relatively good condition and a highly valued state scenic and recreational river. Phosphorus levels are near, but slightly better than, state water quality

standards and lower than the median of 34 other Anoka County streams. It will continue to be monitored. Lake George has good water quality for this region of the state, receiving an overall A letter grade; however declining secchi transparency is a concern. East Twin Lake, Pickerel Lake, Seelye Brook, Cedar Creek, Ford Brook and Crooked Brook are other waterbodies discussed in the plan.

The plan is being considered by the state for final approval in fall 2018. The most updated plan draft and information about the URRWMO is available at [www.URRWMO.org](http://www.URRWMO.org) or contact Chuck Schwartz at 612-548-3141.

# Join the Team!

## The St. Francis Fire Department is accepting applications until December 31

Men and women from all walks of life have proudly served the St. Francis Fire Department, where members discover daily accomplishment and camaraderie in a highly professional and progressive organization.

There is tremendous satisfaction in saving a life, controlling a fire, comforting an accident victim and teaching skills that prevent disaster and injury. Becoming a paid on-call firefighter may be one of the most personally rewarding things an individual can do—and St. Francis wants to know if you're up to the challenge. You must live within 10 minutes from the Fire Station located at 3740 Bridge Street NW and be at least 18 years old to apply.

The St. Francis Fire Department wishes you and your family a warm and joyful Holiday Season.

Here are some winter fire safety tips (located on this page) for you provided by Protect America.

## WINTER FIRE SAFETY

*PROTECTING YOUR FAMILY THIS WINTER HEATING SEASON*

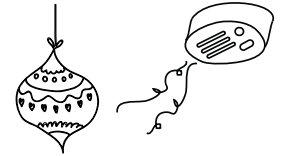
**Over half of all home heating fires occur in December, January, and February. Additionally, \$2 billion in property loss occurs from winter home fires.**

If you're concerned about fire safety this winter, complete this simple checklist to ensure you have a safe holiday season.



### QUICK CHECKS

- Have you tested your smoke alarms?
- Have you tested your carbon monoxide alarms?
- Have you gotten your furnace professionally inspected?
- Have you gotten your chimney professionally cleaned and inspected?
- Have you checked your appliances for worn or damaged cords?
- Have you checked your dryer exhaust vent for lint buildup?
- Do you have a covered metal container ready to dispose of cooled ashes?

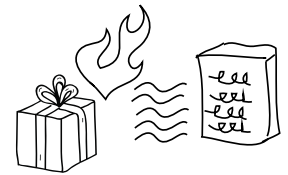


**60% of fire deaths** result from fires in homes without working smoke alarms.



### TOO HOT TO HANDLE

- Do your portable space heaters have an automatic shutoff?
- Is there at least three feet of space between space heaters and other objects?
- Do you turn space heaters off overnight or when unattended?
- Are your space heaters plugged directly into an outlet?
- Do your children know to stay 3 feet away from any space heater?
- Do you always use a fire guard in front of a burning fire?



**30% of residential heating fires** occur because the heat source is too close to things that can burn.



### JUST IN CASE

- If there's a fire hydrant near your home, are you committed to keeping it free of snow?
- Have you made and practiced a **fire escape plan**?
- Do you have a fire extinguisher handy?
- Do your children know how to dial 911?
- Are your house numbers easily visible?
- Have you packed an emergency supply kit in your home?



Keeping a fire hydrant free of snow can give your local fire department precious minutes when fighting a home fire.

Happy holidays from your friends at [ProtectAmerica.com](http://ProtectAmerica.com)

## About-Know The Flow



The **Know The Flow** website ([www.KnowTheFlow.us](http://www.KnowTheFlow.us)) is a water resources management initiative to provide public information and coordination among Anoka County agencies, communities and water management organizations.

The Anoka County Water Resources Management Report (2014) states: *“Residents, businesses, and organizations are willing to cooperate in the protection and management of their natural resources, when asked and where supported. Leadership and enduring community support are critical elements to garner wider public cooperation.”*

Anoka County Environment Services coordinates the Know The Flow website. For more information contact Bart Biernat at 763-422-6985 or [Bart.Biernat@co.anoka.mn.us](mailto:Bart.Biernat@co.anoka.mn.us).

# Visit with SANTA

**Thursday, December 14**  
**5:30-7:30 p.m.**

**St. Francis Police Department**  
**4058 St. Francis Boulevard NW**  
**St. Francis**

Children can visit with Santa and share their Christmas wish list. Remember to bring a camera to capture a photo.

The St. Francis Police Department will also be a drop-off location for toy donations. Donations will be accepted until December 15 and will be distributed to Christmas Committee and Toys for Joy, helping people living in all of northern Anoka County.



## Holiday Lights and Cell Phone Recycling!

The St. Francis Public Works Department is now accepting used cell phones and holiday lights.

Items may be dropped off in the lobby during regular business hours.



**St. Francis Police &  
Public Works Facility**  
**4058 St. Francis Boulevard NW**  
**St. Francis, MN 55070**

Hours: 6:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.  
Monday-Friday

Questions? 763-233-5200

## Package Theft Deterrents

Holidays are approaching fast and more packages are being delivered to homes than ever before. Millions of Americans have packages stolen from their homes each year. There are several ways to protect yourself from criminal activity. Here are some measures that can be taken to protect yourself from package theft.

- If you know you won't be home during the delivery of a package, have it delivered to your workplace.
- Place insurance on the item being delivered.
- If you're going away for the holidays, place your package on a hold.
- Require signature on delivery.
- Install a security camera. Security cameras can deter a thief and act as a tool for law enforcement if a theft occurs.
- Check with your vendors and delivery services for other security options.

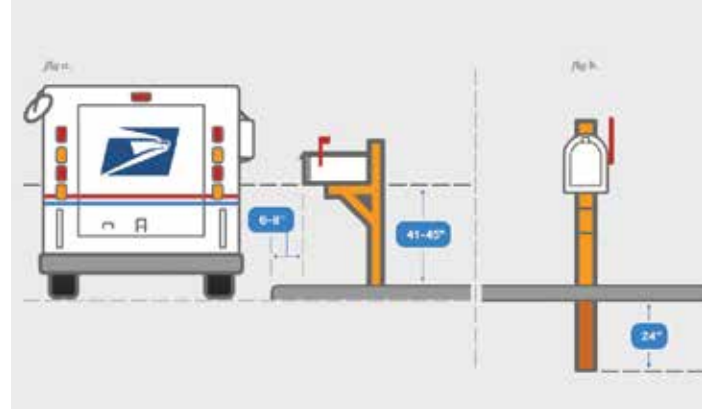
## Snowmobile Safety

- Don't drink alcohol and ride.
- Pay attention to the weather and check trail conditions.
- Don't ride alone.
- Slow down, obey all trail signs and cross roadways with extreme caution.
- Stay to the right on trails.
- Stay on designated snowmobile trails to avoid violating trespassing laws.
- Obtain a permit from the police department if riding in a permit zone.
- Obey all state laws and local ordinances. Snowmobile ordinances can be viewed on the City of St. Francis website under Chapter 7 of the city code.



## Snow Reminders and Winter Tips!

- ❄ When shoveling your driveway apron, shovel the snow to the right of your driveway if you are looking at the street. This will reduce the amount of snow in your driveway when the plow comes by.
- ❄ Do not blow, shovel or push snow from your driveway into the street. It is illegal and the city will be issuing code enforcement violations on residents who violate this law (Minnesota Statute 160.2715). Violations are misdemeanors, but civil penalties would also apply if the placement of snow creates a hazard such as a slippery area, frozen rut or bump that contributes to a motor vehicle or pedestrian crash. The civil liability can extend to both the property owner and the person who placed the snow.
- ❄ Please help keep fire hydrants clear near your home.
- ❄ Placing wooden lath (available at City Hall or Police & Public Works Building) along your property helps the plow driver determine where the edge of the road is and helps to prevent damage to your property.
- ❄ Do not place your garbage cans in the street. Make sure there is a spot for them at the edge of your driveway.
- ❄ Keep the area around and behind your mailbox clear of snow. It allows room for more snow without it piling up. The image below describes United States Postal Service requirements for your mailbox. Using these requirements can help reduce the chances of your mailbox being damaged.



## Ice Safety

Always use caution when venturing out onto the ice. See the following ice safety guidelines from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

### Check for known thin ice areas with a local resort or bait shop.

Test the thickness yourself using an ice chisel, ice auger or even a cordless ¼ inch drill with a long bit.

### Refrain from driving on ice whenever possible.

If you must drive a vehicle, be prepared to leave it in a hurry—keep windows down and have a simple emergency plan of action you have discussed with your passengers.

### Stay away from alcoholic beverages.

Even “just a couple of beers” are enough to cause a careless error in judgment that could cost you your life. And contrary to common belief, alcohol actually makes you colder rather than warming you up.

### Don't “overdrive” your snowmobile's headlight.

At even 30 miles per hour, it can take a much longer distance to stop on ice than your headlight shines. Many fatal snowmobile through-the-ice accidents occur because the machine was traveling too fast for the operator to stop when the headlamp illuminated the hole in the ice.

### Wear a life vest under your winter gear.

Or wear one of the new flotation snowmobile suits. And it's a good idea to carry a pair of ice picks that may be home made or purchased from most well stocked sporting goods stores that cater to winter anglers. It's amazing how difficult it can be to pull yourself back onto the surface of unbroken but wet and slippery ice while wearing a snowmobile suit weighted down with 60 pounds of water. The ice picks really help pull your back onto solid ice. **CAUTION:** Do NOT wear a flotation device when traveling across the ice in an enclosed vehicle!





*So Here's The Deal...*

**TAKE A TRIP TO LAS VEGAS - SFACOC STYLE!**

**St. Francis Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner**

Mark your calendars and save the date. We have the table set for the St. Francis Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner, "*Fabulous Casino Night*", to be held on Jan 26, 2018 starting at 6:00pm.

The evening will include a fun exciting casino night experience for both the novice and the expert player, a buffet dinner, raffles, silent auction, and will include a short presentation by our President Eric Schmoll about the wonderful work of the chamber and all those who benefit from our work with events like this.

The public is welcome and encouraged to join area businesses, and the St. Francis Area Chamber of Commerce, as they honor outgoing chamber board members, welcome the newly elected board of directors, and raise money to

support scholarships for our area youth, promote local businesses and serve the community.

The mission statement of the St. Francis Area Chamber of Commerce is to serve the needs of the membership in working toward the common goal of a growing, healthy business environment and community as a whole.

Held at The Refuge Golf Club in Oak Grove, the Fabulous Casino Night program will be a great way to socialize, have fun gaming, enjoy a dinner, and have an opportunity to win dozens of fantastic prizes donated by area businesses.

Contact the chamber today with any questions and to purchase tickets to be part of this fun event. [dinner@stfrancischamber.org](mailto:dinner@stfrancischamber.org)

Details at [www.stfrancischamber.org](http://www.stfrancischamber.org) - Mention this ad at checking out for a BONUS!



City of

St. Francis

23340 Cree Street NW  
St. Francis, MN 55070

city@stfrancismn.org  
www.stfrancismn.org

PRESORTED  
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U.S. POSTAGE  
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Permit No. 8  
St. Francis, MN  
55070

## ECRWSS POSTAL PATRON

### Events Calendar

- November 29:** Community Tree Lighting in Woodbury Park, 6:30-8:00 p.m.
- December 6:** Santa on the Fire Truck at County Market, 5:30 p.m.
- December 7:** Santa on the Fire Truck touring various neighborhoods, 5:30 p.m.
- December 14:** Have your picture taken with Santa at the St. Francis Police Department, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- December 25:** Christmas Holiday—*City Offices Closed*
- January 1:** New Year's Day Holiday—*City Offices Closed*
- January 15:** Martin Luther King Holiday—*City Offices Closed*
- February 19:** President's Day Holiday—*City Offices Closed*

For a full list of events—visit the city's website [www.stfrancismn.org](http://www.stfrancismn.org)



#### City Council Meetings

First and third Monday each month at 6:00 p.m. (If a holiday, the meeting will be Tuesday.)

#### Planning Commission Meetings

Third Wednesday each month at 7:00 p.m.

Independent School District 15  
Central Services Center  
4115 Ambassador Blvd NW

Agendas and minutes online:  
[www.stfrancismn.org](http://www.stfrancismn.org)

**CALL BEFORE  
YOU DIG!**

**Gopher State One Call**

Local: 651-454-0002

Toll Free: 1-800-252-1166