



City of
St. Francis

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2024 | VOL. 9, NO. 3

What's Happening in the Parks!

Rum River Woods Park

Anoka Conservation District (ACD) will be doing more riverbank restoration along the shores of the Rum River. Upon completion of the Dellwood Trail shoreline restoration, another area that needed to be addressed similarly was discovered across the river at Rum River Woods Park. The project should be completed this fall. This will include riprap armoring, root wads and live stakes.

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources ReLeaf Grant

The City was awarded a grant from the MN DNR to remove Ash trees and replace them with new (disease-free species) trees. The contractor has already planted over 100 trees in city parks and lots. The variety of trees included, but was not limited to, Elm, Maple, Apple, Catulpa, Birch and Basswood. For example, Hidden Ponds Park has over 30 new trees planted, most of them along the walking path. Park staff have been out watering the trees every week.



St. Francis Bark Park

A dog park is coming to St. Francis! The City acquired the property at the southeast corner of Community Park. Construction began this summer and included tree removal, land clearing, and grading. The dog park includes fenced-in areas for small-breed dogs and a separate area for larger-breed dogs. There will be benches and a drinking fountain. The project should be completed by the fall of 2024. Parking and entrance to the dog park are located at the backside or East side of Community Park.



Be sure to check out the City website for more updates!

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Visit us on social media!



From the Street to the Streams



Yes, Fall is back. Crisp days and nights are here, pumpkin spice, everything abounds, and there are brightly colored leaves on the trees. They lose their appeal once they're on the ground, becoming tedious yard work.

Wherever leaves fall, they decompose and restock the soil with nutrients and organic matter. But if there is no soil to land on, the leaves and their decomposing bits wash down the street and into the storm drain. From there, they go directly into lakes and rivers, where the nutrients feed unwanted algae growth next summer.

Here are some do's and don'ts for dealing with autumn leaves:

Don't Blow It Off

Don't just blow leaves off the yard and into the street. It is illegal to do so. Blowing them into the street clogs storm drains and causes flooding when it rains.

Curbside Yard Waste

Leaves are not garbage. If your city offers yard waste collection service, use it. Leaves thrown in the trash go to a landfill. Yard waste collection goes to composting.

Do Clean the Street

Regardless of whether you rack or blow the leaves and debris, clean along the curb, street, and any covering the nearest storm drain. Leaves, grass and dirt feed algae and turn lakes and rivers green.

Don't Burn Leaves

Burning leaves releases large amounts of air pollution. These pollutants can cause breathing problems for sensitive groups and lead to long-term health effects for all of us.

Go Electric

Replace your gasoline landscaping equipment with electric equipment.

The MPCA is offering grants to professional landscape companies to switch from your old, 2-cycle gasoline, VOC-emitting landscaping equipment to electric-powered equipment. These emissions impact employee health and the air quality in the populated communities the equipment serves.

Information provided by the Minnesota Technical Assistance Program (MNTAP).

New Council Member Mark Vogel

The St. Francis City Council held interviews on July 29 to fill a vacancy. There was a total of three interviewees. The City Council appointed Mark Vogel. Councilmember Vogel will serve the remainder of the term that ends on December 31, 2024.



Farmers Market Committee

The City of St. Francis seeks community members to form a Farmers Market Committee. The Farmer's Market is held on Wednesdays from 3:00-7:00 p.m., June 7 through September 13. The committee will recruit, schedule and manage local vendors. The committee will also attend the farmer's market and assist with set up and take down of the event. If you would like to join the farmer's market team, please submit a letter of interest to Community Development Director Jessica Rieland at jrieland@stfrancismn.org.



Reflective Delineators for the Edge of Your Yard!

When a fresh blanket of snow is on the ground, it can be difficult for snowplow operators to see the curbs or the edge of the road. Putting reflective delineators next to the curb can help the snowplow operators locate the edge during the first or second snowfall.

Delineators are used as a guide for the snowplow operator. When installing the delineators on your property, do NOT use metal posts to prevent injury to others or damage to plow trucks/machines.

Public Works at 4058 St. Francis Boulevard NW has a set of six delineators available (per address) for pickup during regular business hours, Monday through Thursday, 6:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. You will need an appointment with Jen from Public Works, as we will be keeping track of who has gotten them for our records. Please call Jen at 763-233-5200 or email her at jgulbrandson@stfrancismn.org to set up your appointment to pick up your set of delineators!



Save the Date—City Hall and Fire Station Open House

Many of you have been watching the construction of Bridge Street's new city hall and fire station building. The project began in August of 2023. With the light winter and dedicated crews working on the building, it is slightly ahead of schedule as this article is released. If the building continues to stay on track, we may move in this December. To recognize the significant number of local sub-contractor teams and the time and effort of all involved, staff is planning an open house for Saturday, February 1. More updates will be included in the December newsletter and on social media.



What's happening at the St. Francis Bottle Shop

We hope you all had an awesome summer! We know we did. A lot of new products have been introduced these past few months, and we've had strong sales. Our THC products are flying off the shelf, and we have some really great packages!

Upcoming Events

Please join us for an Oktoberfest Craft Beer Tasting on Friday, September 13, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. It's totally free to attend, and all beers tasted will be on sale!

Also, we will have a larger wine-tasting event on a Friday in October. That way, you can have all of your favorites stocked up for the holidays.



Follow us on Facebook to get all the updates.

St. Francis Bottle Shop APP

Download the new phone app!

There, you can view our live inventory and pricing, order online for curbside pickup, and see any currently scheduled tastings! Use the QR Code to download.



Last Recycle Events of 2024

September 21
November 16

8:00 a.m.-Noon

St. Francis
Public Works

4020 St. Francis Blvd. NW

**NO—Shredding, Trash/
Construction Debris, Furniture,
Large Plastic Toys, Pools at
these events!**

Please enter the recycling events across from Community Park off 227th and exit on the Police side onto Hwy 47.

For more information, please check the City website at www.stfrancismn.org/publicworks/page/recycling or call Public Works at 763-233-5200.



Water Softeners: Chlorides in Wastewater

Public Works staff would like to remind residents to ensure their water softeners operate efficiently. As many of you know, when the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency renewed our wastewater permit, we were given a chloride limit; this is where we need your assistance. The leading cause of high chlorides in wastewater is coming 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. High chloride levels can have a negative effect on the ecosystem of streams, rivers and lakes. The drinking water in St. Francis is around 13 grains of hardness per gallon. Adjusting your softeners accordingly will help in keeping chloride levels down.



Scam Alert!

Whether it's by phone call, text, mail or in person, if someone asks you for cash, gift cards or wire transfers, it is probably a scam. Never give your personal and financial information (like your Social Security number, date of birth or bank account information) to anyone soliciting money for any reason. Government entities will never ask for "cash donations" to collect fees. Please do your research before you give anyone money.



Police Department Annual Report

The Police Department's 2023 annual report is available now. The report details the goals, achievements and tasks accomplished by police in the past year and highlights the many events and programs the department uses to engage the community.

Read about these items and more in the 2023 Police Department Annual Report, which can be found on the city webpage at www.cityofstfrancismn.org.

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG!

Gopher State One Call

Local: 651-454-0002

Toll Free: 1-800-252-1166

www.gopherstateonecall.org



BACK TO SCHOOL

The St. Francis Police Department values the safety of our community and our children. By following these tips, you will assist the Department in ensuring that everyone has a safe and successful school year.

Driving Tips

- Look for school zone signals and ALWAYS obey the speed limits.
- When entering a school zone, slow down and obey all traffic laws.
- Always stop for school buses that are loading or unloading children.
- Watch out for school crossing guards and obey their signals.
- Be aware of and watch out for children near schools, bus stops, sidewalks, streets, school parking lots, etc. Never text while driving.
- Avoid using a cell phone unless it is completely hands-free.
- Allow yourself extra time when traveling before and after school to account for the increased traffic now that school is back in session.
- For students driving to school, please avoid keeping valuables in their vehicle.



Getting to School

- Students who are riding their bikes to school should make sure to use a bike lock.
- When crossing Hwy. 47, please inform your child to use the crosswalk at Pederson NW Drive and Hwy. 47 and to make sure traffic is stopped before crossing.
- When at the crosswalk, please encourage your child to push the crosswalk button.

St. Francis Police is Recruiting Reserves



Recruiting for the Police Reserves is now open.

For more information about the Reserves and their duties, please contact the Police Department at 763-753-1264 if you are interested.

Crime Prevention at Home

- Lock windows and doors, including the garage door. Unlocked doors are open invitations to intruders. Secure sliding glass doors with a bar or lock.
- Remove valuables from vehicles and lock vehicle doors.
- Don't hide a spare key outside, under a rock or flowerpot.
- Remove obstructions in your yard that could conceal a burglar.
- Don't put your box for your new TV or other valuable item next to the trash can. It lets everyone know what you have inside your home.
- Leave lights on when leaving or have them on a timer to make it appear someone is home.
- When gone for an extended period, have a family member, close neighbor, or friend pick up mail and newspapers and remove the trash can from the curb.
- Get to know your neighbors and help one another maintain a crime-free neighborhood.



Fall Fire Safety: Keep Your Home Safe This Season

As the leaves change color and the air turns crisp, fall brings cozy evenings and festive gatherings. However, it's also a time to be vigilant about fire safety in your home. Here are some essential tips to keep your family safe this autumn.

Heating Safety

Many of us will be turning on our heating systems with temperatures dropping. Ensure your furnace is inspected and serviced by a professional. If you use space heaters, keep them at least three feet away from anything flammable and never leave them unattended. Remember to use heaters with automatic shut-off features for added safety.

Fireplace and Wood Stove Precautions

A roaring fire can be comforting, but it requires careful attention. Have your chimney and flue inspected annually to prevent creosote buildup, which can lead to chimney fires. Always use a fireplace screen to catch sparks and embers, and never leave a fire unattended. Ensure that the ashes are cool before disposing of them in a metal container.

Candle Safety

Candles add a warm glow to your home but pose a fire risk. Keep candles away from flammable items such as curtains and furniture. Always extinguish candles before leaving a room or going to bed. Consider using battery-operated candles as a safer alternative.

Cooking Safety

Fall is a popular time for baking and cooking hearty meals. Stay in the kitchen while cooking, especially when using the stovetop. Keep flammable objects like oven mitts, towels, and wooden utensils away from heat sources. Ensure your smoke detectors work correctly by regularly testing them and replacing batteries as needed.

Leaf Pile Safety

While leaf piles are fun for kids to jump into, they can be hazardous if they catch fire. Never burn leaves or yard debris close to your home or other structures. Instead, dispose of leaves or compost them through your local yard waste collection service.

Smoke Alarms and Carbon Monoxide Detectors

Fall is an excellent time to check your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. Replace batteries at least once a year and test the alarms monthly to ensure they work correctly. Install alarms on every level of your home, inside bedrooms, and outside sleeping areas.

Emergency Preparedness

In the event of a fire, every second counts. Create and practice a fire escape plan with your family. Ensure everyone knows at least two ways out of each room and designate a meeting place outside. Teach children how to call 911 in an emergency.

By following these fire safety tips, you can enjoy the beauty and coziness of fall while keeping your home and loved ones safe. For more information on fire safety, visit our local fire department's website or contact them directly.

Stay safe, and have a wonderful fall season!



It's Time for Buckthorn Busting!

Fall is a great time to manage buckthorn on your property. Common and glossy buckthorn are invasive woody shrubs that aggressively out-compete native plants, disrupting their habitat benefits. Buckthorn chemically alters the soil, creating an inhospitable environment for other plants.

Buckthorn leaves stay green longer than most other Minnesota woodland trees and shrubs, so you'll easily notice them in mid to late October.

Common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*) can be found in upland forests. Look for the thorn, which can be found at the end of some branches. Glossy buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*) tends to grow in slightly wetter areas but can be found in a variety of habitats. There are no thorns. Look for the rust-colored terminal bud.

New research from the University of Minnesota (<https://twin-cities.umn.edu/news-events/u-m-researchers-uproot-decades-buckthorn-management-practices>) suggests that buckthorn seeds do not persist in the soil for six plus years as was previously thought. Their findings suggest that over 97 percent of seeds germinate in the first year. As you manage buckthorn, aim to prevent seed production on mature plants with mid-summer cutting. Follow up with treatment of the small sprouts for the best results.

See Anoka Conservation District's buckthorn fact sheet at www.anokaswcd.org/images/AnokaSWCD/Projects/Active_Projects/Weed_Management/buckthorn_handout_ACD.pdf for tips on identifying buckthorn, to learn about native look-alikes, and compare methods for controlling common and glossy buckthorn.



Common Buckthorn



Glossy Buckthorn



Saturday, October 26 Drug Take Back Day

This Fall's Drug Take Back Day is on Saturday, October 26, from 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. at the St. Francis Police Department, 4058 St. Francis Blvd NW.

The Department always has a dropbox for safe disposal of prescription drugs available in the lobby during regular lobby hours, Monday-Friday, 6:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Know The Flow!

www.knowtheflow.us



St. Francis
City-Wide
GARAGE SALE



So many
sales.

So many
bargains!

September 6-8

www.stfrancischamber.org/city-wide-garage-sale



23340 Cree Street NW
St. Francis, MN 55070

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55070

ECRWSS POSTAL PATRON

Events Calendar

Visit the City's website www.stfrancismn.org for calendar updates.

2ND ANNUAL
Public Works Open House
TRUCK OR TREAT EVENT
Tuesday, October 29
5:00-7:30 p.m.
4058 St. Francis Boulevard NW

- Wear your costume
- Help us name the grader
- Win \$100 credit towards your water bill
- Win a RIDE to school in a snowplow (St. Francis Area Schools Inclusive)
- Temporary tattoos and coloring pages
- Hot dogs and chips will be served
- Halloween candy

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.

Meetings are held at
St. Francis Area Schools District Office
4115 Ambassador Boulevard NW

Agendas and minutes online: www.stfrancismn.org

City Hall Location

23340 Cree Street NW
St. Francis, MN 55070

Hours Monday-Thursday 7:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
Friday 7:00-11:00 a.m.

Contact Us city@stfrancismn.org 763-753-2630
Website www.stfrancismn.org

City Council

Mayor Joe Muehlbauer	763-235-2314
Councilmember Sarah Udvig	763-235-2311
Councilmember Mark Vogel	763-235-2312
Councilmember Kevin Robinson	763-235-2313
Councilmember Crystal Kreklow	763-235-2310