



City of
St. Francis

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2024 | VOL. 9, NO. 1

What's Happening in Dellwood River Park?

If you've taken a walk in Dellwood River Park lately, you might have seen some work being done along the riverbank on the Rum River. The riverbank had some severe erosion on the northwest side of Dellwood Trail. Large trees had fallen into the river, severely eroding the river bank in three locations. The damage was starting to threaten the paved trail and has become a hazard to trail users.

Anoka Conservation District recognized that something needed to be done to save the shoreline and offered to help. After a plan was established between the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the Minnesota Department of Pollution Control, the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, and the Anoka Conservation District, they went right to work.

They installed riprap armoring to protect the shoreline. Riprap is large boulders stacked to form rock revetments to help dissipate wave energy.

You can also see a Benway weir on the upstream side of the project. They alter the river's current along the shoreline to reduce the impact of the strong current. A current free area is created on the weir's downstream side, helping to minimize erosion.

Root wads are also used for bank stabilization. They help move the current line away from the riverbank, making the bank less susceptible to erosion. The root wads collect sediment and debris to enhance the bank structure over time. They also provide structure for fish habitat.

What are those things sticking out of the ground? Those are called live stakes. They are branches of trees cut and planted directly into the ground. They are used for direct bank erosion prevention. The idea is that they will develop roots and grow into new trees, preventing the bank from eroding.

So, the next time you want to go for a walk, check out Dellwood Trail! It is a loop that mostly goes along the Rum River, with a portion that continues onto a residential sidewalk. The loop is just under a mile long. Be careful, though. A couple of pavement sections had to be removed due to construction damage. Pavement repair will be finished in the spring of 2024.



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Visit us on social media!



St. Francis Farmers Market is Back!

Help spread the word! The St. Francis Farmers Market will return to Community Park this summer! The Market will be on Wednesdays from 3:00-7:00 p.m. from June 12 to September 25. Our vendors were blown away by the community support last season, and it was so fun to see the market come to life each week. Please direct anyone you know who is interested in being a market vendor to our website to learn more (link below) or to contact Jodie Steffes at JSteffes@stfrancismn.org. We are looking forward to another great season!



Please visit www.stfrancismn.org/commdev/page/farmers-market for more information.

Does your deck remodel need a permit?

As many of the homes in St. Francis reach their 20-year mark, many decks are being remodeled and renovated. Some of these renovations require a building permit to ensure the structure is safe and the updates are performed to Minnesota Building Code standards.

In general, if you replace a few deck boards with the same material, a building permit is optional. However, if you change the material, a building permit is required. This is because the materials could have different weights or attachment instructions that change the type of structural support needed.

Additionally, a permit is required if you make any changes to the deck's railing, stairs, or structure.

If you have any questions on permits and when needed, please contact the City of St. Francis Building Department in person at City Hall, via phone at 763-753-2630, or by email at bldginsp@stfrancismn.org.



Recycling Dates to Remember!

April 27 | 8 a.m.-Noon

July 20 | 8 a.m.-Noon

September 21 | 8 a.m.-Noon

November 16 | 8 a.m.-Noon

All events are on a Saturday and located at St. Francis Public Works

4020 St Francis Blvd NW

For more information about these events, call 763-233-5200.



Notification System

The City of St. Francis participates in a Community Notification System designed to deliver important and timely information to residents in our area using the latest technology. Nixle notifications instantly deliver trustworthy and important neighborhood-level public safety and community event notifications to users who have signed up for the service. Notices may include road closures and unsafe situations due to fire, which are sent during active situations.

You can sign up to receive these notifications at this link: www.everbridge.com/products/nixle.

Or for immediate and emergency notifications only, text 55070 to 888777.

Text notifications do not include community events or notifications outside of local emergencies.

Property Assessments

In mid to late March, Anoka County will mail statements for 2024 Property Taxes Payable and Valuation Notices (2024 Value that taxes will be based on in 2025). For general questions regarding these statements, Anoka County has an online resource at www.anokacounty.us/281/About-Your-Tax-Statements

If you have specific questions about the valuation or classification of a commercial, industrial or apartment property in St. Francis, call Erik Skogquist at 763-412-1966 ext. 0 or email him at mnessorerik@gmail.com. In early May, in-person appeal meetings will be held at the Anoka County Assessor's office (2100 3rd Ave Room 160 Government Center, Anoka). Dates will be listed on the Valuation Notice. If you plan to come to the meetings in May, you are encouraged to call 763-324-1175 to make an appointment so that your wait time is minimal when you arrive.

Lower Your Water Bill!

A vital feature of the St. Francis Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system is that it alerts the city through its water meter if a resident or business has continuous water usage. This alert is generated by water going through a meter 24 hours a day. If you are seeing higher water bills (with no change in usage), you most likely have a continuous leak.

A few items may generate a Continuous Water Usage Alert. Some of those items could be a flushing mechanism in a toilet that has failed, a water softener that is regenerating too often, a plumbing leak after the meter, or normal usage. We recommend that if this is different from typical usage, you inspect one of the items mentioned.

Typically, these issues can be located and resolved by the resident. If you would like Public Works to assist with checking your water meter and system to see if there is a leak, please call Public Works at 763-233-5200 to set up an appointment for us to check your property. Appointments are available M-F, from 7:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. No appointments are made from Noon to 1:00 p.m.

The City is sending letters to residents to make them aware of this potential issue. The City Residents benefit by saving money, and it helps the City conserve water.

ST. FRANCIS BOTTLE SHOP

Hello neighbors! My name is Joe Pfeifer and I am the new Store Manager for the St. Francis Bottle Shop. With 15 years of experience as a store manager for G-Will Liquors, I promise you are in good hands. Not to mention, I've got an assistant, Crystal, who's been working for you for the last 22 years!

Did you know the St. Francis Bottle Shop is a municipal liquor store? Do you know what that means?

A municipal store is a liquor store owned and run by the City. All profits made go back into the city. Minnesota adopted them after prohibition, and there are 854 of them across the state!

Each year, the bottle shop pays for the fireworks display at Pioneer Days. But that's just the beginning. With the help of the community, we could do so much more. All you need to do is support your local municipality.

We're actively transforming the store to make it more user-friendly. We're making larger purchases to secure better pricing, featuring a wider range of brands, and running more specials to be more competitive.

If you haven't been to the Bottle Shop in a while, now's the time!

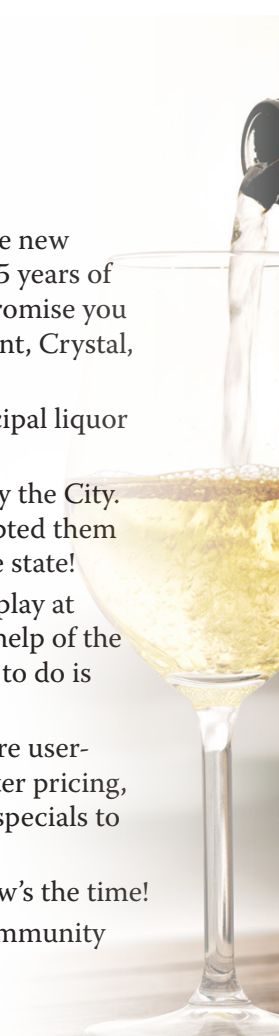
We look forward to serving you and making this community better together.

2023 Department of Natural Resources ReLeaf Forest Community Grant

The City of St. Francis Public Works Department submitted a grant application in September 2023 to try to obtain a Department of Natural Resources (DNR) 2023 ReLeaf Community Forest Grant. These grant monies will aid the City in mitigating the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) by removing and replacing all ash trees on the City of St. Francis Parklands and on one boulevard with a disease-free tree species to replace the tree canopy.

On January 2, 2024, we were granted \$147,797.75 to remove and replace over 100 ash trees on parklands and one city boulevard. You will begin to see the work to remove trees starting as soon as conditions allow this spring and summer. The planting of new trees will start in late summer and continue into early fall.

If you have any questions, please call Public Works at 763-233-5200.



Minnesota Homeowners and Renters May be Eligible for Property Tax Refunds

Homeowners

Homeowners may qualify for the Regular Property Tax Refund and/or the Special Property Tax Refund.

Homeowners Regular Property Tax Refund basic qualifications are as follows:

- 2023 total household income less than \$135,410
- Must be a Minnesota resident or part-year resident
- Must have owned and occupied your home on January 2, 2024
- Your property must be classified as your homestead, or you must have applied for homestead classification and had it approved.
- Have no delinquent property taxes on your homestead.

Homeowners Special Property Tax Refund is available if the net property taxes of your homestead increased by more than 12% from 2023 to 2024.

The basic qualifications for the Special Property Tax Refund are as follows:

- No income limit
- Must have owned and occupied your home on January 2, 2023, and January 2, 2024
- The increase was at least \$100
- The increase was not because of improvements you made to the property

Use the 2024 Property Tax Statement you receive from your county in March or April (mid-July for mobile

homeowners). Do not use the Notice of Proposed Taxes received in late 2023.

Important note about last year (2022): The special property tax refund was changed for one year only, so if your property tax increased by more than 6% from 2022 to 2023, you may qualify for a refund. Revenue automatically increased refunds on previously filed returns that claimed the special refund. If you still need to file, you have until August 15, 2024, to claim this refund if you are qualified.

Renters

The basic qualifications for the Renters Refund are as follows:

- 2023 total household income less than \$73,270
- Must have lived in a building where either:
 - Property taxes were payable in 2023, or
 - Payments in lieu of property taxes (such as special assessments) were payable in 2023

If you are unsure whether either of these programs apply, contact your building manager or county treasurer's office.

For Homeowners and Renters Refunds, your 2023 return should be electronically filed, postmarked, or dropped off by August 15, 2024. The final deadline to claim the 2023 refund is August 15, 2025.

For more information and the forms to file for refunds, visit www.revenue.state.mn.us/property-tax-refund or check with your tax professional.

Capturing rainwater and preventing runoff

Reducing stormwater runoff is crucial to minimize its impact on the surrounding water bodies. It is recommended to reduce the size of hard surfaces in your yard, and if required, use porous pavements or pavers that allow water to seep through. You can also capture rainwater for use in your yard, which helps to reduce stormwater runoff. So, when planning changes to your house or lot, make sure to consider these water-friendly options to keep our lakes and rivers clean.

Rain gardens and native plants: Beautiful solutions to water pollution

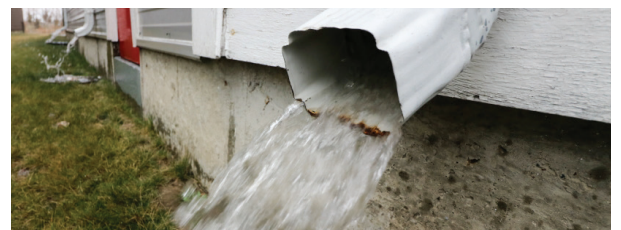
A rain garden is a popular landscaping choice that prevents water pollution by allowing stormwater to soak into the ground before it runs off. Rain gardens and native plants also:

- Prevent erosion by holding soil in place with their deep roots.
- Attract birds and butterflies.
- Requires little watering and maintenance once established.

Rain gardens are concave gardens that collect runoff from downspouts or driveways. Plants that tolerate “wet feet” should be planted at the bottom, while plants that need less water are grown on the edges.

Rain Barrels

Rain barrels are a simple yet effective way to reduce runoff. They are designed to collect rain from your roof, helping conserve water. Whether fancy or basic, the structure is straightforward: a barrel at the end of a downspout equipped with a spigot or hose for watering your garden or yard. With rain barrels now available in several home improvement stores, they're an accessible solution that any homeowner or gardener can implement to make a positive environmental impact.



Source: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Minnesota Stormwater Manual. Capturing rainwater and preventing runoff. Retrieved from www.pca.state.mn.us/news-and-stories/capturing-rainwater-and-preventing-runoff

St. Francis Police Department 2024 Spring Events

Bike Safety — I Got Caught!

When Officers are out patrolling and catch young children wearing their helmets, they will stop and give you a coupon for a free small cone from Dairy Queen!



April 8-12 Severe Weather Awareness Week

The Severe Weather Awareness Week campaign helps teach Minnesotans about weather hazards and provides resources to minimize the risks associated with severe weather. Using this site as a guide, everyone is encouraged to plan, build an emergency kit, and practice drills. The campaign and the scheduled statewide tornado drills are conducted in collaboration with the State of Wisconsin and the National Weather Service.

During Severe Weather Awareness Week, there will be a statewide tornado drill on Thursday, April 11 sirens will sound at 1:45 p.m. and 6:45 p.m.

St. Francis Police Department 4th Annual Citizens Academy

This program will offer citizens an inside look at the St. Francis Police Department's operations. There will be a wide spectrum of topics covered. The program will start on April 9, and is every Tuesday and ends on May 14. Watch the department's Facebook for more information.

Bike Rodeo - June 6 | 5:00-7:00 p.m.

The St. Francis Police Department's 8th Annual Bike Rodeo will be held in the department's parking lot. Highlights are safety skills course and bicycle inspections. Check the department's Facebook page for more details.

Emergency Decal Program

The St. Francis Police Department has established an Emergency Response Decal Program. The program is to assist police in responding to specific calls for service. These decals will help in knowing who we could be dealing with and assisting them with the correct treatment or care. This will also help officers pass along helpful information obtained from the decals to the responding paramedics and fire departments. The decals are free and can be picked up at the St. Francis Police Department lobby.



Saturday, April 27 | 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Drug Take Back Day

National Take Back Day is a safe, convenient and responsible way to dispose of unused or expired prescription drugs.

The event will take place at the St. Francis Police Department, 4058 St. Francis Boulevard NW.

The St. Francis Police Department has a drop box for safe disposal of prescription drugs available in the lobby during normal lobby hours, Monday-Friday, 6:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Please "like" the St. Francis Police Department Facebook page.

Saturday, May 4 | 9:00 a.m.- Noon

Free Dog License Day

Please check with City's website and Police Department's Facebook page for updated information. The event will be held at the St. Francis Police Department, 4058 St. Francis Boulevard NW.



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Toll Free: 1-800-252-1166
www.gopherstateonecall.org



Know The Flow!

www.knowtheflow.us



Recognizing the Signs of a Stroke: A Community Guide to Quick Action

In every community, individuals must be aware of the signs of a stroke. A stroke occurs when there is a sudden interruption in blood supply to the brain, leading to potentially life-threatening consequences. Recognizing the signs and acting swiftly can make a significant difference in minimizing damage and saving lives. In this community guide, we'll explore the key signs of a stroke and emphasize the importance of immediate action.

Understanding Stroke: Before delving into the signs, it's essential to understand the two main types of strokes: ischemic and hemorrhagic. Ischemic strokes are caused by a blockage in a blood vessel supplying the brain, while hemorrhagic strokes result from bleeding in or around the brain. Both types require urgent attention, and recognizing the signs is crucial for timely intervention.

Common Signs of a Stroke

1. **Sudden Weakness or Numbness:** One of the most common signs is a sudden weakness or numbness in the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body. Ask the person to smile—if their smile is uneven or one side of the face droops, it could indicate a stroke.
2. **Trouble Speaking or Understanding Speech:** Slurred speech, difficulty forming coherent sentences, or an inability to understand spoken or written language can be signs of a stroke. Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence to assess their speech.
3. **Severe Headache:** A sudden, severe headache with no

known cause can be a sign of a stroke, particularly if other symptoms accompany it. It is important to note that not all strokes cause headaches, but when they do, it can be a red flag.

4. **Trouble Walking or Loss of Balance:** Coordination and balance problems, difficulty walking, or sudden dizziness can also indicate a stroke. Encourage the person to take a few steps or observe if they are suddenly unsteady.
5. **Vision Problems:** Sudden blurred or decreased vision in one or both eyes and other symptoms may signal a stroke. Ask the person if they are experiencing any changes in their vision.

Immediate Action is Crucial

If you suspect someone is having a stroke, remember the acronym FAST:

- F:** Face drooping
- A:** Arm weakness
- S:** Speech difficulty
- T:** Time to call emergency services

Call emergency services immediately if you observe any of these signs. Time is of the essence, and prompt medical attention can significantly improve the chances of recovery.

In every community, knowledge about the signs of a stroke is a powerful tool for saving lives. By educating ourselves and others, we contribute to a healthier and safer environment. Recognizing the signs and acting promptly can make a crucial difference in the outcome for someone experiencing a stroke. Together, we can build a well-informed community that is ready to respond in times of need.



Recycle Smart – Recycle Scrap Metal at a Drop-off, Not Curbside!

What is considered a random metal item that should not be recycled curbside? Metal pots and pans, bake ware, pipes, automotive parts, tire rims, fencing, shelving, hangers, tools, chains, hardware and any metal item is considered scrap metal.

Recycle Scrap Metal at Drop-offs!

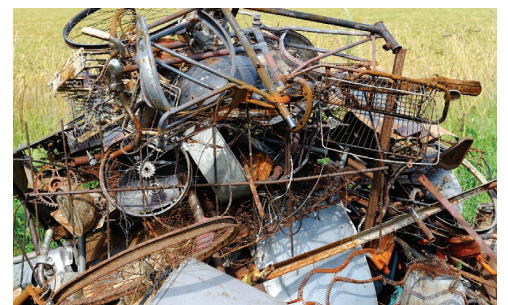
The good news is all metals that aren't accepted in curbside recycling are recyclable anywhere that collects scrap metal. St. Francis Recycle events always accept scrap metal for free. All fluids should be drained, and any non-metal items removed prior to recycling small engine equipment.

What metal items can be recycled curbside?

- food and beverage cans
- aluminum trays or pie tins



Go to Anoka.CountyMN.gov/RecyclingDirectory for more information on what is recyclable and where to take items that don't belong in your curbside recycling cart. You can also check out the City of St. Francis website for more information on recycling and events at www.stfrancismn.org.



Water Pollutant - Chloride

Minnesota has a growing salty water problem that threatens its freshwater fish and other aquatic life. Chloride from de-icing salt and water softener salt gets into lakes and streams, and groundwater supplies drinking water. It takes only one teaspoon of salt to pollute five gallons of water permanently. Once in the water, there is no feasible way to remove the chloride.

Sources

When snow and ice melt, the salt we spread on icy roads, parking lots, and sidewalks flows into storm drains and our lakes, streams, wetlands, and groundwater. Approximately 365,000 tons of road salt is applied in the Twin Cities metro area annually. A study by the University of Minnesota found that about 78 percent of salt applied in the Twin Cities for winter maintenance is transported to groundwater or remains in the local lakes and wetlands. In the Twin Cities and other communities across Minnesota, local partners are addressing this problem by using sand and other strategies to keep winter roads safe while using less salt for de-icing.

People soften their water to make water heaters operate more efficiently, prevent hard water spots on dishes, and make soaps lather more. In most communities, salty brine from water softeners drains to municipal wastewater treatment plants not designed to remove salt from wastewater, so the salt passes through to a lake or stream.

Retrieved from www.pca.state.mn.us/pollutants-and-contaminants/chloride.



St. Francis Area Chamber of Commerce

PO Box 655
St. Francis, MN 55070

763-438-5163

chamber@stfrancischamber.org
www.stfrancischamber.org

The St. Francis Area Chamber of Commerce serves the needs of its membership in working toward the common goal of a growing, healthy business environment and community as a whole.

HAPPY
New
Year

Happy New Year from the St. Francis Area Chamber of Commerce!

Our new year kicked off with a successful event for our Annual Dinner and Casino night. The event was held on January 26 at the Refuge Golf Course. We had over 100 attendees, fantastic food, and lots of fun.

St. Francis Pioneer Days

presented by the

St. Francis Area Chamber of Commerce

Pioneer Days 2024 will be held from May 31 to June 2. With the Grand Day Parade being on Saturday at Noon. See the parade route on our website. We are bringing back the Pioneer Days Button for 2024.

We are currently looking for parade participants and vendors for the park, and we need volunteers! If you have a non-profit organization that would like to help as a group for fundraising, please reach out, as we have opportunities for organizations to help and earn money in return for their services.

Please check out our all-new website at www.stfrancischamber.org

You can find the links to sign up on the Pioneer Days page.



Other events to mark your calendar for include:

- ◆ City Wide Garage Sales on September 6 and 7.
- ◆ The annual Golf Tournament will be held on September 10 at The Refuge Golf Course.
- ◆ The St. Francis Chamber meets the third Wednesday of every month at 8:00 a.m. in the St. Francis City Hall Community Room. All are welcome!



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St. Francis, MN 55070

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Events Calendar

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



Seedling Orders

Spring is just around the corner, so get your tree order in today for the end of April pick-up at the Anoka Conservation District (ACD). The District offers a wide variety of native stock, including black cherry, mixed oak, maple, and pine trees. The trees and shrubs are sold in bare root seedlings or transplants, ranging from 12" to 18" in height. They may be purchased in bundles of ten for \$23 or bundles of twenty-five for \$45, not including tax. Native prairie seed and tree aides are also available. You do not need to be an Anoka County Resident to order. Pick-up is the last Saturday in April at the ACD office.

Visit the Anoka Conservation District website at www.anokaswcd.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.

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 Robert Bauer 763-235-2312
Councilmember Kevin Robinson 763-235-2313
Councilmember Crystal Kreklow 763-235-2310