

The Arlington Report

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Jim Kreft -- Mayor
 Jim Pederson -- Council Member
 Bob Pichelmann -- Council Member
 Curt Reetz -- Council Member
 Jason Ruehling -- Council Member
 Galen Wills -- Council Member

APPOINTED OFFICIALS

Matt Jaunich -- City Administrator
 Lisa Tesch -- Deputy Clerk
 Vicki Pomplun -- Admin. Ass't
 Lana Woehler -- Community Center Coordinator
 Dan Thomes -- Streets/Parks Supt.
 Jeff Paine -- Maintenance Worker
 Bruce Rovinsky -- Chief of Police
 Scott Bennett -- Police Officer

CONTRACTED SERVICES

Ross Arneson -- City Attorney
 Cynthia Smith-Strack -- EDA,
 Planning & Zoning Consultant
 Darin Haslip -- Building Inspector
 People Service -- Water/Wastewater
 Joel Hawbaker (Bolton & Menk) --
 City Engineer

PHONE NUMBERS

City Hall: 964-2378
 Fax Line: 964-5973
 After-Hours On-Call:
 507-327-6601
 Fire Garage: 964-2279
 Police Dept: 964-5200
 Library: 964-2490
 Hospital: 964-2271
 S.E. School: 964-2292
 Post Office: 964-5503

OTHER SERVICES

Water/Sewer/Electric Services
 City of Arlington (964-2378)
Gas Service
 CenterPoint Energy (800-245-2377)
Cable Service
 Mediacom (800-332-0245)
Internet/Phone Service
 Frontier (800-435-1504)
Garbage Services
 Waste Management (800-422-5785)
 Renville-Sibley Sanitation (866-
 800-6244)

PRELIMINARY TAX LEVY SET

At its September 6 meeting, the Arlington City Council approved a 5 percent tax levy increase for next year compared to this year's levy. The preliminary levy was set at \$777,800, compared to last year's levy of \$740,726. The reason for the preliminary tax levy increase is to account for a loss in revenue and for an increase in capital improvement and debt service needs. The 5 percent tax levy increase is expected to be lowered by the Council before it approves its final tax levy in December. If lowered, the reduction or elimination of programs/funds and/or of capital projects will likely have to take place to offset the difference. Per State law, the tax levy cannot be increased from its preliminary level, only decreased. The annual Truth-in-Taxation hearing has been set for Monday, December 5 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the Community Center, with the final levy expected to be adopted Monday, December 19 during the regular city council meeting.

CITY ASKS FOR HELP WHEN PLACING GARBAGE CANS FOR PICKUP

October is a busy month for street maintenance, in particular, the sweeping up of leaves. Because of this, City staff would like to remind residents that garbage cans should not be placed out in the street. Garbage cans collected at the street, should be placed in your driveway or within the boulevard area. This assists the City in street sweeping, snow plowing, and other maintenance efforts, and eliminates an obstacle for drivers. Thank you for your cooperation in this effort!

REMINDER ON LAWN METERS

City Staff is reminding residents with lawn meters to turn in their final readings for the year so their sewer charges can be credited. Staff is also reminding lawn meter owners to bring their meters inside and store them in a non-freezing location to prevent damage to the meter. Damaged meters will have to be replaced at the owner's expense.

REMINDER ON BURNING OF LEAVES

With the fall season upon us, ideas for getting rid of fall leaves begin to surface. Residents should remember that the burning of leaves within city limits is prohibited. Fires are only permitted within city limits as long as they are for recreational purposes. *Recreational purposes* shall include only the cooking of food or the providing of heat and light for outdoor social gatherings. Only propane, charcoal bricks or wood products may be used to

fuel outdoor fires and shall be contained in an outdoor fireplace, barbecue equipment, or a concrete-lined fire pit, sufficient to provide physical limitation to the spread of fire.

HYDRANT FLUSHING TO TAKE PLACE

PeopleService staff plan to flush hydrants within the city from October 17 - October 28. Residents and businesses may experience low water pressure and/or discolored water and cloudiness during the flushing process. The water is safe to drink and should clear up in a few days. Running tap water for a short time should alleviate the problem.

COMPOST SITE IS STILL OPEN

Want to get rid of those fall leaves? The City's compost site is still open 7 days a week during daylight hours for residents within city limits. The site is located near the wastewater treatment facility on Freedom Drive. *Allowable compost:* lawn clippings, garden compost, leaves (no plastic bags). *Small brush pile area* - No stump or logs. The City will do chipping on location for large quantities at a cost. Call city offices for costs and notify us of your need for chipping services.

COUNCIL CALLS PUBLIC HEARING ON LIQUOR/ALCOHOL ORDINANCE CHANGES

The City Council has called a public hearing for October 3, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the Community Center to consider changes to the City's liquor/beer ordinances. Possible changes may include amendments to the issuance of Sunday Licenses and also closing times for liquor establishments. The Council will give all people who appear at the public hearing the opportunity to express their views in regards to the changes. Written comments will be received until 4:30 p.m. on October 3 for those unable to make the public hearing. Copies of the proposed amendments and new sections are available at City Hall or can be viewed on the City's website.

FIRE PREVENTION WEEK IS OCTOBER 9-15

This year's Fire Prevention Week will be held from October 9-15. Fire prevention week is a good reminder to everyone to check and replace the batteries in their smoke detectors. Smoke alarms that are properly installed and maintained play a vital role in reducing fire injuries and deaths. Having a working smoke alarm cuts the chances of dying in a reported fire in half. In 2009, 2,565 people died in home fires. Nearly all of these deaths could have been prevented by taking a few simple precautions like having a working smoke alarm and a home fire escape plan, keeping things that can burn away from the stove and always turning off space heaters before going to bed.

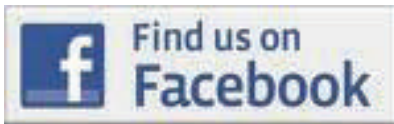
City of Arlington, Sibley County

Contact us at:
204 Shamrock Drive
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E-mail: cityhall@arlingtonmn.com
Website: www.arlingtonmn.com



A Beautiful City Growing in Unity



ARLINGTON'S COLD WEATHER RULE

The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule is designated to assist people who have trouble paying their utility bills during the winter months. The Rule was issued by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (216B.097 as amended by Minnesota Laws 2001, Chapter 212, Article 4, Sec. 2). The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule applies from October 15 to April 15.

The Cold Weather Rule provides that your utility (the City) cannot disconnect your residential utility service during the winter months if the customer meets all of the following requirements:

1. Utility disconnection would affect the customer's primary heat source;
2. The Customer has declared an "inability to pay" on forms provided by the City;
3. The household income of the customer is less than 50% of the State Median Income;
4. The Customer's account is current for the billing period immediately prior to October 15, or the customer has entered into a payment schedule and is reasonably current with payments under that schedule;
5. The Customer receives referrals to energy assistance programs, weatherization conservation, or other programs likely to reduce the customer's energy bills.

To qualify for Cold Weather Rule protection, you must meet both of the following conditions:

1. Disconnection would affect your primary heat source.
2. You qualify for:
 - a. Inability to Pay Plan, or
 - b. Ten Percent Plan
 - c. Reconnection Plan

The Cold Weather Rule does not prohibit winter shut off. If you receive a disconnection notice, act promptly. Please contact the City of Arlington at 507-964-2378.

COLD WEATHER RULE OPTIONS

If you receive a notice of disconnection, the following options are available:

Inability to Pay Plan

To qualify for the Inability to Pay Plan, you must be a residential customer who:

- 1) Was current or reasonably on time with a payment plan as of October 15; and 2) Meets income guidelines as set by the State; and 3) is willing to make payment arrangements. If you qualify for Inability to Pay, the City of Arlington cannot disconnect your utility service between October 15 and April 15.

Ten Percent Plan

To qualify for the Ten Percent Plan you must be a residential customer who:

- 1) Was not current or reasonably on time with a payment plan as of October 15; and 2) Meets income guidelines set by the State; and 3) Agrees to pay the lesser of ten percent of monthly household income or the full amount of the current bill, not including arrears. If you qualify for the Ten Percent Plan and you make your required monthly payments, the City of Arlington cannot disconnect your utility service between October 15 and April 15.

Reconnection Plan

If the City of Arlington has shut off your utility service on or before October 15, you may qualify for the Reconnection Plan. To qualify, you must be a residential customer who:

- 1) Was not current or reasonably on time with a payment plan as of October 15; and 2) Meets income guidelines set by the State; and 3) Agrees to pay the total amount owed plus the current utility bill in monthly payments. You are not required to pay more than ten percent of your monthly household income. If you qualify for the Reconnection Plan, your electric service will be restored. If you continue to pay, we cannot disconnect your service between October 15 and April 15.

Payment Schedule Plan

The City of Arlington offers a payment schedule to residential customers of all income levels who:

- 1) Was current or reasonably on time with a payment plan as of October 15; and 2) Is willing to make payment arrangements. If you continue to make your payment arrangements on time, we will not disconnect your service. Failure to keep payment arrangements will result in an immediate disconnect. Under this plan, a customer may change its initial payment schedule with approval of the City of Arlington.

RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Utility Customers have rights and responsibilities under the Cold Weather Rule. These rights and responsibilities are designed to help you with winter utility bills. You must act PROMPTLY! If you choose not to assert your rights or choose not to enter into a mutually acceptable payment schedule, your service will be disconnected. Specifically, the Cold Weather Rule provides you with these options:

As a utility customer, you have the RIGHT to declare your inability to pay your utility bill. If you declare an "inability to pay", you must enter into a payment schedule with the City to maintain your electric service. You have the RIGHT to appeal any proposed disconnection by the City. You will have to provide the City with proof that you are unable to pay and were current in payments to the City on October 15. Your service will not be disconnected until the appeal is resolved. Appeals are resolved by the City Council. As a Utility Customer, you have the RESPONSIBILITY, if you prove an inability to pay, to complete an "inability to pay" form with the City. If you are receiving Energy Assistance or any form of public assistance, and can document that for us, you do not have to fill out an "inability to pay" form. However, you must still arrange a payment plan with the City. As a Utility Customer, you also have the RIGHT to a mutually acceptable payment schedule with the City. But Utility Customers also have the RESPONSIBILITY of making payments as agreed to, or promptly notify the City on why you cannot keep the agreement. You may then request a new payment schedule that is subject to City approval. Utility Customers have the RIGHT to request that the City notify a third party if your service becomes subject to disconnection. Utility Customers also have the RESPONSIBILITY to receive budget counseling from a local energy assistance provider or other financial counseling organization.

NEED HELP PAYING?

If you are having trouble paying your utility bill, local agencies may be able to provide payment assistance. The City of Arlington recommends you call one of the following:

Minnesota Valley Action Council (Sibley County Office) at 507-327-2981 or Sibley County Human Services at 507-237-4000 or Heat Share (Salvation Army) at 888-999-1568.