

# The Arlington Report

## ELECTED OFFICIALS

Jim Kreft -- Mayor  
Ben Jaszewski -- Council Member  
Jennifer Nuesse -- Council Member  
Curt Reetz -- Council Member  
Jason Ruehling -- Council Member  
Galen Wills -- Council Member

## APPOINTED OFFICIALS

Liza Donabauer -- Administrator  
Lisa Tesch -- Deputy Clerk  
Vicki Pomplun -- Admin. Asst.  
Annie Shottliff -- Community  
Center Coordinator  
Tony Voigt -- Maintenance  
Supervisor  
Kirby Weckworth -- Maintenance  
Worker

Cory Danner -- Police Chief  
Bruce Rovinsky -- Police Officer

## CONTRACTED SERVICES

Ross Arneson -- City Attorney  
Cynthia Smith-Strack -- EDA,  
Planning & Zoning Consultant  
Darin Haslip -- Building Inspector  
PeopleService -- Water/Wastewater  
Jason Femrite (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/Phone/Internet Services*  
Mediacom (800-332-0245)  
*Internet/Phone Service*  
Frontier (800-435-1504)  
*Garbage Services*  
Waste Management (800-422-5785)  
Renville-Sibley Sanitation (866-  
800-6244)  
Gaylord Sanitation (888-613-2274)

## PRELIMINARY TAX LEVY SET

At its September 15th meeting, the Arlington City Council approved a 6% preliminary tax levy increase over 2014's tax levy. The preliminary levy was set at \$802,231, compared to last year's final certified levy of \$756,805.00. The increase in the General Fund levy is attributed to an anticipated 20% increase in health insurance premiums, wage increases (step and required minimum wage increase), a proposed staffing change from a two-person to a three-person Police Department, increased expenses in the Public Works Department (shop equipment, fuel expenses and repairs, sign retroreflectivity inspections and sign replacement, repairs to shop building, and snow removal).

The City Council and staff are committed to continue to analyze operations and discuss the budget to continue to find ways to manage costs. The Council will meet again in October to discuss the Capital Improvement Fund: revenue sources and equipment/project priorities for 2015. Then in November, the Council will meet to review the employee benefits, Enterprise Funds and related utility rates. Counties, school districts, all cities, and all special taxing districts certify their final adopted payable 2015 property tax levies to the county auditor on or before December 29, 2014. The last time the City of Arlington has experienced a levy increase was in 2012. The proposed levy increase for 2015 reflects an increase of \$45,426 from 2012 or \$20.34 per capita. The City Council will hold their Truth-in-Taxation Hearing at their first meeting in December.

## HYDRANT FLUSHING

PeopleService staff plan to flush hydrants within the city from the first week of October till they've done all of the hydrants in town. 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.

## 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 in their meters and store them in a non-freezing location to prevent damage to the meter. Damaged meters will be replaced at the owners expense.



## 4TH ANNUAL FRIGHT NIGHT

Join Arlington Area Chamber of Commerce for Halloween Fright Night, on Friday, October 31st from 5:30-7 p.m. along Main Street.



## REMINDER ON BURNING OF LEAVES

With the Fall season upon us, ideas for getting rid of 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 fire place, barbecue equipment, or a concrete-lined fire pit, sufficient to provide physical limitation to the spread of the fire.

## SPORTSMAN'S PARK SOFTBALL FIELD TO BE RENAMED

Dan "Buck" Thomes tirelessly served as President of the Arlington Sportsman's Club for a quarter-century. Not only did he direct operations of the Club, he managed leagues and teams, performed routine maintenance, and organized park improvements. The softball field was a particular area that "Buck" took great pride in, spending countless hours preparing the field for league and tournament games. Through generous donors and grants the softball field is scheduled for needed improvements and is to be repurposed for youth baseball and softball.

These improvements will reflect on all the hard work "Buck" put into it. A dedication event is planned for October 19, 2014 at 1:00 p.m., to christen the field to be forever known as the "Dan 'Buck' Thomes Field."

## FIRE PREVENTION WEEK IS OCTOBER 6-10

This year's Fire Prevention Week will be held from October 6-10. 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. The Fire Department will be holding tours for students during the week. In addition, on Wednesday, October 8th the AFD will be delivering takeout orders from local businesses from 5:30-7 p.m. These businesses include Arlington Haus, Cenex, Godfather's and QuickShop-Subway. When they deliver your order to your home, they will change batteries in smoke detectors, with a limit of two per household. To end the week an Open House will be held on Friday, October 10th from 5-7 p.m. at the Fire Hall.

## City of Arlington, Sibley County

Contact us at:  
204 Shamrock Drive  
Arlington, MN 55307

Phone: 507-964-2378  
Fax: 507-964-5973  
E-mail: [cityhall@arlingtonmn.com](mailto:cityhall@arlingtonmn.com)  
Website: [www.arlingtonmn.com](http://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.