



# The Bridge

City of Rockford, Minnesota

Volume 144



Spring Edition  
March 1, 2021

## Mayor's Message

Happy Spring!

It has been a rather manageable winter, as far as Minnesota winters go. Nonetheless, we gladly welcome springtime and look forward to all the season has to offer! This year may look different than years past with some community events being scaled down or cancelled, but we will continue to navigate the pandemic and should see life begin to return to normal. River Days, Rocktoberfest, and many other community events are still being planned, so there is a strong sense of hope that we will have our community gatherings and events on some scale as we move along through 2021.

Speaking of 2021, the Council and Staff plan to focus the city's efforts on partnering with other local organizations, including the Rockford Lions, in building a much-needed Veteran's Memorial in our community. The city will also focus efforts on supporting development in our Downtown area, and continuing to manage our city's rapid growth to ensure we can provide the level of services and amenities needed for our community.

Thank you for helping to make our community all that it is. Stay safe, enjoy the spring and let's get outside and enjoy the upcoming warmth and sunshine!

- Mayor Renee Hafften

## Members of your Rockford City Council

Mayor Renee Hafften  
Term: 2020 - 2024

Rick Martinson  
Term: 2020 - 2024

Debbie Buoy  
Term: 2018 - 2022

Scott Seymour  
Term: 2020 - 2022

Denise Willenbring  
Term: 2020 - 2024

City Hall  
6031 Main Street  
Rockford, MN 55373  
(763) 477-6565

City Hall Office Hours  
Monday through Friday  
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Closed on Holidays

Council Meetings  
City Hall  
2nd and 4th Tuesday  
of Every Month

Planning and Zoning  
City Hall  
2nd Thursday  
of Every Month

Park Commission  
City Hall  
1st Monday  
of Every Month

# Rockford City Staff Spotlight

The City of Rockford is fortunate to have dedicated staff that help keep the city running smoothly. Each member of our team plays an important role in providing the services that are important to our community. Here are some introductions to a couple of new staff members, along with an update on the success and leadership our Water / Wastewater Operator is providing to people within her field.



## Renee Oelrich

Renee joined our team as our Water and Wastewater Operator in January of 2020. Formerly a Water Plant Operator in Mankato and a Water and Wastewater Operator in LeSeuer, Renee came to the City of Rockford to run our Water and Wastewater Utility Operations. In the Spring of 2020, Renee was selected as the 2020 Inspiring Woman of Wastewater based upon her work history and self-published article entitled “My Nontraditional Path.” This article highlighted her journey through the Utilities profession and her realizations that the profession itself was not subject to gender roles. As she states in her article, “[t]he truth is, however, there is no ‘woman’s way’ versus ‘man’s way’ of doing things.”

## Jason Styve

Jason came to the City of Rockford in the Fall of 2020. Most recently, Jason was a part of the Public Works team at the City of Delano, focusing his time and efforts in landscaping and park maintenance. Prior to working for the City of Delano, Jason ran his own construction company JAS Construction Incorporated. Through his company, Jason built out and remodeled stores for a national-brand gas station. His experience with construction, equipment and his work ethic have made Jason an important part of our dynamic Public Works Team.



## Amy McNellis

Amy is the most recent addition to our City of Rockford Team, coming on board in February replacing Deputy Clerk, Audra Etzel. Amy is stepping into her role as Deputy Clerk as resident and member of the Rockford community. For the past twelve years, Amy has worked with cities and builders in her role as a real estate agent with Oak Realty, LLP. Her sense of humor, diligence and attention to detail are a great addition to our dedicated City Hall Team. As hobbies, Amy plays the piano, listens to Credence Clearwater Revival and enjoys spending time with her cats. Make sure to say “hi” to her next time you are in City Hall.



## Single Sort<sup>SM</sup> Recycling Every Other Week Recycling

● Gold Week ● Holiday ● Holiday Week  
● Rockford Collection

2021



## Rockford Garbage / Recycling Calendar

Waste Management collects recycling from the City of Rockford on an every-other Wednesday basis. A copy of the Recycling Calendar can be found on the City's website or can be picked up in City Hall. Rockford is the "Gold Week" for collection. All recyclables must be set out at the curb by 7 a.m. It is helpful to the collection workers if you face the lid of the bin toward the street, with the handle facing the house.



Items that can be recycled: metal cans, plastic bottles & containers #1 - #7, glass bottles and jars, paper, flattened cardboard & paperboard, and dairy & juice cartons. Please do not include plastic bags, needles, sharps or medical waste, foam cups and containers, or food waste.

March 10th, 24th	April 7th, 21st	May 5th, 19th	June 3rd, 16th, 30th	July 14th, 28th
August 11th, 25th	September 9th, 22nd	October 6th, 20th	November 3rd, 17th	December 1st, 15th, 29th

## Rockford Compost Site

The Rockford Compost Site, located at 9000 Elm Street (County Road 33), is scheduled to open Wednesday, April 14th, 2021, depending on the weather and site conditions. The Compost Site is restricted to use by Rockford Residents only and accepts grass clippings, leaves and brush no larger than 3" in diameter. All bags must be removed. The Compost Site will be closed if illegal dumping occurs. No commercial lawn care or tree companies are allowed at the site.

### Hours of operation:

**Monday-Friday 7:30am-3:00pm**

**Wednesday Evening 4:30-Dusk**

**Saturday 8:00am-noon**

### City Clean-Up Day *Tentatively* Scheduled for Saturday, May 1, 2021

The City's Annual Clean-Up Day is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, May 1, 2021, from 8 a.m. until noon at the Rockford Public Works Building: 6551 Utility Drive, Rockford, Minnesota. City Staff are working with Waste Management and within the confines of Pandemic-related Executive Orders that limit the scope and scale of events that can be held in Minnesota. We are hopeful that we can hold this year's Clean-Up Day events, but that will depend upon the Covid-19 regulations in place as we get closer to May 1st. Updates on Clean-Up Day will be posted on the City's website, Facebook page and are available by e-mailing [cityhall@cityofrockford.org](mailto:cityhall@cityofrockford.org).

The following items will be accepted for a fee: scrap metal, household appliances, furniture items, electronics, tires, and fluorescent/compact bulbs. Fees and further details will be available at City Hall or on the City's website:

[www.cityofrockford.org](http://www.cityofrockford.org).



## Winterfest 2021, March 13th, Noon to 4:00 p.m.

The Rockford Lions will be partnering with Clays Restaurant, located at 8900 Walnut Street, Rockford, Minnesota for Winterfest – A Day Of Outdoor Fun! Bean Bags, Snow Golf and other events will highlight a day with a portion of all proceeds supporting the Rockford Lions.

**Bean Bag Tournament**  
**\$30 per team of two**  
**Prizes Awarded**  
**Register now at:**  
**bgraunke@gmail.com**

**Snow Golf - Free**  
**Donations Accepted**

**50 / 50 Raffle, Mega Meat Raffle, Food and Drink Specials. Don't miss this first-ever winter event that supports the Rockford Lions.**

# Winterfest



## 8th Annual Thousand Hearts Crow River Serve Day

Mark your calendars! The 8th Annual Thousand Hearts Crow River Serve Day is just around the corner! This year's event is tentatively planned for Saturday, May 22nd. There are a few adjustments necessary to keep everyone safe.

We will not be serving any food or beverages from the Lions Building in Riverside Park but, instead, we will be bringing everything to volunteers at the project site. There will be volunteers at each site collecting waivers (extras available) and supplying wristbands. Please bring a mask; we will have extras on hand. Let's get after this, pull together and show the Community some love!

**Please follow the link to sign up for your favorite project:**  
**<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0b4eafa623a3fb6-8thannual>**



The Rockford-Greenfield Chamber of Commerce promotes the social welfare and economic development of the cities of Rockford, Greenfield and surrounding areas, through the support of initiatives for job creation and business development, including the expansion and retention of existing businesses, attraction of new businesses, community research, public information and education, facilitation of communication and development between government and area businesses and to assist local government leaders and community development programs to foster economic growth and provide leadership training.

## Events Calendar

**Thursday, March 11, 2021: Chamber Luncheon at the Rockford Community Center**

Spotlight: Rhonda Dean, Superintendent of Rockford Schools | Keynote: Wright County Sheriff Sean Derringer

**Thursday, April 15, 2021: Tax Mixer, 5 to 7 p.m., Location To Be Determined**

**Thursday, May 13, 2021: Chamber Luncheon, Location To Be Determined**

**Thursday, June 10th, 2021: Coffee Connection and Networking**

**For more information, contact the Rockford-Greenfield Area Chamber of Commerce**  
**[www.rgchamber.wixsite.com/rgchamber](http://www.rgchamber.wixsite.com/rgchamber) | [rockfordgreenfieldchamber@gmail.com](mailto:rockfordgreenfieldchamber@gmail.com)**





### Rockford Area Historical Society Update

Preparation has started for the restoration of a stairway connecting Bridge Street to the west portion of the Ames-Florida-Stork House. This was the entry that area pioneers would have used to hand their letters to Joel Florida in the 1860's. The stairway project will provide better visibility to this historic home on the east bank of the Crow River. With some luck and cooperation from Mother Nature, this project could be near completion by Memorial Day Weekend.



Rockford Area Historical Society  
Learning, Sharing & Celebrating  
Minnesota History

Call or email Ames-Florida-Stork House for availability to schedule a tour or reserve for a private event. The Ames-Florida-Stork House is located at:  
8131 Bridge Street  
(763) 477-5383  
Email: [storkhouse@cityofrockford.org](mailto:storkhouse@cityofrockford.org) | [www.rockfordmnhistory.org](http://www.rockfordmnhistory.org)

The Rockford Area Historical Society will again this year be placing Memorial plaques throughout Elmwood cemetery of war veterans and early Rockford pioneers. These plaques honor those who served our country or were instrumental in the establishment and/or development of our community. Last year 30 plaques were placed grave-side, this year our goal is to add an additional 10 plaques prior to Memorial Day. Plaques will be in place from the morning of May 21st until sunset May 31st. We encourage residents to drive or walk through Elmwood cemetery and learn more about our history and the people who contributed to it. If you have questions or would like to have a plaque honoring someone please reach out to the Rockford Area Historical Society at (763) 477-5383 or Email: [storkhouse@cityofrockford.org](mailto:storkhouse@cityofrockford.org).

- Kevin Koehler  
Rockford Area Historical Society



### Rockford / Delano Varsity Hockey - Skate with the Tigers Day Tuesday, March 9th, 2021 at Riverside Park, Rockford, Minnesota

Weather permitting, this March 9th, 2021 at 3:30 p.m. the Rockford / Delano Varsity Boys Hockey Team will take the ice for an open practice. After practice, members of the Community and area youth are invited to skate alongside the "big fellas" and enjoy one of the best parts of Minnesota Winter - Hockey!





Street	From	To	Utility Improvement	Street Improvement Type
Maple Street	Linden St	Woodlawn Drive	Sanitary/Water/Select Storm	Reclamation
Maple Street	Woodlawn Drive	Tamarack Lane		Reclamation
Maple Street	Tamarack Lane	Nathan Blvd	Sanitary/Water/Select Storm	Reclamation
River Oaks Road	Autumn Oaks Drive	Autumn Oaks Drive		Mill and Overlay
Autumn Oaks Drive	River Oaks Road	River Oaks Road		Mill and Overlay
Acorn Circle	Red Oaks Drive	End		Mill and Overlay
Red Oak Drive	Autumn Oaks Drive	End		Mill and Overlay
Walnut Street	Main St	Electric Drive	Sanitary/Water/Select Storm	Mill and Overlay
Haug Ave	Electric Drive	End	Sanitary/Water/Select Storm	Mill and Overlay
Electric Drive	Highway 55	End	Sanitary/Water/Select Storm	Mill and Overlay
Walnut Place	Walnut Street	End	Sanitary/Water/Select Storm	Mill and Overlay
Boulder Ridge Drive	Walnut Street	Trail entrance		Reconstruction
Tower Street	Highway 55	End	Sanitary/Water/Select Storm	Mill and Overlay
High Street	Highway 55	Walnut Street	Sanitary/Water/Select Storm	Mill and Overlay
Ash Street	Highway 55	Walnut Street	Sanitary/Water/Select Storm	Mill and Overlay
Maple Street	Highway 55	Walnut Street	Sanitary/Water/Select Storm	Mill and Overlay

## 2022 Street and Utility Improvement Project Feasibility Study

The Public Works Department and City Engineers have noted deteriorating street and utility main conditions for the past few years, with particular challenges to the road and infrastructure on and under Maple Street and Walnut Street. Members of Staff and the City Council began meeting in the Summer of 2020 to discuss the scope of a potential project to improve the city's utility mains and roadway, and reviewed available means to fund such a project. Based upon the City's existing bond debt, bonding capacity and Capital Improvement Funds saved over the past several years, a project was crafted as shown above in blue that merits additional research and investigation. On that basis, a formal Feasibility Study was ordered by the City Council at the January 26th, 2021 Council Meeting that will detail the estimated cost of the project and will recommend means to fund such a project. The project would be scheduled in the Spring of 2022.

In the above map, the roads and area highlighted red and as identified on the right show the locations currently proposed for the 2022 Project. This may change, however, as research and investigation explore the actual condition of the road and utility mains in the overall project area. Some parts of this project are also proposed to be assessed to benefitted properties. The Feasibility Study, when received, will help guide the final project, at which point the City Council will review and decide if the project should move forward. Additional information regarding the project and plans will be discussed at future Council Meetings and will be posted on the City's Website when it becomes available.

## Coming Soon... New City Website

The City of Rockford Website will have a new look sometime in the Fall of 2021. The City used CARES Act funding provided by the State to engage Prime Advertising + Design to rebuild the City's Website. City Staff have heard from residents, businesses and people interested in our community that the current design and functionality have become dated over the past several years. The City is working toward incorporating new technology and a new layout to help people visiting the site get to where they want to be faster and easier. The new website will also incorporate updated analytics, blog capabilities, photos, video components and will meet current ADA Accessibility requirements.



As a part of this design process, the City will be asking for help from the community on identifying locations and sending in pictures that best help tell the story of our community. Whether it is fishing from the Canoe Launch Pier, dancing at Rocktoberfest, playing some games at River Days or playing some hockey at the rink, we will be asking for your pictures to highlight everything that makes Rockford special. We will send out more information on the picture hunt in the Summer.





# Water Conservation Tips and Information

## Water Conservation Tips and Information

Clean, fresh water is a limited resource. Conserving water is important because it keeps water pure and clean while protecting the environment. Conserving water can also save you a significant amount of money on your monthly utility bills.

The following tips and information about water conservation are recommended by the Minnesota Rural Water Association. For more information about water quality or conservation, visit their website at [www.mrwa.com](http://www.mrwa.com), or send the an e-mail at [mrwa@mrwa.com](mailto:mrwa@mrwa.com).

### Bathroom Conservation Opportunities:

#### Toilets:

- \* If you happen to live in an older home with original fixtures, you may be flushing at a rate of 5 to 7 gallons per flush. You can save water per flush by installing a toilet dam.
- \* Your toilet is not a wastebasket - don't use it to flush away cigarette butts or Kleenex.
- \* Most new toilets presently available on the market are engineered for low volume use.
- \* Put a few drops of food coloring in your tank. If colored water shows in the bowl without flushing, there's a leak and repairs are needed.

#### Bathing:

- \* A shower generally uses less water than a bath.
- \* Do your showering and hair washing in one step.
- \* Fill the tub on 1/4 full. This is enough to cover an adult's body or float a child's toy.
- \* Most showers can be fitted with a flow restrictor or low-volume head to conserve water.
- \* Don't turn the shower on until you're ready to step in.

#### Sink:

- \* Don't leave water running while washing your face, shaving or brushing your teeth.
- \* An electric razor uses less energy than it takes to heat up the water for razor shaving.

#### Kitchen and Laundry

- \* Twenty-five percent of the daily household water use occurs in the kitchen and laundry with much of this water being wasted.

### Washing Dishes:

- \* When washing dishes by hand, use a stopper in the sink and don't rinse with running water.
- \* Use low-sudsing detergents - they require less rinsing.
- \* Adding 1/4 to 1/2 cup of vinegar to your wash water cuts grease more readily than hot water alone.
- \* Run your dishwasher only when you have a full load.
- \* Use the prewash, rinse-hold and scrub cycles of your dishwasher only when necessary.



### Laundry:

- \* If your washer has a variable load control, always adjust water levels to fit the size of the load. This saves both water and the energy needed to heat the extra hot water.
- \* Run your washer when you have a full load.
- \* Remember that in soft water clothes get cleaner and require less detergent and less rinse water.
- \* When buying a new washing machine, look for models with water or energy-saving controls.

### All Around the House

- \* Check every faucet for leaks. Just a slow drip can waste 15 or 20 gallons a day.
- \* Use a broom, not the hose, to clean the garage, sidewalks, and driveway. Wash the car from a bucket. Use the hose only to rinse it off afterwards.
- \* Insulate the hot water heater, pay special attention to the insulation qualities of the shell. Avoid buying a larger tank than is necessary for your needs.

### Lawn and Yard

- \* Morning is the best time to water most lawns. Before 10:00am is best of all because rising heat later on tends to steal a lot of water by evaporation. Another benefit is that grass and leaves have a chance to dry off quickly. Evening or night-time watering leave the grass wet and can allow lawn diseases to develop.
- \* A lush green lawn requires 1 to 1 1/2 inches of water a week. Keep in mind the amount of rainfall that might fall on your yard and adjust your watering schedule accordingly.
- \* If you let your grass grow to about 1 1/2 to 2 inches in the summer, water loss will be reduced because the blades will provide shade for the roots.
- \* Avoid watering when windy or in the heat of the day.
- \* Don't allow sprinklers to run unattended. Use a timer as a reminder when it's time to move or turn off the sprinkler.
- \* Lawns that are frequently aerated absorb water better.
- \* High nitrogen fertilizers stimulate lawn growth and increase water requirements.
- \* Thatch build-up in a lawn can create a rapid run-off situation. Every spring the lawn should be raked and dead grass removed.



- \* Sprinklers throwing large drops in a flat pattern are more effective than those with fine, high sprays.
- \* Forget about watering streets, walks and driveways. They don't grow a thing.
- \* Mulch shrubs and other plantings so the soil holds moisture longer.
- \* When possible, flood irrigate vegetables and flower gardens rather than using sprinklers. Irrigation allows deeper soaking with less water. Sprinklers result in high evaporation loss of water.