A Letter from your Mayor

St. John Single Family Home Initiative

In 2013 the City began to identify the many vacant and/or abandoned properties in the City that were not being taken care of by the property owner. One of the biggest challenges was contacting the property owner to notify them of issues. This was easier said than done in many cases. Because of this in 2014 the City Council implemented a Vacant Property Registration for vacant properties, and a Landlord Registration for rental properties. This would require property owners to register annually with their current contact information. For owners with rental properties living over 50 miles away from St. John, they are now required to designate a local Representative to ensure the property is maintained.

The registrations have helped considerably. However, many properties still remain vacant and in disrepair. As I’m sure you realize, vacant or abandoned houses can be a real problem. They are what our Police Department calls “attractive nuisances.” Vacant homes appeal to vandals and they can often become a habitat for wild animals such as raccoons and opossums.

Something still needed to be done, but what? Luckily, the City heard about a program through St. Louis County wherein properties could be acquired from St. Louis County and conveyed to either rehab contractors or new home builders.

In order to reduce the number of vacant or abandoned homes in St. John, the City Council undertook an aggressive program to identify those properties which had potential to be rebuilt or upon which a new home could be built. We were able to acquire properties from the County Collector that were listed on their “post third tax sale” list at a very minimal cost to the City ($27). Because the City acquired them from this list it meant that the back taxes were waived. We could then pass them along to a rebuilder or a new home developer at a very modest cost. For example, we recently advertised a Notice to Bid for a number of homes we acquired this way and the bids received ranged from $2,000 to $8,000 for existing homes. That means some abandoned homes can now be rebuilt and made viable once again. We were also able to convey four vacant lots to a developer who is going to build new, 3 bedroom, two bath homes on them. This is the second round of homes this developer has built for us since this program began in 2016. Our plan going forward is to continue to identify these abandoned properties and work to make them viable homes or get new homes built.

The City also works very closely with Rebuilding Together™. This is a National Organization of volunteers, both corporate and local individuals, that work together to help elderly, veterans, disabled and low-income residents remain in their homes safely. To date, Rebuilding Together has spent almost $1,000,000 in St. John. As recently as September, the home of a veteran’s widow had at least 20 volunteers working on her house.

In 2015, “Rebuilding a Better Neighborhood” had a 3-day build that included 14 houses on one street. Due to Rebuilding Together helping these residents, they were able to stay in their homes.

These things are part of the ongoing effort that the City Council and City Staff are doing to keep St. John a great place to live.
HOME SURVEILLANCE TECHNOLOGY AIDS LAW ENFORCEMENT INVESTIGATIONS... AND PROMOTES SAFER COMMUNITIES

With the constant rapid advancements in home surveillance technology, costs for in-home security camera systems have drastically declined. What was once only an option for growing, major businesses and government institutions, is now available at an average cost of approximately $200.00 for home owners to purchase. According to Freedonia, a Cleveland based industry research firm, home security systems are expected to hit $3.4 billion in sales by the end of 2018 and $4.8 billion by the year 2025. Due to this, it seems that more and more residents and businesses within the City of St. John are installing digital cameras for added safety benefits. And...they are right. Studies show that criminals are less likely to strike when and where they know cameras could capture their every move and possibly even their identity. There is no doubt that video surveillance systems are a deterrent to criminals.

The St. John Police Department, along with several other local Law Enforcement agencies, have recognized the home security camera system trend and have also discovered an untapped criminal investigation tool right in our own communities. In the recent past, St. John Police Officers have partnered with home owners and businesses who possess security cameras in areas where crimes have occurred so that video of the alleged suspects could be viewed. This video footage proved to be a valuable resource for the investigating officers. Not only did the video produce images of the alleged suspects, but it also gave a better timeline of the criminal events and the routes taken.

In an effort to resolve criminal activity quicker and strengthen community partnerships in our City, we are asking for residents and businesses that have security cameras to register them with the Police Department. The registration is completely voluntary and even after registration; the residents are not under any obligation to share their video footage with the police. The registration list, as well as provided video, will be kept confidential except as required by law or court order. This registration program is an excellent way for the community to get involved with Law Enforcement efforts to maintain a safe environment and peace of mind. Be looking for the camera registration form on our City’s Website in the near future.

WHEN THE SNOW FLIES

In the last couple of years we have not seen a great accumulation of snow during the winter snow season. The Street Department has been called out mainly by the Police Department to salt icy streets, but there has not been a lot of snow to plow up. But just as sure as we start talking about it we will see record snow falls this year.

In the event that snow starts to accumulate the Street Department will be called out to begin plowing it off of the streets. As always our goal is to clear the street from curb to curb as quickly as we can so we not only make them safe to drive, but also keep them safe for pedestrians. To this end we ask your cooperation so that we can get the street cleared as soon after the snow event as possible.

If the forecast says it is supposed to snow we ask that you park your vehicle(s) off the street until we can get it plowed. This will help us get the streets cleared but also minimize the possibility of damaging a vehicle during the plowing process. As always, thank you in advance for your cooperation.
Patrolman Jaymes Brookshire was hired on August 1, 2018. He is a recent graduate of the Jefferson County Police Academy where he graduated top of his class in academics and also holds a Bachelors degree in Criminal Justice. His previous work experience includes supervisory levels in loss prevention for a major St. Louis area retailer and also as a Corrections Officer for the Missouri Department of Corrections.

Patrolman Josh Muratori was hired on August 1, 2018. He is a graduate of the Eastern Missouri Police Academy. Patrolman Muratori brings with him nearly eight years of law enforcement experience, some of which were in a supervisory capacity in the St. Louis County area. He currently serves in the U. S. Army National Guard and has completed multiple overseas, combat deployments during the Global War on Terrorism.

Patrolman Nathan Tucker was hired on August 1, 2018. He is a graduate of the St. Louis County Police Academy and also holds an Associates degree in IT. Patrolman Tucker brings with him nearly nine years of law enforcement experience in the St. Louis County area. Prior to beginning his law enforcement career, he served multiple years in the United States Navy during the Global War on Terrorism.
CHIPPER SCHEDULE Nov-April
The fall limb chipping schedule will begin on November 5th and run through April 30, 2019. The Street Department will begin running the limb chipper through the City on the following schedule:

East side of town (East side of Marshall to the eastern City limits) - 1st and 3rd Monday of each month.
West side of town (West side of Marshall to the western City limits) - 2nd and 4th Monday of each month.

Our chipper can only take limbs that are 3” in diameter or smaller. So, please place all limbs of this size at the curb with the fat ends out toward the street. We ask that you not block sidewalks with your limbs, nor put them out in the street. Just lay the limbs out behind the sidewalk if you have one and we will get them picked up for you. Thanks for your cooperation.

ST. JOHN’S ANNUAL BREAKFAST WITH SANTA Dec 8

Saturday, December 8th, 2018 ~ Cafeteria Level
10:00 a.m. SHARP! (Doors open at 9:30 am)

Tickets are limited and are only available for children and grandchildren of St. John residents, 9 years of age or younger. Tickets will be available the week of October 29th. They are free and can be picked up at the St. John Municipal Center, 8944 St. Charles Rock Road, Suite 100, Monday thru Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Proof of residency is required. Tickets are available until 5 pm, Friday, December 7th, OR until they run out.

Don’t Forget To Bring Your Cameras For A Photo With Santa!

SENIOR CITIZEN UTILITY TAX REBATES Feb 1, 2019

Utility tax rebates for the year 2018 will be issued February 1, 2019 – April 30, 2019. The rebate is $30.00 per household. In order to qualify for this rebate, residents must:

1) Have turned sixty-five (65) years of age or older at some point during the year 2018;
2) Currently reside in the City and have previously resided in the City for the entire calendar year of 2018;
3) Apply on forms provided by the City for a rebate on 2018’s taxes.

Qualified residents need to provide the following documentation to the City Hall in order to collect the rebate:

1) Picture identification;
2) Identification showing current address and date of birth;
3) One utility bill for January 2018 and one bill for December 2018 reflecting the address which they reside at and are requesting the rebate for.

If you have any questions, please contact City Hall at 427-8700, ext. 3.

The St. John Police Department would like to thank all those who purchased this year’s Special Olympics Torch Run T Shirt. Because of you, the Department reached their $1,000 goal which will go back to the Missouri Special Olympics.

Thank You To Everyone For Your Support!
UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

ELECTION FILING DATES April 2, 2019

The 2019 Municipal Election will be held on Tuesday, April 2, 2019. The following seats will be open:

**Mayor (Tom Halaska - Incumbent)**
**Councilperson - Ward I (Rachel Hayes - Incumbent)**
**Councilperson - Ward II (Lee Taylor - Incumbent)**

Filing for this election opens at 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 2, 2019 and closes at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 15, 2019. Petitions are available at the St. John Municipal Center, City Hall, Suite 100, located on the first floor of the St. John Municipal Center, 8944 St. Charles Rock Road.

In order to file for office, candidates must:

- Be a current resident of St. John
- Have legally resided in St. John for one year or more
- Be 21 years of age or older
- Currently be a registered voter in St. John
- Be current with payment of all City, County, and State taxes

Candidates meeting the above requirements must file a petition (supplied by City Hall) with the City Clerk containing the signatures of ten (10) registered voters (in indelible ink). Petitions are now available. Candidates filing for Council must live in the Ward in which they are filing for and the signatures of their sponsors must be from that Ward. Candidates filing for Mayor may live in either Ward of the City and sponsor’s signatures can be from either Ward as well. Nominees are not allowed to sign their own petition. The filing fee is $10 and must accompany the petition at the time of filing. If you have any questions regarding this, please contact the City Hall at 427-8700, x3.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

In August of 2017, through a grant from the Emergency Management Association, the City of St. John implemented “Code Red”, a high speed mass emergency notification service. The Code Red system sends telephone calls, text messages, emails, and posts to social media channels to inform residents of critical information during emergency situations.

The system started with an initial data base of residential and commercial land-line phone numbers; however the system is capable of handling much more. Residents and business owners are encouraged to visit www.cityofstjohn.org and click on the Code Red logo on the home page, just below the News Flash articles. Or, you can just copy and paste the following url: https://public.coderedweb.com/cne/en-US/BFE0125444B3. There you can create a managed account or just review and submit your information. Information can range from your home phone, cell phone and/or email address; any one of these, or all of them. This link will also provide you further information on this program.

Originally, the system was designed for emergencies such as fires, floods, weather events, boil orders, missing children/adults, and Police incidents. In addition, the system is also available to send out general information as well. Non-emergency notifications such as road closures, snow removal call-outs, health screening services, community events and public meeting announcements can be delivered by this service as well. However, residents can opt out for any or all of the notifications if desired.

In addition, there is also a Code Red Mobile Alert app for your smartphone. This app can also pick up alerts from other agencies with the same system if you drive through an area with an active notification. You will find it in the Google Play Store.

No personal information is shared. No solicitations, advertising, or political messages are ever sent via Code Red. And, this service is free to all residents and businesses in our community. So please sign up soon.
We all know accidents happen. A gate gets blown open in a storm; our dog jumps the fence to chase a rabbit; or our cat slips out the door when we're carrying groceries in. Whatever the reason may be, the reality is that sometimes our pets get away from us and go missing. Do you know who to contact if this ever happens to you?

If your dog, cat, or other pet go missing the first step is to call City Hall to leave a message for our animal control officer. You'll want to leave your name, address, phone number, and a description of the missing pet. This should include any collar, tags, or microchip that the pet may have. Our animal control officer patrols our city regularly and will keep an eye out for missing pets.

The City of St. John has a Facebook page where unidentified pets are posted in an attempt to locate an owner. Any pets for which we are unable to locate an owner for are transferred to St. Louis County Animal Control. So getting your information to our animal control officer is crucial.

If your pet has a microchip you should contact the microchip company to report the pet missing. The microchip company will take a report and contact you if anyone calls them to trace your pet’s microchip number. It is a good idea to keep your pet’s microchip number handy in case you ever need to make such a report. Next you should contact the shelters in the area. There are three main shelters in the area. They are St. Louis County Animal Control in Olivette, the Humane Society in Maryland Heights, and the APA in Brentwood. It is recommend that you visit these shelters in person to view the animals that they have and check to see if yours is there.

These shelters take in a large number of animals daily. Some of these animals may look similar to yours, so giving a description over the phone may cause your pet to be overlooked even if he/she is there. These shelters also post the animals they take in on www.stllostpets.org. You can view the animals at the shelters and submit a missing pet report. This website is updated hourly so it is a good idea to check it regularly.

One last place to check is a Facebook page called St. Louis Missouri, Lost & Found Paws. People all across the area come together on this page to help lost pets and their owners be reunited. People can post dogs they have found or seen running loose, and owners can post pictures of their missing pets. We hope these steps help reunite you with your pets should they ever go missing.
We’ll handle it from here.

Learn more at RecyclingSimplified.com

Additional Items You DO NOT RECYCLE

- Shredded paper or other smalls items
- Flattened bottles or cans
- #7 Plastic
- Caps or lids on glass bottles or cans
- Window glass or mirrors
- Rope-like items
- Diapers or Bio-hazardous waste

For more information you can also view St. Louis County’s Website at: www.recyclesaintlouis.com

The following link is to a short video explaining why the recycling industry is changing:

— Republic Services

“We’ll handle it from here.”
Vehicle Security

Everyday law enforcement agencies in the St. Louis area take crime reports from victims for thefts of property from their vehicles as well as stolen vehicle reports. Though nothing can prevent you from ever being a victim of such a crime, there are things you can do to lessen the odds of your being victimized. Many thieves are opportunists and will look for the vehicle that is unlocked or the one that may be locked but has valuables left inside. Even if your vehicle is locked and alarmed, if there are valuables in sight (even covered up) a window may be smashed to gain entry. This all can occur in a matter of seconds.

Here are a few crime prevention tips to make the transition easier. **Don’t make it easy for them.**

- Never leave the keys inside the vehicle.
- NEVER LEAVE A VEHICLE RUNNING WHILE UNATTENDED.
- Make sure that all windows are up all the way before locking your vehicle.
- Lock your vehicle even if you are only going to be away from it a short time.
- Lock your vehicle even if it is parked in your driveway, inside your garage or on the street in front of your residence.
- Make sure your vehicle alarm is activated whenever you exit/lock your vehicle.
- Do not leave valuables, (i.e. purses, wallets, cellular phones, cameras, laptop computers etc.) inside your vehicle, even if it is locked.
- Even if your vehicle is locked and alarmed, do not attempt to “hide” valuables under the seat or under an item of clothing in the vehicle.
- Please report any theft from your vehicle immediately to your local law enforcement agency. It is up to you whether or not you chose to report this to your insurance company.
- If you observe anyone acting suspiciously in the area of your vehicle, report it immediately to law enforcement by dialing 9-1-1 or 636-529-8210.
- Don’t hesitate to contact St. John Police to report suspicious activity or subjects.

**CRIME PREVENTION TIPS FOR THE FALL/WINTER MONTHS**

Fall is upon us, thus, darkness is falling earlier. All those activities previously done in daylight will now occur in darkness: Going to your vehicle after work, picking up your children from afterschool, activities and sports.

PREVENTING THE THEFT of your vehicle and its contents

1. Never leave your car running unattended.
2. Have a tracking or anti-theft system installed.
3. Always lock your doors.
4. Not leave items visible.
5. Never attach name or address to your key chain.
6. Not hide spare keys inside or outside your vehicle.
7. Park in safe and well-lit areas.
FAT FREE SEWERS

No one ever wants a sewer backup. But for sure you don’t want it when you have a house full of guests. So, with the holidays almost upon us, it’s time to remind everyone again about not putting FOGs down your drains.

Your garbage disposal may be strong enough to handle that turkey carcass but your drain may complain. Fats, oils, and grease (FOG) don’t just clog our arteries, they clog our sewers too. Keeping fat, grease, and oil out of the drain is one of the best ways to avoid a sewer backup in your home. Many backups result from accumulated grease buildup along the walls of your sewer line. Over time, grease buildup will block water flow in your pipes. Last year MSD estimates that about 8% of blockages in its public sewer system were caused by FOG.

Fats, oils, and grease are found in many of the foods we eat every day - foods such as meat, fish, butter, cooking oil, gravy, sauces, mayonnaise, salad dressing, and cheese. Keep these items out of the drain or garbage disposal.

Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District reminds you of these easy steps to prevent grease buildup in your pipes:

• Wipe cooled pots and pans with a paper towel before washing.
• Remove fatty foods from plates and the kitchen sink, and place them in the trash; not down the drain.
• Can it, cool it, and trash it. Pour all cooled cooking fats that will harden into a container such as an empty pet food, vegetable, or coffee can. Cool them and throw them in the trash.

MSD has provided the City with lids that will fit several types of vegetable and pet food cans. These can be used to cover cans containing FOG for disposal in trash cans. They are free at the St. John Municipal Center, City Hall side.

Since 2004, MSD has nearly an 80% reduction in grease-related sewer overflows, due in part to the community’s help in preventing FOG from entering our sewer system. Help prevent drain and sewer clogs by keeping drains fat-free.

NOT IN THE STORM SEWER!

So often the storm sewer inlets on residential streets are used as receptacles for all sorts of trash, debris, and yard waste.

We’ve seen people throw cans and bottles down the storm sewers, rake leaves into them, and blow grass off the street into the storm sewers. Did you know that whatever goes into the storm sewers gets into the water supply?

Rain water entering a storm sewer eventually empties into a stream or creek which empties into a larger river like the Missouri or the Mississippi. Did you know your drinking water comes from these rivers? The trash, debris, and yard waste that gets dumped into the storm sewers will affect the quality and cost of your drinking water. It’s important that we not pollute these rivers, not only for the sake of the aquatic life that depends on them, but also for our own health and well being. Please remember: nothing but rain water in the storm sewer.
Neighbor Helping Neighbor

Department of Human Services
Mission

St. Louis County’s Department of Human Services is committed to providing the support, services and resources that help individuals of all ages live safely, productively and independently.

Our Values

Customer Centered – We are committed to our customers by providing a supportive environment with honest and respectful communication, timely response, and teamwork that reinforces consistent and effective services.

Respect – We provide an environment that promotes respect, appreciation, and support to our customers and our staff.

Teamwork – We collaborate in a respectful and cooperative manner and value the contribution of each staff member as we work together toward achieving our shared mission.

Accountability – We perform our job functions and deliver services efficiently and to the best of our ability. We take responsibility for our actions and develop solutions to enhance our success.

Professionalism – We maintain a set of skills and qualities that promote accountability, acceptance of increased responsibility, effective communication, and commitment to excellence in job performance.

Excellence – We are dedicated to a high standard of performance excellence for our leaders, staff, and customers. We set high expectation, set lofty goals, and help people reach them.

Vision Statement

St. Louis County is a community where residents of all ages are empowered to live to their fullest potential.

BECOME A CORP VOLUNTEER DRIVER BY CALLING TODAY AT (314) 615-4516!

The County Older Resident Programs (CORP) is seeking dependable volunteers who reside in St. Louis County, to provide transportation to and from doctor’s appointments and to other essential destinations for our senior residents of St. Louis County. A few hours of your time could make all the difference in the world to a senior neighbor that lives near you. Mileage reimbursement is available!
In 2015, the City of St. John and Rebuilding Together-St. Louis developed a partnership to provide funding opportunities to St. John homeowners for property repairs and improvements.

Rebuilding Together-St. Louis is an affiliate of the national volunteer organization, Rebuilding Together. Their Mission is to bring volunteers and communities together to improve the homes and lives of our homeowners. Low income homeowners can receive FREE critical home repairs, accessibility modifications, and energy efficient upgrades.

Many of our residents and neighbors have worked hard all of their lives to maintain their homes. Due to illness, aging, financing, or other uncontrollable circumstances, they can no longer keep up with needed home repairs. As a result, homes and neighborhoods ultimately become unsafe and unlivable.

Rebuilding Together-St. Louis’ mission is to revitalize neighborhoods by rehabilitating the houses of low income homeowners, particularly the elderly, disabled, and veterans. Their goal is to allow homeowners to live independently in the safety and comfort of their own homes.

Rebuilding Together-St. Louis provides the following repairs: Electrical, Plumbing, Painting, AC/Heating, Flooring, Roof repairs, and Handicap accessibility improvements. Skilled and experienced volunteers provide these services at NO COST to the homeowner.

As a part of the monthly fee St. John residents pay for trash services, Republic Services will pick up two (2) bulky items per week and one appliance or electronic device per week. Bulky items are household items such as furniture (sofa, table, etc.) and bedding (mattresses, box springs, bed frames, etc.). These types of items are picked up every Monday. However, residents need to call Republic Services at (636) 947-5959 to schedule this pick-up. Set it out on Sunday night for a Monday pick-up. In the event the bulky item is not picked up by close of business Monday, call Republic Services and let them know your item still needs to be picked up. We are beginning to see far too many bulky items left at the curb late in the week and even over the weekend. When we see this we realize that the resident who set the item out has not followed up with Republic to make sure it is removed in a timely manner.

Appliances and electronic items are picked up on Thursdays. Call Republic Services on Wednesday to schedule a pick-up of these items. Please note, some electronic items may incur a cost so be sure to inquire before scheduling. Republic Services does not pick these items up themselves but gives this work to a contractor, so it is critical that you call early on Wednesday to make sure that these items are picked up on Thursdays. As with bulky items, if appliances are left out on Friday or over the weekend then we know that the resident who set the item out has not followed up properly to make sure it is picked up in a timely manner.

Keep in mind that when you set either bulky items or appliances/electronics out they can not be set in the street nor can they block a sidewalk. Put them in the grassy area behind the curb. Setting them on the street or blocking a sidewalk is a violation of the Municipal Code. So to avoid getting issued a summons, make sure you set them out properly. And make sure you call ahead so that Republic Services will know they have a pick-up in St. John. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.
Remembering Corporal Kelly Russ

Corporal Kelly Russ passed away on Friday, October 26, 2018 at the age of 66. He retired last year from the City of St. John after 32 years of service to this community. He had also worked for COPS, a motorcycle escort service for funeral services.

He loved motorcycles, especially Harley-Davidsons. In fact, in 2002 he was involved in a major accident while escorting a funeral procession of another retired St. John employee when a car cut through the procession line and hit him. It nearly cost him his life. It took many months for him to recover enough to a point of being able to come back to work. Although he never completely recovered, it didn’t stop him from returning to police work and escorting funeral processions again.

In addition to his regular duties during his tenure with St. John, he held many other positions, such as Reserve Officer Liaison, Traffic Officer, Motorcycle Officer, Firearms Range Master and a mentor to his fellow officers.

Aside from the various “hats” he wore; Kelly also had other roles, both at the Police Department as well as his “outside interests”. Whether you knew Kelly from the job, the gun range, the archery range, the motorcycle fraternity, corvette cruises, road trips, or just by being a friend or neighbor, we were all touched somehow, someway by him.

His funeral was held on Wednesday, October 31st. After the funeral his procession drove through the City where Corporal Russ served. Anyone driving down St. Charles Rock Road by the Police Station that day was probably wondering what was happening as both sides of the street were lined with police cars from numerous departments, all lights on, and Community Fire had the American Flag waving high in the air from the truck’s ladder.

Anybody that knew Kelly will tell you he was one of a kind. His job required that he be “strong-willed” but his personal side reflected that he had a big heart. He will be missed by all that knew him.

The family has requested that any memorials be sent to the Wentzville Police Department Blue Line Family, 1019 Schroeder Creek Blvd, Wentzville, MO 63385, or The Backstoppers, Inc., P.O. Box 795168, St. Louis, MO 63179.