



## Mayors Spring Newsletter 2018

By Mark Korin

**Why can't we just get along?** Is it too much to ask to not fight? Does all the bickering, squawking and posturing make things better? The hatred because of where you come from, the territorial dominance and the endless physical and emotional battles to prove the past justifies the future. Why is it at spring, with its new beginning always starts the same way? **What?** I'm talking about the

Trumpeter Swans battling with the geese. The sand hill cranes swooping over their last years home to find that new squatters, the trumpeters have taken over. BUT WAIT, SNOWMAGEDDON, silence, peace, tranquility, solitude. The neighbors, the "snowbirds", pun intended, are silent. Twelve plus inches of snow and continued subfreezing temperatures suddenly force a new focus, to stay alive, to find food with no open water and nowhere to swim. There's kind of a parallel in the human race, with social media blasting twisted real and blurring the line with so much fake news it seems like more and more people are dwelling in the past, bickering and fighting about what was, rather than making the best of what could be. But the view immediately changes when a catastrophe impales our country. I remember vividly the terrorist attack on the twin towers in New York on 9-11.... The major problems of the day seemed insignificant, buried by the tragedy. Regardless of where you were, EVERYONE stopped, took a deep breath, and prayed for the victims, their families and our country. It didn't matter what country your relatives came from, what color your skin is, male, female, old or young, tall or short, rich or poor we focused first on our country and our families. It's kind of strange as I write this, looking out my hotel room with blue sky, nice breeze, 70 degrees on the white sand beaches of Destin, Florida. Yes, for business, a very long two weeks away, but back at home, major snowfalls, my wife breaks her leg and there's nothing I can do but count down the days until I get to come home. Everyone pitched in to help her and dig out from the never ending winter. The focus changed for me immediately and for everyone around her, for the good.

The focus for all of us should be to help each other, to make a better country as individuals and should strive to make what's right selflessly for the future. There are those that continually point out the differences, strive on discontent, disruption and wallow in hatred against others because of atrocities centuries ago. We, unlike the animal kingdom have the ability to come together, to have compassion, be grateful and to forgive. Sometimes the realization or understanding what could be is worse than the constant daily barrage of any menial negativity. Being humble, having compassion and looking for the positive should be our American and neighborly emphasis. **TO BE CONTINUED.....**

**Notice of filing for 2018  
City General Election**

*See more on page 2*

**Fire Department accepts  
delivery of new tanker**

*See more on page 3*

**Building Codes  
and Permits**

*See more on page 5*

## City Administrator's Updates

Loren Wickham  
CITY ADMINISTRATOR

### 2017 Audit Complete

Bergan KDV Limited recently presented the 2017 audit of the city's financial statements to the city council at their regular meeting on March 12. A copy is available on the city's website under the finance department.

### 2018 Official Newspaper – StarTribune

The city's official newspaper for publishing legal notices is the StarTribune. Legal notices are available at [www.startribune.com](http://www.startribune.com). All legal notices are also available at [www.ci.oak-grove.mn.us](http://www.ci.oak-grove.mn.us), City Hall and the Recycling Drop-Off Center at 19045 Main Street NW.

### 2018 Construction Projects – Tentative Schedule

The City of Oak Grove maintains approximately 117 miles of roads. The city council considered the 2018 Street Improvement Plans at the April 30 City Council Meeting. The tentative list includes overlay projects for the neighborhoods of Cedar Ridge, Cedar Creek, Vista Creek Terrace and Birds-Eye View Acres. These neighborhoods are all clustered along our southern border east of Lake George Boulevard. Depending on bid prices, additional road overlays may be included into the project. The tentative schedule is to let bids on June 7, award the project on June 11, start construction in July or August and project completion in September. To sign up for construction project updates via email, visit the city's website at [www.ci.oak-grove.mn.us](http://www.ci.oak-grove.mn.us).

This past winter a resident of the North Ridge subdivision inquired about the process to have their gravel road paved. This inquiry led to a city-initiated neighborhood meeting to discuss the process and requirements to pave gravel roads in Oak Grove. Subsequent to the neighborhood meeting, the city received a petition to initiate the process to pave North Ridge. The cost of paving gravel roads are typically assessed to the benefitting landowners. The City of Oak Grove anticipates adding this paving to the 2018 Street Improvement Plans. Please contact City Hall for more information on this project or if you have interest in learning more about paving other gravel roads in Oak Grove.

## Notice of filing for 2018 City General Election

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, to the residents of the City of Oak Grove, that a General Election will be held in the City of Oak Grove, in the County of Anoka, State of Minnesota, on Tuesday, the 6th day of November, 2018, for the purpose of electing candidates for the offices listed below. The filing period for these offices begins on Tuesday, July 31, 2018 at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 14, 2018.. Candidates for the offices listed below need to file with the City Clerk at Oak Grove City Hall, 19900 Nightingale Street NW, Oak Grove, Minnesota. Office hours at City Hall are 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. However, office hours will be extended until 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 14, 2018, to accept filings. A fee of \$2 must be paid before an Affidavit of Candidacy will be accepted.

### Offices for 2018 General Election

City Mayor, four-year term

Two (2) Council Members, each for four-year terms

*Kathy Nielsen, CITY CLERK*

## Be part of the 2018 election process

Voting is a fundamental right for all citizens, but ensuring that elections are run smoothly is the responsibility of a small and committed team of election judges. Oak Grove has a great team of experienced judges who serve all residents by administering elections efficiently and accurately for all of us. If you would like to be a part of this important team for either the Primary Election on Tuesday, August 14, or the General Election on Tuesday, November 6, please contact City Clerk Kathy Nielsen at [kn Nielsen@co.oak-grove.mn.us](mailto:kn Nielsen@co.oak-grove.mn.us) or call 763-404-7007.



## Greetings!

My name is Kathy Nielsen. As your new City Clerk, I look forward to serving the city council and residents of Oak Grove.

I come to the city with 13 years of experience as a township clerk in Scott County. I also bring with me a sense of excitement and curiosity about getting to know what makes Oak Grove a unique and special place to live. Though I have only been with the city since April 23, I have already enjoyed meeting residents and am slowly learning my way around. As an animal lover, Lake George Regional Park has been a favorite place to walk my dog. My hobbies also include gardening, kayaking and cooking.

In the coming weeks and months I look forward to meeting and getting to know many more of you. So, please stop by City Hall to say, "Hi!"

# Oak Grove Fire Department accepts delivery of new tanker

**Curt Hallerman**  
OAK GROVE FIRE CHIEF

The Oak Grove Fire Department is pleased to announce the delivery of Tanker 11. It weighs in at 26,308 pounds empty, 34'3" in length and 10'8" tall. The new tanker has a 2018 Freightliner M112 chassis, five-person cab fabricated by Custom Fire Apparatus out of Osceola, Wisconsin. It has a 1,000 gallons per minute water pump and will carry a little over 2,500 gallons of water. It will be located at Station 1 adjacent to City Hall.

This new truck will replace a 1995 Ford tanker. The old tanker and only has a two-person cab. When the old tanker was purchased, the population of Oak Grove was around 6,000 residents. As many of you know, being rural, Oak Grove does not have a lot of fire hydrants. This means the fire department has to haul water to the fire scenes. When the old tanker was built, the only water supply at the time to fight fire was mainly the use of Lake George and three dry hydrants in the city. A dry hydrant looks very similar to a regular hydrant, but leads to a water supply. The three dry hydrants that were available at the time were on the



east side of Lake George, the creek on County Road 9 and Cedar Drive and on the Refuge Golf Course. The old tanker 11 would respond to a fire scene, dump the water it had into a drop tank and respond to get more water. Once at a water supply the old tanker would hook up a vacuum pump on the

truck to pull water into the water tank and respond back to the scene.

It would repeat this multiple times until the fire was out. All these dry hydrants have since failed and been put out of service with the last one being used in 2008. The challenge with all the dry hydrants was water pulled came from a natural supply. When you pull water from a natural water supply, as was done in the past, a lot of sand comes with it. This sand damages the water pumps and valves in the fire trucks. With the city now having regular water fire hydrants on the north side and the center of the city, with the ability tap into the St Francis and East Bethel hydrants, the old tanker became more obsolete for what it was designed to do back in 1995.

The new Tanker 11 is more diverse. It can still do everything the old truck did, plus a lot more with the new technology available today.

I would like to thank the committee that worked on acquiring this truck; it took 18 months of work to complete. The committee examined trucks in Cross Lake, Monticello, St. Paul Park, Elk River and Evansville. They looked at three suppliers before moving forward with Custom Fire Apparatus. Their hard work is greatly appreciated. I also invite the community to come see this piece of fire equipment over the summer. It will be out during St. Patrick Catholic Church's event and will be available for showing during the annual pancake breakfast. Otherwise, if you see us at the station, please feel free to stop in; we are more than happy to show our residents the trucks and equipment we use to serve our community.

In the City of Oak Grove, we continue to need men and women who are willing to join the fire department on both day and evening shifts. We are a paid on-call department and have no full-time staff. Training is provided and there are many benefits to becoming a paid on-call firefighter with the department. If you would like additional information, please contact City Hall during business hours. Another option for finding additional information on being a firefighter and to apply online is to go to [www.mnfirehire.com](http://www.mnfirehire.com). This is a county-wide website that will explain what it is like to be a firefighter in both Oak Grove and Anoka County. You may contact City Hall or stop in for an application.

Thank you and please be safe this summer.

## COMPARISON

Old Tanker 11	New Tanker 11
Carried 2 firefighters max	Can carry up to 5 firefighters
Carried 2 airpicks for firefighters in compartment	4 Airpicks preinstalled in the seats so fire staff can gear up while responding
Carries up to 3000 gallons of water	Carries up to 2500 gallons of water
Can pull water from lakes streams	Can also pull water from lakes and streams
Carries no fire hose or fire attack equipment	Has 3 fire attack lines with 1 blitz attack system and 400 ft of supply hose
Does not have a fire pump to fight fire	Equipped with a 1000 gallon per minute pump to fight fire.
No Air bags for driver and passenger protection	New Safety standards installed including high vis chevron in back to avoid accidents.
Water dump valves all manual, have to get out to Control creating risk as operator is between truck and the drop tank.	All water dump valves are electronic, control from in the cab, rear camera also installed.



## Springtime care for your septic system

Regular maintenance of your septic system prolongs the life and prevents unnecessary expenses. A failing septic system can cause a serious health threat for your family and neighbors, contaminate the environment and reduce the value of your property. Here are some basic septic system tips that homeowners can do each spring:

Watch the snow melt. If water is pooling over the tank or drainfield, channel it away.

As the ground thaws, inspect the drain field area for surfacing of sewage. Look for areas that stay wet, have standing water or areas where the grass is greening up earlier than other areas in your yard. These may be signs of plugged or frozen piping.

If you have an effluent filter in your tank, now is a good time to clean it.

Take a walk around your system. Are there water-seeking trees such as willows nearby? Their roots can extend out searching for available water and may damage your drainfield. Remove these trees if so.

When doing your spring cleaning, limit the amount of chemical products you use. Antibacterial and bleach cleansers can destroy the bacteria necessary for the septic tank.

Your septic system should be inspected by a licensed septic contractor every two to three years and pumped out ever one, two or three years depending on the size of your tank and the amount of use.

Keep records of pumping, inspections, and other maintenance you have performed on your system. Learn the location of your septic system and drainfield and keep a sketch of the area handy for service visits.

For installation records of your system, please contact your local municipality.

Source: *U of M Extension*

## Wellhead Protection #4

### "An ounce of prevention..."

Wellhead protection is all about prevention. Keeping contaminants out of wells is much more effective and cost-efficient than treating contaminated water, cleaning up ground water or drilling a new well. Most communities and homeowners have invested a great deal in their water system because having a reliable and safe water supply is necessary for the economic growth of a community and caring for their families. Costs to a community to deal with a water contamination problem can run into the thousands or millions of dollars for investigations (soil and water testing), legal fees, clean up and remediation, distributing information to the public about the problem, providing an alternative water supply, consulting fees or costs for a new wells. One town of 5,800 in Ohio has spent over \$300,000 to clean up dry cleaning chemicals in their water supply. Part of the cost was passed on to their customers.

Safe, clean drinking water is essential to our survival and well-being. Water-borne contaminants can have serious and even life-threatening health effects. Some contaminants can have immediate or acute health effects. For example, nitrate levels over 10 parts per million (ppm) can cause "blue baby syndrome" in infants after

short-term exposure. Illnesses from disease-causing bacteria, viruses or parasites can come on quickly after consuming contaminated water. Then there are contaminants that can have prolonged or chronic health effects after long-term exposure to low levels of the contaminant. For example, a carcinogen, such as benzene found in petroleum products, may result in a person developing leukemia after a lifetime of exposure.

Concerns about both short and long-term health effects from contaminated water resulted in legislation at both the federal and state level aimed at protecting public water supplies that serve a larger number of people. The federal Safe Drinking Water Act and the Minnesota Groundwater Protection Act both authorize wellhead protection for public water supplies. Responsibility for overseeing that wellhead protection occurs falls to the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). Individual public water suppliers are responsible for developing and implementing a wellhead protection plan that will protect their wells from contamination. Cities under 3,300 population are eligible for assistance from MDH to develop their wellhead protection plans.

Source: *Minnesota Rural Water*

## Does your dog run loose?

Spring is here and dogs running loose become a common nuisance complaint within the city. According to Oak Grove Code of Ordinances, dogs are not allowed to run at large. At large is defined as a dog that is off the premises of the owner and is:



- (1) not on a leash held by a responsible person, or
- (2) not accompanied by and under the direct control of a responsible person so as to be effectively restrained by command.

Please remember to be considerate neighbors and responsible pet owners and keep pets within your property borders.

## Building codes and permits

As the 2018 construction season begins, some homeowners may be anxious to start projects in and around the house. The information in this article can help answer questions and address situations often associated with residential construction projects.

It is important to know that the purpose of the building code is to provide minimum standards to protect the safety of people, property and public welfare. This is accomplished by regulating the design, construction, quality of materials, use and occupancy of all buildings and structures as well as where they are located and how they are maintained.

### When is a permit required?

Permits are required to construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, demolish or change the occupancy of a building or structure. Permits are also required to install, alter, repair, remove or replace any gas, mechanical, electrical, plumbing system or other equipment regulated by the code.

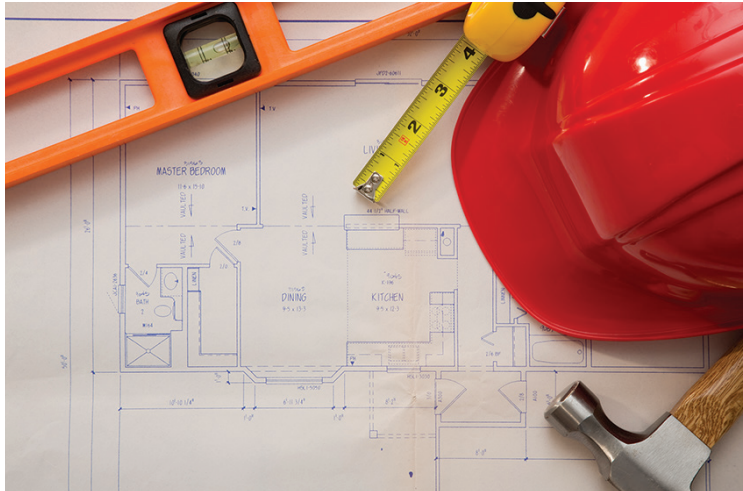
### What can be done without a permit?

The building code identifies several types of projects when permits are not required. To find out if your project meets the permit exemption rule. Contact Andy Schreder, at 763-291-3704 or email to [andy@rumrivercc.com](mailto:andy@rumrivercc.com).

### Why is getting a permit so important?

Obtaining the required permit will help to meet minimum building code standards and city ordinance requirements by first going through the plan review process and then inspections after the permit is issued.

Without a permit, inspections cannot be made to verify compliance with the Minnesota State Building Code. When this happens problems often occur. Some problems may include work performed by unlicensed contractors, contractors leaving before completing all work or work



completed that does not meet minimum city ordinance and building code requirements. As a result, homeowners often become unhappy and in some cases, can spend thousands of dollars on repairs and corrections.

### How long is a permit good for?

Permits are valid for 180 days from the day of issuance and become invalid if the work authorized by the permit is suspended or abandoned for 180 days. Extensions of time may be granted by the building official when written justifiable cause is demonstrated.

### Who should get the permit?

For most home remodeling projects, it is recommended that the person doing the work get the permit. If a homeowner gets the permit but hires a contractor to do the work, the homeowner is at risk if the contractor does not complete the work according to minimum code requirements. In this situation homeowners are often left on their

own to deal with the contractor in a civil case.

If, however, a licensed contractor got the permit and the homeowner had the same type of problems, the homeowner may be able to receive some assistance from the Minnesota

Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) to recover monetary losses and or initiate a formal complaint against the contractor which may result in disciplinary action by the state.

Fortunately, most contractors are reputable and do a good job, but unscrupulous contractors do exist. To help avoid problems, homeowners should still exercise prudence before hiring anyone.

Before hiring a contractor, the DLI suggests that homeowners ask:

- For the contractor's license number to verify with the DLI if the license is current and if there is any disciplinary history.
- How long has the contractor been in business?
- For references to ask former customers about work quality or complaints.
- For a Minnesota business address other than a post office box.
- For a local phone number to check if the contractor is accessible during normal business hours.

If you are not sure a permit is required, if the contractor needs a license, who should apply for the permit, or if you have any building code related questions, you can contact the designated Building Official, Andy Schreder, at 763-291-3704 during normal business hours Monday through Friday, or by email: [andy@rumrivercc.com](mailto:andy@rumrivercc.com).

## Website

[www.ci.oak-grove.mn.us](http://www.ci.oak-grove.mn.us)

## City Hall

### General Information

19900 Nightingale Street NW  
Oak Grove, MN 55011

Phone: 763-404-7000

Fax: 763-404-7001

Monday-Friday except holidays  
8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

## Anoka County Sheriff's Office

(Police non-emergency)  
763-427-1212

## Fire & Police Emergency 911

## CITY STAFF DIRECTORY

City Administrator	Loren Wickham	763-404-7075
City Clerk	Kathy Nielsen	763-404-7007
Building Official	Andy Schreder/Rum River Const.	763-367-7844
Account Specialist	Lisa Hart	763-404-7022
Public Works Director	Tim Smith	763-434-1441

## CITY COUNCIL

Mayor	Mark Korin	763-753-7389
Council Member	Scott Lawrence	763-753-8069
Council Member	Mike Wylie	612-845-5103
Council Member	Dan Denno	763-443-4729
Council Member	Paul Tradewell	612-910-7577

## MONTHLY MEETING SCHEDULE

City Council	Second and last Mondays	7:00 p.m.
Planning Commission	Third Thursday	7:00 p.m.
Parks Commission	Third Wednesday	6:30 p.m.

## Burning Permits

Burning permits for brush fires are required for any fire larger than 3' x 3'. Permits are available at City Hall during regular office hours and anytime at [www.ci.oak-grove.mn.us](http://www.ci.oak-grove.mn.us).

- Remember only open burning of clean brush originating onsite is permitted; all fires must be attended
- Open burning is only allowed between 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

**Reminder:** If you have a question as to whether or not permits are allowed, please check the MN DNR website map as it is updated daily at [www.dnr.state.mn.us/forestry/fire/questions.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/forestry/fire/questions.html).



## Low interest loans for well and septic fix-ups

Low interest loans are available to eligible property owners and businesses located in Anoka County to repair or replace private well and septic systems under a program offered by Anoka County Community Development and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Best Management Practices Program (AgBMP).

The program targets projects that prevent or reduce water pollution. In Anoka County, some eligible projects include:

- Repair or replace failed or failing septic systems
- Relocate a private well to meet setback requirements
- Repair broken casings in a private well

- Seal a well that is no longer in use or is contaminated
- Solve an existing or potential groundwater pollution problem
- Repair or replace non-compliant septic systems
- Repair a failed or failing drainfield

The program provides loans up to \$200,000 at below market interest rates. Property owners who are current on their mortgage payments and property taxes are encouraged to apply. Loans will be repaid via a special assessment on the property tax statement through Anoka County.

For more information or to obtain a loan application, call 763-324-4605 or visit [anokacounty.us/cd](http://anokacounty.us/cd).

