



# The Clear View

A newsletter for the Citizens of Clear Lake

Volume 16 - Number 2

March 2018

[www.cityofclearlake.com](http://www.cityofclearlake.com)

## New Fire Truck in Service

The Clear Lake Fire Department's newest truck, Engine 2, was placed into service at the beginning of February. Engine 2 was built by Toyne Apparatus of Breda, Iowa.

The new truck features a 6-man cab, a Hale 2,000 gallon per minute pump, and a 450 horsepower Cummins diesel engine. The truck carries 1,500 gallons of water and a total of 2,000 feet of hose. Engine 2 also has the ability to pump and roll and discharge from a bumper mounted nozzle. This design feature will allow the fire department to easily extinguish field and ditch fires that are common during dry seasons.



## Registering or renewing your permit for your short-term vacation rental property

Because the city recognizes the positive effects that visitors can have on our city, it established a process for property owners in certain city zones to use their properties as vacation rentals or "short-term rentals."

In March of 2017, the Clear Lake City Council began taking an in-depth look at "short-term vacation rentals" (i.e., Airbnb, vrbo, etc.) through its governance process. After gathering public comments and accepting testimony from citizens at the public hearing, the council approved an ordinance to allow



these types of rentals. The process of registering a short-term rental property requires property owners to obtain a valid permit, as well as pay applicable fees and follow certain requirements. These regulations give property owners a legal way

to rent out their properties and ensure a positive experience for visitors while mitigating possible negative effects for neighbors surrounding the vacation rental properties.

Anyone who wishes to operate a short-term rental in the City of Clear Lake must apply for a permit. Permits cost \$150 and expire on September 30th, annually.

Short-term rentals are subject to state sales tax and Clear Lake's local lodging tax.

For more information on short-term vacation rentals permit requirements in Clear Lake, please contact City Building Official Mike Ritter at 641-357-6135 or via email:

[mritter@cityofclearlake.com](mailto:mritter@cityofclearlake.com)

## Medication Drop Box Program

The Clear Lake Police Department thanks our residents for their on-going efforts in reducing the amount of unused pharmaceutical medicine in their homes. The City began its Police Lobby Medication Drop Box program in the summer of 2017. Since that time, over 100 pounds of unused medicines have been collected and destroyed.

The medication drop box program was made possible through a grant from the Governor's Office of Drug Control Policy to address the increasing problem of prescription drug abuse. "We are excited to partner with the state to offer a local drop off box to residents," said Police Chief Pete Roth. "It allows us to provide a needed service to the community."

The Medication Drop Box is accessible to the public during normal business hours. It is conveniently located in the main lobby of the Police Department, 511 1st Avenue N.

For additional information, please contact Captain Mike Colby at the Police Department at 641-357-2186.





**Mayor Nelson Crabb**

# City Budget 101

One of the most significant things a City does each year is prepare an annual budget. We do this for many reasons, not the least of which we are required to do so by State law. However, it is important for Clear Lake residents (or “shareholders”) to understand how the City spends their valuable property tax dollars and the budget fulfills that mission.

The City’s goals in creating a budget are important, not just for today, but for tomorrow and beyond. One of the goals is to ensure that we have adequate reserves and cash balances. Another is to continue to offer the quality of services that the residents of our City have come to expect, at the lowest possible cost. Also, a goal is to fund “quality of life” projects, which build a unique sense of place and experience. Likewise, finding ways to fund our departments and support our dedicated City staff. Last, but not least, maintain one of the lowest tax rates in the State of Iowa, as well as one of the lowest levels of indebtedness in the United States for a City our size.

The budget that the City will soon conduct a public hearing on is for our fiscal year 2019, which begins on July 1, 2018 and ends on June 30, 2019. The City’s budget process is always very transparent and open to the public. There are City Council budget workshops and several public presentations of the City budget during regular City Council meetings.

The 2019 Fiscal year budget marks the 3rd consecutive year that the City’s portion of the tax rate will decrease. The tax rate for FY 19 will be \$9.70/\$1,000 of taxable valuation. For FY 17, the tax rate was decreased from \$10.54 to \$10.04; for FY 18, the tax rate was decreased from \$10.04 to \$9.80. The City’s share of the overall tax rate, therefore, has decreased by nearly \$0.85/\$1,000 of taxable valuation over the last 3 years.

I always make sure to note, that the City of Clear Lake receives only about 1/3 of your property tax payment (unless in a TIF District). Otherwise, the Clear Lake Community School District, Cerro Gordo County, Clear Lake Sanitary District, NIACC, etc. receive the other 2/3’s.

Property taxes are a significant source of revenue for the City, making up about 43% of total revenues. Those dollars are used to fund police, fire, ambulance, library, parks and recreation, etc. However, the City receives additional revenues such as local option sales tax, utility revenues, and Road Use Tax Funds, to name a few.

The taxable valuation for the 2019 Fiscal Year (1/1/2017) continues the positive trend of growth in the Community. The taxable valuation for FY 19 is \$607,348,889, which is a \$21,052,154 increase (3.6%) from FY 18. This is despite a commercial, industrial, and multi-family residential rollback. The residential rollback for FY 19 is set at 55.62%, which is a decrease from FY 18’s rate of 1.32%.

The proposed FY 19 budget reflects total expenditures among the various programs of slightly over \$13.5 million (FY 18 was \$16.6 million); of which \$8.3 million is directed towards operations & maintenance; \$4.7 million towards capital; and \$500,000 to debt service. Projected ending cash balance for June 30, 2019, in the General Fund is \$3,088,147, which is roughly 46% of the General Fund operating budget. The City’s constitutional debt limit for FY 19 is \$49,376,815, the City currently has used only 3.7% or \$1,813,500 of its General Obligation borrowing capacity – one of the lowest levels of debt in the Country. Generally, municipal finance advisors suggest operating in the 60-70% range.

Overall I feel good about this coming year’s budget. We need to do whatever we can to take care of the great employees that serve this community all while protecting the interests of all of our residents and the future of our youth.

As always, I am honored to work with the other elected officials, City staff, board and commission members, businesses, non-profits and residents in

## Tales from the Vault

by Jennifer Larsen, City Clerk

One of my responsibilities as City Clerk is to record and preserve the official minutes from the meetings of the Clear Lake City Council. Here are some excerpts from the minutes of a Clear Lake City Council meeting from the “old days” which you may find interesting.

*“The City Council met in regular session on March 3, 1961 at 8 o’clock P.M. with the following members present: Council men Carroll Anderson and Joe Johnson and Arthur Johnson Arleigh Eddy. Absent Mayor Secory and Council man Nesbit. Mayor Pro-Tem Carroll Anderson presided. A. O. Paulson, Cemetery Sexton, presented the following suggestions for the Council’s consideration: 1. To raise the sale price of cemetery lots to be more in line with charges made by other cemeteries in this area; 2. To limit burials to vaults only, no rough boxes to be used; 3. Various trees need trimming and spraying for some sort of disease which he explained was not Dutch Elm disease but some sort of fungus that was slowly killing them; 4. Need of lawn mowers for the coming season. The Cemetery Committee was instructed to meet with Paulson and report back at a later date.”*

## City Welcomes Addition to Public Works Staff



The City’s Public Works Department is pleased to announce the addition of Jon Hauge to its staff. Hauge began his duties with the City on January 22nd. Prior to his employment with the City, Jon worked for Dean Snyder Construction of Clear Lake for 14 years.

“Jon brings a unique skill set to the public works staff and I am very excited to have him join our team,” stated Joe Weigel, Public Works Director.

In his free time, Jon enjoys riding his motorcycle, hunting, and traveling. Jon resides in Fertile with his wife, Trista and their two children, Jady and Hunter.

## Clear Lake Uses Salt Brine To Combat Winter Road Conditions

Among the various strategies and resources the City of Clear Lake employees use to deal with snow and icy roads in order to help residents get to and from their destinations safely during the winter months is a de-icing agent known as: "salt brine". The City has invested in new salt brine storage tanks and application equipment for its snow removal vehicles.

"The street maintenance folks did research and found that the new salt brine trucks may actually help prevent roads from getting slippery, although it doesn't work for pavement temperatures below 15 degrees. Despite the below freezing temperatures, snow on major streets in Clear Lake melts because of the salt brine solution," stated Public Works Director Joe Weigel.

Weigel added that, "this is a solution of sodium chloride we spray down before the ice bonds with the roads - this makes it easier for ice and snow to come off. This solution only uses 10-20 percent salt, whereas the rock salt that was formerly spread on streets contained almost 100 percent salt. The salt brine actually dries on the pavement and will continue to work and protect the streets from ice and snow until it is worn off. Since it is already in a liquid state, the solution is dissolved when it is displaced. The rock salt was not able to dissolve until motorists broke it up with their cars' wheels."

De-icing chemicals work by lowering the freezing point of water. But when pavement temperatures drop to around 15 degrees, the brine loses its effectiveness. Road crews can't apply enough solution to get the melting they need. In those instances, the Public Works crews go back to the old-fashioned way. They'll have rock salt and sand mixture that they are able to put down. That's distributed out of a spinner at the back of the truck. [So, if you're following a snow plow, please be aware of that.](#)

The City is very careful to balance the amount of salt put down in order to prevent damaging local ecosystems and the undercarriages of vehicles. Limiting salt runoff is really important to prevent things like fish kills. In past years, the City may have applied about 150 tons of salt over a rough winter. Since then, applications have steadily declined due to improved methods like brine, resulting in the City using less than 100 of previous amounts.



## Street Sweeping to Start Late Spring

Spring street sweeping operations begin when streets are significantly clear of ice and snow accumulations. This typically occurs late in March or possibly early April. Temperatures play an important part in the start up of spring sweeping operations. Because a sweeper requires water to minimize dust, the air temperature needs to remain above 36 degrees for efficient operation of the sweeper. Rain can also hamper street sweeping because too much water on the street reduces sweeping effectiveness.

The city utilizes its two street sweepers not only for cleaning streets but also for city owned parking lots. Sweeping operations cover all paved streets, approximately 80 miles, on a routine basis. Once the sweepers begin seasonal operations, they are each assigned to specific routes and will continue sweeping assigned routes until the entire city has been swept. The sweeping of streets continues on a routine basis throughout the warm weather months.

Street sweeping helps remove sediment, debris, sand and other materials from the street to prevent the materials from getting into the storm sewer system. This reduces the environmental impact since the storm sewer system leads directly to local creeks as well as some intakes leading directly to Clear Lake.

## Large Item Cleanup Program

The 2018 Spring Large Item Pickup will take place April 9th to April 12th. Residents are encouraged to use this opportunity to dispose of **LARGE** items that cannot be discarded through their weekly garbage service. The Large Item Pickup map will appear in the Clear Lake Mirror Reporter on April 4th, listing the dates the City will pick up in your area and the items that will and will not be picked up.

City residents can have old appliances and/or electronic items picked up during Large Item Cleanup for a cost of \$15 an item. Stickers can be purchased for \$15 each at Clear Lake City Hall, 15 North 6th Street. Stickers must be purchased by 5:00 p.m. on April 11th. Items that require a sticker are: furnaces, air conditioners, refrigerators, freezers, dehumidifiers, dishwashers, stoves, washers, dryers, microwaves, copy machines, water heaters, fluorescent light fixtures, televisions, computer monitors, and printers. Pickup of appliances in all areas will be on April 12th. Please have appliances with stickers attached by the curb by no later than 7:30 .m. on April 12th.

Please also be aware that the City **WILL NOT** pick up any items that may be recycled through the Landfill of North Iowa's electronic waste-recycling program. Landfill customers may drop off VCR's, DVD players, stereo equipment, computer towers, mice and keyboards, input devices, scanners, video surveillance cameras, fax machines, and cordless phones for recycling. Many of the above items may be recycled free of charge at the Landfill.

## City Sewer System and Sump Pumps

Many homes have sump pumps to capture and remove water that would otherwise result in a damp basement. The clear water pumped may be groundwater and is often the result of rain or snow melt. Sump pumps quietly pump water year after year doing an underappreciated job and demand little in terms of daily maintenance. However, some attention is necessary to avoid problems. Consider the following tips if your home has a sump pump.



### Tip 1 – Follow the Rules:

Clear water entering the sanitary sewer system is commonly referred to as I & I (inflow and infiltration). Sump pumps discharging into laundry tubs and floor drains are a form of I & I. Discharge from sump pumps is prohibited by local code from entering the sanitary sewer system. The typical sump pump installation is rigid PVC pipe, running from the pump to the outside of the house. The water is then discharged onto the grass.

### Tip 2 – Know the Difference:

Clear water (I&I) does not require treatment as wastewater does. Wastewater is the water from sinks, showers, tubs, toilets, and washing machines. This water flows into the sanitary sewer system and must be treated at a wastewater treatment plant before it can be safely discharged into the environment.

### Tip 3 – The Preseason Check:

If your sump pump does not run during winter, you should perform a test run before April showers bring May flowers (and a wet basement). Add water to the sump pit to make sure the pump is working properly. Perform a visual check that the pump is actually discharging water, as a faulty pump can run without pumping any water. Listen for strange noises coming from the pump motor.

### Tip 4 – Proper Sump Hose Etiquette:

Perform a visual inspection of the discharge hose. The sump pump should discharge water onto your lawn. If your pump is discharging water directly at the outer house wall, you are likely just pumping water in a continuous circle as it seeps back down under the basement. Be a good neighbor and avoid discharging water across public sidewalks, bike lanes/trails, or onto your neighbor's property.

Some homes with improperly connected sump pumps send large amounts of clear water to the sanitary sewer system through a basement drain or laundry tub, for example. An 8" diameter sanitary sewer line can service sewage flow from 465 homes; however, that same line can handle only 12 sump pumps operating at full capacity.

If you have questions related to sump pumps, please feel free to contact the Building Official, Mike Ritter at 641-357-6135.

## Watermain Flushing Schedule set for Spring

The Clear Lake Water Department will begin flushing watermain in May. Flushing will be done from Tuesday, May 1st to Thursday, May 3rd, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**Why does the City flush watermain?** Watermain flushing is performed to maintain the distribution system to desired standards. Flushing is used to remove iron and other deposits that may build up over time in some parts of the system and is performed to bleed the system of air pockets. Flushing moves water through parts of the system where it may have lost the desired

concentration of chlorine and fluorine due to relatively low water usage. It also allows Water Department crews an opportunity

to inspect hydrants for tampering and verify they are operating properly for fire protection.



**How often does the City flush watermain?** Water Department personnel generally perform flushing operations twice a year, usually in the spring and fall. Flushing may also be performed after repairs have been made to fix breaks or new lines that have been added to the water distribution system to ensure the system is properly disinfected.

**What should residents expect when the City is flushing watermain?** Residents may experience low water pressure and some discolored water when the Water Department crews are flushing in their neighborhood. Any change in the direction or rate of flow of the water due to watermain break, fire use, heavy sprinkling, and flushing can cause naturally occurring deposits in the pipe to be churned up and mix with the water, affecting its appearance. In most cases, the "rusty" water is temporary and will go away within about 5 minutes by letting the water run through an unfiltered cold water tap until the system clears. While discolored water may not look pleasant, it is not a health risk.

Residents may also notice the water is cloudy or has a chlorine smell. Tiny air bubbles may be trapped in the water by churning action causing it to look cloudy. The churning action may also cause chlorine to be released from the water, affecting smell and taste.

Notice of flushing is placed in the [Clear Lake Mirror Reporter](#). If you have no water pressure during flushing operations, please notify the Water Department at 641-357-5267.

### City offices will close on Good Friday

City offices will be closed Friday, March 30th, in observance of the Good Friday holiday and will re-open at 8:00 a.m. the following Monday, April 2nd. This will not affect garbage or recycling collection.

# Dive In To Springtime Fun with Clear Lake Earth Days

It's time to think Spring and in Clear Lake that means the Green Expo, community Trash Bash, 5K/10K Race, Outdoor Fest and more.

New activities this year include a Backyard Treasure Hunt and a one mile "Kwik Kwikkel" Walk/Run fundraiser for Clear Lake Middle School Principal Steve Kwikkel who is battling cancer.

Don't delay in registering for your favorite Trash Bash cleanup site or it may be taken. Also, businesses should register now for the Green Expo because space is limited. Registration for these events and the popular early season 5K/10K is online at [www.earthdayclearlake.org](http://www.earthdayclearlake.org).

We are fortunate to live in a community where "people make the difference" with a lake heralded as North Iowa's greatest natural asset.



Refresh Yourself  
Your Community  
Your Planet

## Refresh Yourself Your Community and the Planet @ the 21st Annual CLEAR LAKE EARTH DAYS

- **Green Expo** Thursday, April 19th from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. @ The Surf Ballroom
- **Outdoor Fest** Saturday April 21st @ City Park  
Community Clean-up – 8:00 a.m. to noon  
5K/10K Race – 9:00 a.m.  
"Kwik Kwikkel" Walk/Run – 9:15 a.m.  
Tug of War, Bounce House, Hungry Hippo, GoWild Parade, games, food and more – 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
- **Clear Lake Public Library events** – children's open house and movie
- **Clear Lake Arts Center** – Repurposing Contest, Creative Kids and Club Flamingo
- **Clear Lake Community Schools events**

Check out [www.earthdaynorthiowa.org](http://www.earthdaynorthiowa.org) or Clear Lake Earth Day on facebook for the latest activities for the whole family to enjoy to celebrate Earth Week in Clear Lake.

## World War I and World War II programs offered at the Library

### WW I Battlefield Medicine

During the Great War from 1914 to 1918, new techniques, medicines and tools were developed that helped increase the survival rates for wounded soldiers amid the horrors of trench warfare and weapons, including machine guns and poison gas. Additionally, a system of prioritization, or triage, was instituted to allow for smoother transitions from battlefield to recovery in a hospital.

On April 24th at 6:30 p.m., at the Clear Lake Public Library, Michael Eckers will share some of the changes and advances in Battlefield Medicine that took place during World War I, resulting in the highest survival rate of soldiers up to that period of history.

Eckers has studied the history of America and our military for more than 40 years. His latest novel was released in June of 2017, entitled Five for Freedom; a story of a young war correspondent searching for his four high school basketball teammates, scattered around the world during WWII. Eckers' books will be available for purchase and signing. This program is free and open to the public.

### Earth Day Celebration at the Clear Lake Public Library

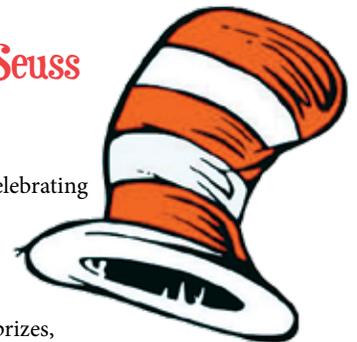
On Monday, April 23rd, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., there will be an Earth Week Family Night at the Clear Lake Public Library centered on "Making Every Day Earth Day". Children will be able to work on a craft and engage in various activities in the children's department. It will be an open house format. The event is mostly appropriate for toddlers up to early elementary and their accompanying adults.

### Clear Lake and Alaskan Highway during WWII

H. Milton Duesenberg will present a local history discussion on "Clear Lake and the Alaskan Highway during WWII" at the Clear Lake Public Library on March 6th at 6:30 p.m. From 1942 to 1943, men from Clear Lake and other areas of Iowa journeyed to Alaska to help build the Alaskan Highway. Duesenberg brings an interesting and intimate knowledge on the subject: his father was one of the men who helped build the Alaskan Highway. View amazing photos and listen to this fascinating piece of WWII history. This program is free and open to the public.

### Come Celebrate Dr. Seuss at the Library

The Clear Lake Public Library is celebrating Dr. Seuss' birthday with an open house on Thursday, March 1st, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. A Dr. Seuss storytime will be held at 6:00 p.m. There will also be door prizes, activities, and games. The Cat in the Hat will make an appearance at the library during the hour, in honor of the event. Bring along your camera to take your child's picture with the Cat in the Hat. If you have any Cat in the Hat attire, please wear it in celebration. Cat in the Hat hats will be on sale for \$3.00. This event is generously sponsored by the Friends of the Library.



# City of Clear Lake Directory

## CITY DIRECTORY

**EMERGENCY .....911**

Non-Emergency Police.....	357-2186
Building Inspection .....	357-6135
Cemetery .....	357-6135
City Administrator .....	357-5267
City Attorney .....	357-2139
City Clerk.....	357-5267
City Hall .....	357-5267
Fire Department.....	357-2613
Absolute Waste Removal .....	357-4517
Mayor.....	357-5267
Parks & Recreation.....	357-7010
Planning & Zoning .....	357-6135
Public Library.....	357-6133
Public Works.....	357-6135
Landfill of North Iowa.....	357-5452
Clear Lake Sanitary District.....	357-2019
Water Department .....	357-3911

City Council Meeting agendas are posted online and at City Hall. Rebroadcasts of City Council Meetings are available anytime online on the City's website and on CLVision Community Channel 1 on the 1st and 3rd weeks of the month as follows: Tuesday - 7 p.m.; Wednesday - 6 p.m.; and Saturday - 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

## Clear Lake City Council

 Mayor Nelson P. Crabb 357-3839	 At-Large Dana Brant 641-420-1180	 At-Large Mike Callanan 357-5911	 First Ward Mark Ebeling 641-201-0430
 Second Ward Bennett Smith 651-271-5267	 Third Ward Jim Boehnke 357-7144	 City Administrator Scott Flory 357-5267	 City Clerk/Editor Jennifer Larsen 357-5267

**City Council meetings  
are the first and third Mondays  
at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall.**

Additional meetings are scheduled as necessary.

Meetings, except for the Parks & Recreation Board and Library Board, are normally held at City Hall, 15 North 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Council Chamber. For an agenda or to verify exact date and time, please call City Clerk's office at (641) 357-5267.

## Library Board

(Meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month)

Tom Arndorfer	Jana Severtson
Scott Johnson	Sean Moran
Diane Glynn	Pat Weigel
Tamara Schwichtenberg	

## Parks & Recreation Board

(Meets 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month)

Tim Raber	Laurie Calgaard
Linda Hopper	Amy Hogg

## Planning & Zoning Commission

(Meets last Tuesday of each month)

Lori Broghammer	Davin McLeod
Al Penfold	Arnold Prohaska
Chyrl Bergvig	Al Duea

## Board of Adjustment

(Meets as needed)

David Klang	Kirby Schmidt
Fred Muth	Bob Swanson

**Visit The City Of Clear Lake Website at [www.cityofclearlake.com](http://www.cityofclearlake.com).**



## The Clear View

March 2018

Clear Lake, Where People Make The Difference



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