

The Newsletter of the  
City of Veneta

88184 8th Street  
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# City News

## Restoring Balance to Wastewater Ecosystem

For the past 16 years, the City of Veneta's Biolac wastewater treatment process has served Veneta's residents precisely as it was designed to do. This summer, though - as a result of repeated introduction of toxic substances - the plant has been dysfunctional, creating an unpleasant odor, driving up costs of operation, and diverting the city's Public Works crew from other projects as they struggle to bring a "sick" ecosystem back into balance.

Wastewater treatment is a biological process that uses naturally occurring microbes to break down the organic materials that come into the system, explained Public Works Director Kyle Schauer. "Tiny organisms, which we refer to as bugs, break down the organic waste. Our task is to create an ecosystem within the wastewater plant to keep the microbes in balance. When they work in harmony, they very effectively break down the organic material that is flushed down drains and toilets, allowing us to reclaim the

water." The effluent water then passes through an ultraviolet light disinfection unit before it is applied to a parcel of city land during summer months.

"When the bugs get sick, though, it throws the ecosystem out of balance and they can't do their job," Schauer said. "Anytime something comes into the plant that isn't natural or organic, it throws the ecosystem out of order.

The repeated contaminations are driving up costs to all residents. The City is now operating under a temporary DEQ permit that requires extra monitoring and treatment. "As an added precaution against bacteria, we are chlorinating the effluent before it is pumped out on a designated City parcel," Schauer explained. "Also, we would typically test the system once a week. Now, because of the special DEQ permit, we test the system daily and drive the samples into Eugene. That incurs overtime pay and lab fees." The system can recover quickly if the contaminations

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## 7th Annual Harvest Festival

Celebrate the coming of fall at the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Harvest Festival held Sept. 10 on Broadway St. in Veneta. The Festival kicks off with a pancake breakfast at 7:00 a.m. at the Fern Ridge Service Center, with other events beginning at 10:00 a.m.

The day will feature a quilt show, live music, a kids zone, vendors, and Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce chili cook off.

Neighborhood Watch Groups will team up with the Lane County Sheriff's Office to host a public-safety education booth. Visitors can learn about personal and property safety, the great work being done in various neighborhoods by these volunteers, and discover how to get involved. "The organization is looking for new members and watch captains who may want to start up their own group," said Veneta City Administrator Ric Ingham.

Residents are also encouraged to visit with the City's booth to learn more about disaster preparedness and what they can do to be ready for the unexpected (see related article "National Disaster Preparedness Month").

### CITY OF VENETA - CIVIC CALENDAR - SEPTEMBER 2016

Veneta Administrative Center - 88184 8th Street, Veneta, Oregon

2	Veneta Community Pool Closes - 25190 E. Broadway	7:00 p.m.
5	Labor Day - City Hall Closed	
6	Veneta Planning Commission Meeting - City Hall	6:30 p.m.
7	Veneta Park Board Meeting - City Hall	4:30 p.m.
12	Veneta City Council Work Session - Hazard Mitigation Plan - City Hall	5:30 p.m.
	Veneta City Council Meeting - City Hall Veneta Urban Renewal Agency Meeting - Immediately following City Council Meeting	6:30 p.m.
14	Veneta Economic Development Committee Meeting - City Hall	2:00 p.m.
15	Municipal Court - City Hall	8:30 a.m.
24	Meet the Sergeant (Lane County Sheriff's Office contract Sergeant for the City of Veneta) - Fern Ridge Library	1:00 p.m.
26	Joint Work Session of the Veneta City Council & Veneta Planning Commission - Wastewater Master Plan - City Hall	5:30 p.m.
	Veneta City Council Meeting - City Hall	6:30 p.m.



Calendar updates will be posted on the City's website at [www.venetaoregon.gov](http://www.venetaoregon.gov)

This Civic Calendar was sent to: Fern Ridge Review, Fern Ridge School District 28J, Fern Ridge Public Library, and Lane Fire Authority

## September is National Disaster Preparedness Month

Are you prepared for a disaster? Where would your family meet? Could you survive for weeks without help? Research on personal preparedness indicates that individuals who believe they are prepared are often not as ready as they think, while others admit to having no plan at all.

To increase awareness and encourage communities and individuals to plan ahead, FEMA has declared September as National Disaster Preparedness Month. In 2015, the City of Veneta identified emergency planning as a top priority. For the past 18 months, the City has partnered with Lane Fire Authority (LFA) and Lane County Emergency Management to develop a Hazard Mitigation Plan (identifying the most probable disasters and measures to reduce their impact) and is drafting an Emergency Operations Plan. City leaders and personnel have participated in emergency planning and training, and in October, the City and LFA will conduct a "Tabletop Exercise" to consider responses to a hypothetical emergency.

The City encourages residents to learn what the City has done to be prepared, and to begin to take measures at home.

While some incidents occur with enough warning that the public can be notified, others, such as an earthquake, can happen suddenly and without warning. And, though emergency personnel will react as quickly as possible, response could be impaired if infrastructure is damaged.

Households should be able to sustain themselves with no outside help for at least three days, and up to

three weeks in the case of a major event like the Cascadia Earthquake. Those who care for children or the elderly have additional responsibilities. However, outcomes are much likely to be better if individuals are proactive.

### Emergency preparedness steps to take:

1. Sign up for emergency notifications. The City has recently adopted a notification system that allows individualized notifications to be sent to cell phones. To sign up, visit <http://public.alertsense.com/SignUp/?regionid=1087>
2. Pick up a free American Red Cross "Prepare! A Resource Guide" from City Hall with checklists to help you prepare your home supplies. Ideally, your vehicle should also be stocked with items such as water and blankets. A "go-bag" containing medications and important documents in case you need to make a quick exit is also important.
1. Know your neighbors. Is there someone in your neighborhood that lives alone and may need you to check on his or her welfare?
2. Consider your pets by including food in the emergency supplies.
3. Have a family reconnection plan. Choose a meeting place and an alternate location.

Emergency planning can be done gradually and with less cost if done ahead. To learn more, call Julie Reid at Veneta City Hall, 541 935-2191 or visit the City's booth at the Harvest Festival.

## Brush up on Back to School Safety

As students prepare to head back to class, now is a good time for children, parents, and motorists to brush up on school transportation safety.

For drivers, that means slowing down in school zones and keeping an eye out for children alongside the roads. And, according to Lane County Sheriff's Office Sgt. Billy C. Halvorson, drivers should also be familiar with crosswalk laws.

The Oregon State Legislature has revised these laws over the past six years and Halvorson is concerned that many drivers are unclear on the rules. "Whether marked or unmarked, every intersection is a crosswalk," he said. "Even if there's no paint, drivers must follow crosswalk rules." Those rules state that if a pedestrian is at a crosswalk and they make a forward gesture toward the street — whether by extending a foot, a hand, a cane, or a stroller wheel, for instance — motorists must come to a complete stop, and remain stopped until that pedestrian

fully clears pedestrian "buffer zones." This means the pedestrian not only crosses the lane in which the motorist is waiting, but is also beyond the center turn lane, bike lane, or similar road feature. "If the driver starts moving before the pedestrian is clear, it's a Class B violation with a base fine of \$260," Halvorson explained.

He also reminded drivers to slow down in school zones. "When those lights are flashing, drivers must slow to 20 mph," said Halvorson. Fines for speeding in a school zone increase incrementally with each 10 mph over the limit. And any violation in a school zone automatically doubles. So violating the crosswalk rule in a school zone, for instance, could yield a citation of more than \$520.

For parents, now is a good time to review safety precautions whether students walk, ride a bike, or take the bus to school.

## Restoring Balance to Wastewater Ecosystem

stop. "We can resume normal, healthy operations in a couple of week's," said Schauer.

Because of the repeated incidents the individual caught for illegally dumping or flushing toxins into the City sewer system can be charged with a Class C felony.

They would still be subjected to a penalty of \$400 to \$4,000 per incident. The City has increased its reward for information leading to the individuals responsible to \$1,000. To report a lead, contact Schauer at Veneta City Hall 541-935-2191, or, after hours, 541-914-7982.

# September is National Disaster Preparedness Month... Are you Prepared?

## WHAT ARE WE PREPARING FOR?

Earthquakes are high on the list of natural disasters that can disrupt our drinking water supply.



We now know that it is not a matter of IF, but WHEN “the big one” hits. Drought, forest fire and chemical spills are other possibilities. The magnitude 9.0 earthquake that devastated parts of Japan issued a call to action. Are you prepared?

Emergency Preparedness is a shared responsibility and the City of Veneta and EWEB want to help. Act now to pick up your free Prepare! A Resource Guide at City Hall or download a copy from our website at [www.venetaoregon.gov](http://www.venetaoregon.gov)



## WIN A FREE 3 GAL. WATER CONTAINER

Submit your “Be Red Cross Ready Checklist” from the last page of your free Prepare! A Resource Guide.

A drawing will be held October 10th to choose 25 winners of a 3 gal. BPB-free emergency water Container! To enter, submit your “Be Red Cross Ready Checklist” to City Hall by September 30th.

## How Much Water Do You Need?



**1** Gallon  
Per Person, Per Day



## WHAT COULD HAPPEN TO OUR WATER SYSTEM?

Lack of a water source for extended periods of damage, such as with an earthquake, could result in a risk to public health and safety.

- Pipelines could rupture during sudden ground movement.
- Pipelines are subject to failure where they connect to structures: intake structures, filtration plants and reservoirs, as well as to homes and businesses.
- In summer months there is only a 2 or 3 day water supply if something disrupts the City’s system.



Contact: Julie Reid for more information  
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