

City News

The Newsletter of the
City of Veneta

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<http://www.ci.veneta.or.us/>

Final City water rate analysis underway

The new drinking water pipeline between Eugene and Veneta is all but finished, with only some habitat work to be completed next spring.

The City of Veneta is finalizing its analysis of the cost of providing drinking water to residents.

City staff expects to present the analysis to the City Council in November. The Council will vote on a final rate increase in December.

"We are still hoping that it's going to be less than 20 percent," says City Finance Director Shauna Hartz of the prospective rate increase. "That's what we're working towards."

Earlier this year the City

Council enacted a 25 percent water rate increase, coupled with a 5 percent wastewater rate decrease, which went into effect July 1.

The second rate increase will kick in at the beginning of January 2014.

The total rate increase will be much less than planners expected when the pipeline project kicked off three years ago. A federal financing agency had projected a 128 percent rate hike would be necessary to pay for the project.

"We're expecting that the entire project will cost \$10,442,000," says Hartz, adding that the USDA Rural Development had originally estimated that the

pipeline project would cost over \$18 million.

At the direction of the City Council, the City's staff has worked diligently to keep the cost of the project in check.

The project's timing has been fortuitous, coming at a time when construction materials were well priced and contractors were eager to bid competitively for municipal construction contracts.

More information on the water pipeline, including slide presentations explaining changes to municipal water and wastewater rates, can be found on the City website at: <http://www.ci.veneta.or.us/waterpipeline.cfm>

Burn Ban lifted

On October 1, the Lane Regional Air Protection Agency (LRAPA) opened up the county's open/backyard burn season. But before you rush outside with your matches, City Officials and Lane Fire Authority want to remind residents to be aware of county fire and air quality regulations when planning a backyard burn.

The allowable purpose of outdoor burning, according to officials, is to dispose of woody yard debris generated on a residential property.

Burning construction, demolition or land clearing debris requires a special LRAPA permit, as does the burning of waste generated by manufacturing, industrial process or any other commercial activity. Agricultural and forest slash burning are regulated by the Oregon Department of Agriculture and the Oregon Department of Forestry, respectively.

LRAPA recommends residents call their local fire departments for information regarding

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Veneta Civic Calendar

November/December 2013

Date	Time	Meeting/Event
11/4	4:00 p.m.	Historical Committee Meeting - City Hall
11/5	7:00 p.m.	Veneta Planning Commission Meeting - City Hall
11/6	4:30 p.m.	Veneta Park Board Meeting - City Hall
11/11		City Hall closed for Veterans Day
11/18	7:00 p.m.	Veneta City Council Meeting - City Hall Urban Renewal Agency Meeting Immediately Following
11/21	8:30 a.m.	Municipal Court - City Hall
11/28-11/29		City Hall closed for Thanksgiving Holiday
12/3	7:00 p.m.	Veneta Planning Commission Meeting - City Hall
12/4	4:30 p.m.	Veneta Park Board Meeting - City Hall
12/9	7:00 p.m.	Veneta City Council Meeting - City Hall Urban Renewal Agency Meeting Immediately Following
12/12	7:00 p.m.	Light Parade

City Budget Committee recruiting new members

The City of Veneta is accepting applications for two Budget Committee positions for three-year terms between January 1, 2014 and December 31, 2016.

The Budget Committee, an advisory group established by state statute, is composed of City Council members and an equal number of citizens. After discussion with the City Council, Veneta's Mayor appoints citizens to the positions.

Generally speaking, the time commitment required is two to six hours per year during the months of April - June. Appointees must be registered voters and live within the City of Veneta.

The committee holds public meetings to hear the budget message, reviews the proposed budget and participates in budget deliberations which include comments and questions from interested citizens. It can revise the proposed budget to reflect changes it wants to make in the City's fiscal policy. When it is satisfied, the Committee approves the budget and then it goes before the City Council for adoption.

Applications are available at City Hall during business hours and on the City website: www.ci.veneta.or.us. The application deadline is November 14. For more information contact Shauna Hartz at 541-935-2191

BURN BAN: ignoring regulations may lead to fines

restrictions on burning in their areas before burning.

Lane Fire Authority, a partnership between Lane County Fire District No. 1 and Lane Rural Fire and Rescue, can be reached at 541-935-2226 and found online at: <https://lcf1orfd.samariteam.com/>.

All 14 local fire stations issue burn permits listing what residents can burn in their backyards.

Generally, open/backyard burning season runs between October 1 and June 15. The actual dates burning is allowed depend on weather conditions; dry fall and spring weather can shorten the season.

Burning is restricted on days when pollution rises into the moderate category or weather conditions may cause a buildup of fine particulate from smoke. Fern Ridge residents should always call LRAPA's open burning hotline, 541-726-3976, before burning to verify that burning is allowed on any given day.

LRAPA's burn advisories also have information about what time burning may begin and when fires must be out.

The advisories are updated daily on the agency website, www.LRAPA.org.

According to City Recorder Chris Workman, City Hall occasionally receives complaints of residents burning trash in their yards. That kind of burning not only creates a smoky, smell nuisance within the whole neighborhood, it is also illegal. Burning trash and garbage is illegal and can result in stiff fines, according to LRAPA.

"The days when you could burn a week's worth of household garage in your backyard are gone," says Chief Terry Ney of the Lane Fire Authority, adding that backyard burn piles should be composed of small tree limbs, leaves and other dry, combustible yard debris.

The City of Veneta forwards all burn-related complaints directly to LRAPA.

Burning on prohibited days or after designated hours are also citable offenses. The first violation of LRAPA's open burning rules may result in a \$500 fine and fines increase for repeat violators.

Burning affects local air quality and neighborhood health

In addition to knowing and following backyard burning regulations, Veneta residents should remember that burning affects local air quality and health and should show consideration to their neighbors when burning yard debris and or home heating fires.

Though the inversions that can lower air quality in the southern Willamette Valley are uncommon in Fern Ridge, local residents should call the Lane Regional Air Protection Agency (LRAPA) open burning hotline, 541-726-3976, to make sure its safe to burn. Burning garbage, plastics, tires, petroleum-treated materials, rubber products and other toxic material is illegal and unhealthy for the whole neighborhood.

"We do have days when the fog is hanging low and it can get pretty smoky when people are burning," says Workman, "This especially affects young children, seniors and individuals with asthma or other respiratory conditions. Sometimes it's less about whether burning is legal or not and more about consideration for others when conditions are not ideal."

To ensure a clean, safe burn without a lot of unhealthy

smoke, Chief Terry Ney of the Lane Fire Authority urges residents to plan a burn well ahead of time, piling and tarping yard debris during the dry season so it will burn better and cleaner in the fall. "That's a good way to make sure that pile will burn," says Chief Ney, adding that the tarp must be removed from the pile before burning.

Using dry wood is equally important for residents who heat their homes with stoves and fireplaces. Well-seasoned firewood not only burns with much less smoke than green wood, it burns more efficiently too, reducing the risk of soot-caused chimney fires and the amount of firewood needed for heating over the course of a season.

Whenever possible, LRAPA advises residents to choose other ways to dispose of yard debris, including chipping, composting and hauling. Grass clippings and leaf piles, for instance, while legal to burn, create lots of smoke and can be a valuable soil additive when properly composted. SaniPac provides curbside yard debris pick-up throughout the City and Veneta Public Works will continue to pick up bagged leaves every Tuesday and Thursday through the end of January.