

City News

The Newsletter of the
City of Veneta

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Council to enact utility rate changes

As expected, municipal water rates will increase this summer to offset the cost of the nearly complete water pipeline between Veneta and Eugene. A proposed wastewater fee reduction will help diminish the overall impact to city residents.

During its June 10 meeting, the Veneta City Council will consider an overall budget for fiscal year 2013-14. The City Council will also update water rates to reflect the increased cost of providing drinking water and consider reducing the residential wastewater rate in order to minimize the overall increase to residents' utility bills. The proposal includes 5 percent reductions to the wastewater rate in August 2013 and February 2014.

The proposed 25 percent water rate increase

will go into effect July 1. A second rate increase will follow, once pipeline construction ends in the fall and the total cost of the project can be determined with a final rate analysis study. When the drinking water increase and wastewater savings are combined, the average Veneta resident will see a slight increase of \$3.70 on July's monthly utility bill.

"At this point, we think the second increase could be in the range of 10 to 20 percent," says City Administrator Ric Ingham. The second rate increase will kick in at the beginning of January 2014.

While working to limit the necessary water rate increase, the City has also been documenting long-term savings on capital projects and maintenance expenses to operate the

wastewater plant.

Since the City Council implemented the Wastewater Capital Improvement Plan in 2009, the City has spent roughly 35 percent less on capital projects than was projected, saving about \$690,444.

"We've also seen considerable savings over the same time period in operations and maintenance of the wastewater plant," says Ingham. "Those savings afford the council to enact a wastewater rate reduction, easing increases in the water rate the Council may enact on July 1."

Two PowerPoint presentations created to explain the changes to the water and wastewater rates have been posted to the pipeline project section of the City website at: <http://www.ci.veneta.or.us/waterpipeline.cfm>

Farmers' Market Fun

For several years, Veneta's farmers' market has been a great way to purchase local produce while visiting with friends and neighbors. This year, the market will be even more fun — with new vendors and entertainment, including vendors from the Oregon Country Fair.

For the 2013 season, the Veneta Downtown Farmers Market (VDFM) is recruiting Oregon Country Fair crafters and entertainers to participate in the market's Fourth Friday Festivities. The first event will take place on June 28 and continue on the fourth Fridays of July, August and September.

"Every Friday will have some element of entertainment and more new vendors," says Market Manager Marie Pickett. "We invite Fern Ridge residents to join us for a fun and exciting season and experience the flavor and artistry of the Fair at our Fourth Friday Festivities this summer."

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June 2013		Civic Calendar	June 2013
Date	Time	Meeting/Event	
4	7:00 p.m.	Veneta Planning Commission Meeting - City Hall	
5	4:30 p.m.	Veneta Park Board Meeting - City Hall	
10	7:00 p.m.	Veneta City Council Meeting - City Hall	
		Includes a Public Hearing on the Approved Fiscal Year 2013-14 Budget	
10	8:30 p.m.	Veneta Urban Renewal Agency Meeting - City Hall	
		Includes a Public Hearing on the Approved Fiscal Year 2013-14 Budget	
20	8:30 a.m.	Municipal Court - City Hall	
24	7:00 p.m.	Veneta City Council Meeting - City Hall	

The Summer 2013 Recreation Guide will be available beginning June 3 at the following locations: City Hall, the Fern Ridge Library, Ray's Food Place and Veneta Community Pool. Download a copy at <http://www.ci.veneta.or.us/pool.cfm>

MARKET: Fourth Friday Festivities come to Veneta

Fourth Friday Festivities are intended to broaden the market's vendor and customer bases and to celebrate and deepen the ties between the community and the Fair. Pickett says that she expects to have 6 to 12 vendors associated with the Fair at each Fourth Friday event.

"Last season, on our biggest day we had 19 vendors," says Pickett, adding that 12 vendors attended the market on average.

"This year we are assuming that we will average no less than 12, and 20 to 30 vendors on Fourth Fridays — about half from the OCF."

The Fourth Friday events at market are a collaboration between the City, the Oregon Country Fair, VDFM and the Fern Ridge Chamber of commerce. The Fourth Friday events will run from 2 to 7 p.m. and are intended to be a community celebration.

"They will feature a lot more vendors, including, wine, food and artisans — plus the regular farmers' market vendors," says Veneta Community Development Director Kay



Bork. "The Oregon Country Fair is sponsoring live music from 5 to 7 p.m.

The VDFM was created in 2007 to connect local farms to local consumers and help build community in the Fern

Ridge area. Over the last six years, the market has recruited six cornerstone farmers who present fresh fruit and produce seasonally from June through September.

In addition to produce vendors, the market also

attracts a variety of local artisans and musicians. The majority of vendors come from within a 25-mile radius of Veneta.

The market is located on the grassy knoll in the Fern Ridge Shopping Center, at Territorial Hwy. and Luther Lane. It is a pleasant and accessible location with room for growth.

For more information regarding the Veneta Downtown Farmers Market, contact Pickett 541-636-7624 and visit the market online at: www.ci.veneta.or.us/farmersmarket.

City code covers noxious vegetation on vacant property

The recent mix of warm days and rainfall has been great for plant growth. It also means homeowners and tenants must stay ahead of quickly growing grass, weeds and noxious vegetation as Spring matures to Summer.

According to the City of Veneta's Municipal Code (Ch. 8.05, Sec. 8.05.060), property owners or those in charge of a property cannot allow noxious weeds or vegetation to grow on their property or the right-of-way of a public thoroughfare abutting the property.

The code defines noxious vegetation as weeds and grass more than 10 inches high, poison oak, and poison ivy, blackberry bushes extending into a public thoroughfare or across property lines. It also includes vegetation that presents a health, fire or traffic hazard.

That means property owners or residents must mow grass and trim or cut down shrubs, bushes, weeds or other noxious vegetation as often as necessary to prevent such vegetation from becoming unsightly or a fire hazard, or, in the case of noxious weeds, from going to seed.

Persons failing to abate a nuisance may be subject to citation and fines through Veneta Municipal Court. Each day's violation constitutes a separate offense.

"Let's use nice weather to our benefit and keep our lawns mowed," says Veneta City Recorder Chris Workman. "If you notice that your neighbor's yard needs help, why not offer to mow? They may be elderly or have special needs. In addition to doing a good turn, you'll also

keep their weeds from spreading onto your yard."

Due to a higher than usual number of unoccupied homes in the area, the City wants to inform residents that there is a complaint process in place to deal with neglected yards. The process of filing a complaint if a neighbor's grass is too high or is full of noxious weeds is the same whether a property is vacant or inhabited.

Code compliant forms are available at City Hall or can be downloaded from the City's website at: <http://www.ci.veneta.or.us/enforcement.cfm>.

After completing the form, residents can return it to City Hall or mail it in. A code enforcement officer will contact the homeowner or tenant and work with them to resolve the complaint. The code enforcement officer will follow up with the bank or financial institution in charge of a vacant property or foreclosed home in order to make arrangements for the problem to be addressed.

If the City is unable to resolve the complaint with the owner after providing due notice of the complaint, the code enforcement officer can hire a landscaping company to address the complaint and then bill the landowner and/or place a lien against the property.

"People shouldn't get frustrated if a foreclosed property needs yard maintenance," says Workman. "They just need to inform the City so our code enforcement officer can begin the formal process of contacting the bank or owner of record."