



Fremont City Beat

Issue No. 14 - Spring 2004

FREMONT, MICHIGAN:

“NOW AND ALWAYS – A Fine City • A Great Community”

CONGRATULATIONS CITY CLERK

The Michigan Rural Water Association (MRWA) recently named Fremont’s own City Clerk/Finance Director **Todd Blake** as its **“City Clerk of the Year.”**

Todd received the award at the Association’s annual management & technical conference in Grand Rapids in early April. His wife Teri, as well as Public Works Superintendent Brian Hettinger and City Manager Chris Yonker were on hand to surprise Todd with the presentation.



There are over 625 municipal water systems in the State of Michigan. Fremont’s consistent record of non-violation testing and high water quality has proven outstanding and worthy of recognition. Just last year, the MRWA recognized Fremont as its “Water System of the Year” and our Streets/Water Supervisor, Doug Hartger as its “Water Operator of the Year.” Fremont’s system last year sold over 630 million gallons of water, making it one of the larger producers of water in the area.

The financial management of a public water system is a difficult and complex undertaking. It must be run as a business enterprise, similar to a private utility. It must have staff capable of preparing accurate and detailed accountings of income from water sales, expenses to operate & maintain the system, capital expenses to replace and upgrade the lines and equipment, issuance and payment of bonded indebtedness, and proper calculation of depreciation of the system’s assets. Once all of this is done, a comprehensive analysis of the rates and fees must be done on a regular basis to keep the enterprise on solid financial footing.

The City Council recently offered its congratulations to Mr. Blake along with the rest of the “office team” involved in the administration of the water sys-

tem. They include City Treasurer Gay Krouse and Account Clerks Marge Ekkel and Joyce Winchel. Mr. Hettinger noted during the Council presentation that “Todd has the skills and desire to accomplish the many necessary tasks to keep our water system operating ‘in the black.’” However, the system is only one of many City services, and the MRWA’s recognition of Todd also considered the many other activities and projects in which Todd is involved. Of particular note, is Todd’s involvement with the numerous park and recreation projects that have led to many new facilities in our community, including the Multi-Purpose Court/Rink in Branstrom Park, the Skate/Bike Park and the coming Town & Country Path network.”

The City Manager echoed the Superintendent’s comments and added, “It is truly gratifying to see our staff receive these awards. They recognize the extraordinary efforts necessary for the City through its elected officials and professional staff to offer the highest quality services to our citizens. We already knew Todd was ‘good’; now the rest of the State knows, too!”

CONSTRUCTION SEASON ARRIVES



Did you know that Michigan really only has two seasons instead of four each year? They are commonly known as winter and construction! All kidding aside, it’s that time of year when the orange barrels, barricades and traffic detours appear and disrupt our dependence on the almighty automobile. While we attempt to minimize these impacts, there just is no way to resurface a street or replace a water main without some inconvenience to the adjoining neighbors and the public. So, please be patient and *“give our construction workers a brake”* by slowing down through any construction zone. The following projects are scheduled this year: *(continued on page 2)*

(Construction Season ... continued from front page)

- Installation of a flexible PVC liner in the sanitary sewer mains under Southwoods Ave., between Main St. & Chippewa Dr., and under Oak St., between Southwoods & Iroquois Dr. This modern technology allows us to line the existing sewer to prevent groundwater from flowing into the system without digging up the main. Power cleaning of the lines is done, with the actual liner installation scheduled for the week of April 19th.
- Milling & resurfacing with new asphalt the same above section of Southwoods.
- Replacement of the small 4" and older cast iron water main with a new 8" ductile iron main under Sheridan St. between Weaver & Gerber Avenues.
- Complete reconstruction of the same two-block section of Sheridan with new curbs and asphalt street surface.
- Reconstruction of Hillcrest Dr. from Cherry St. to Lewis Lane, including the short side streets of Club View, Juniper and Vista Lane. The section of Hillcrest without curbs will receive a complete reconstruction including storm sewers, while the remainder of Hillcrest and the other three streets will receive milling & resurfacing.
- Rebuilding of Green Ave. from M-82 south to Lake Dr. in cooperation with the Newaygo Co. Road Commission and Sheridan Township.
- Widening of M-82 & the construction of a new intersection at Industrial Dr. and the main entrance to the new Wal-Mart Superstore. Work is already underway on the project, with the installation of underground utilities & the new traffic signals.
- Extension of the north/south runway at the Fremont Municipal Airport. Because of the very favorable bid prices, we will also be able to mill, reshape and resurface the entire east/west runway as part of the same project.
- Construction of the first two legs of the Town & Country Path network as noted in the accompanying article in this Newsletter.

Estimated costs for the above impressive list of improvements is nearly \$ 2.4 million. The capital work will be financed from a variety of sources, including state & federal grants, state gas tax, state revenue sharing, local user fees, special assessments, property taxes, foundation grants and contributions from individuals, businesses, private developers, the County Road Commission and our neighboring townships.

TREE COUPONS NOW AVAILABLE



"A man has made at least a start on discovering the meaning of human life when he plants shade trees under which he knows full well he will never sit"

Elton Trueblood (1900-1994)

On April 10, 1872, it was estimated that more than 1 million trees were planted in Nebraska on the first Arbor Day. In celebration of **National Arbor Day** on Friday, April 30th, the Fremont City Council has approved the tree-purchase coupon program for another year. The City will offer \$20 coupons to the first 100 City residents that request them at the City Offices. Coupons will be available starting April 26th.

During the City's \$20 coupon program over the last 6 years, residents have planted over 400 trees in the community. During the same time, the City planted an additional 200 trees throughout our parks, along our streets and in our cemeteries. The MSU Management Information Service calculated the national average economic value of "street trees", those trees planted along our roadways. They considered the values of the benefits provided by the trees, such as cooling, wind breaks, minimizing erosion by stabilizing soils, absorbing carbon dioxide & creating oxygen and increasing property values.

COUPON PROGRAM RULES

- ◆ City residents only.
- ◆ One coupon per household, not per parcel owned.
- ◆ Only the manager (not a tenant) of a rental property may request one coupon.
- ◆ Condo complexes are limited to one coupon/complex.
- ◆ Only trees, not shrubs or bushes, may be purchased.
- ◆ Coupons must be redeemed at Mellema Nursery, Gentleman Farmer or Fairview Floral by 5/31/04
- ◆ Trees must be planted on the property designated on the coupon at the time of pick-up. During June, the City will inventory all trees planted under the program.

At an average annual economic value of approximately \$525/tree, those 600 trees will add over \$15 million of value to this community over their average 50-year life span. The coupon program and other various City tree plantings and maintenance efforts have contributed to the City's 11-year



TREE CITY USA

designation as a "Tree City, USA." Consider creating a tree legacy for the next generation, so that they may "discover the meaning of human life when they sit under our trees."

OVER THE RIVER & THRU THE WOODS!

The Town & Country Path Committee, along with City staff and the project engineer from Moore & Bruggink, recently took a maiden



voyage along the proposed route of the first phase of the Path. As they trudged through the deep snow,



the group reviewed several route alternatives and confirmed the final alignment for Phase 1a.

That's Park & Recreation Committee Chair Jeannie Caris, at left, up to her knees in the white stuff! Most of the two sections that make up Phase 1a traverse through

wooded park areas and along a couple portions of Darling Creek.

The north section connects Branstrom Park with Pathfinder and Daisybrook Elementary Schools. Students will be able to take advantage of this off-road route between the two schools year round and classrooms will be able to travel a paved path to Branstrom Park, where numerous fieldtrips are taken.

The south section connects the City sidewalk system at Oak Street & Lake Drive to Fremont Lake Park. Along the way you can visit the new Fremont Skate/Bike Park, then journey along Darling Creek through the woods and visit the Swirl Ice Cream shop or the beach at Fremont Lake Park. Construction of both sections is expected to begin this May, weather permitting and finish by the first part of July.

Boy Scout Troop 1139 recently constructed several wooden benches along routes of the Town & Country Path. **The two shown below** overlook the



Branstrom Park baseball field and are along a section of already paved path. The other benches over-

look the new Skate/Bike Park, along which the Path will be constructed this spring.

The Committee is still raising funds for future Path phases and greatly appreciates the funds already donated by local individuals, businesses and organizations. **Tax deductible donations can be submitted to the Town & Country Path Fund, c/o**



the Fremont Area Community Foundation, P.O. Box B, Fremont, MI 49412. If you have questions regarding the Path, contact City Clerk Todd Blake @ the Fremont City Offices @ 924-2101.

FREMONT WELCOMES NEW CITY ASSESSOR

The City is pleased to announce the contracting of Ms. Joann Hunt as the City's new Assessor. She replaces Richard Passage, who retired last year after 14 years with Fremont. Joann will be leaving her



current post with the Muskegon Co. Equalization Dept. and opening her own consulting business.

Joann was looking for part-time work so she could spend more time with her family. Thus, the timing of the City seeking a new Assessor couldn't have been better for

her and the City. She began her job with Fremont on April 15th. Joann will have established office hours each week during which citizens may schedule appointments with her. She will also be reappraising 20% of the parcels in the City each year to get us back on track with having appraisals no more than five years old. According to City Manager Chris Yonker, "we are very pleased to have secured a 'win-win' arrangement between the City and Joann. She comes to us with all the technical skills needed to run a top-notch Assessor's Office. We look forward to her joining our team."

Joann was willing to share with us the following brief personal biography so that we could get to know her a bit better before she arrives:

I have lived in Whitehall for almost 14 years and have been married for 17 1/2 years to Mark. We have two gorgeous sons Dan, 14 and Matt, 12. They keep us really busy with their sports, choir, band (school and church) and play practice. Our family is a member of Resurrection Life Changing Ministries in Dalton,

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(New City Assessor ... continued from page 3)

Michigan. Our favorite pastime is being out on the water with our Seadoos. We have traveled the Chain of Lakes, Grand River, up and down the coast of Lake Michigan, Spring Lake, Duck Lake, White Lake, Lake Huron, Lake Charlevoix, Torch Lake, Elk Lake and Grand Traverse Bay. We also enjoy snow skiing, riding bikes, traveling and spending time with our extensive families. I am the youngest of six children and am a transplant from the east side of the state, having grown up in White Lake, MI (about 30 miles west of Pontiac). West Michigan is my home, though. I love it here.

“TRASH TALK”

Guide on the Website

As a convenience for our residents, we have placed the updated refuse & recycling services guide on the City's website at www.cityoffremont.net for your review of new changes, types of services, rules for participation and guidelines for proper preparation of your wastes for collection or recycling.

BRUSH PICKUP UPDATE

The City DPW crew began the curbside brush pickup program this April. Brush will be removed without charge the first Monday of each month, April through October. Brush must be stacked with the cut-end curbside and limbs no more than 3" in diameter.

Residents must have their brush placed curbside by 7:00 AM the first Monday of each month. Brush is not to be placed at curbside any earlier than 5:00 PM the Friday before the first Monday. A \$5 per day fine may be levied against property owners not in compliance.

Brush along the road for more than a few days becomes a nuisance to your neighbors and is in violation of City Ordinances.

Rate Adjustments

The City received notice from Sunset Waste Services that monthly rates for residential refuse cart and recycling bin services will increase by 1.9%, effective April 1st. The contract between the City and Sunset allows for an annual increase limited to the previous year's inflation rate. The increase will adjust the monthly refuse cart rate from \$7.78 to \$7.93 and the recycling bin rate from \$1.47 to \$1.50. These small increases will first be reflected in the bills mailed in early July. Prices for the other refuse fees, stickers, bags and tags will again remain unchanged.

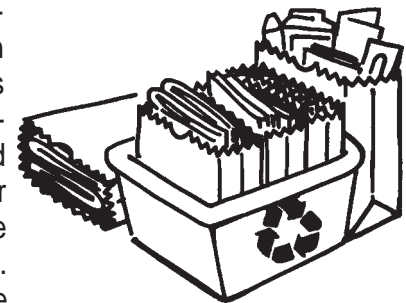
Rollout Cart Size Options



Recently, some of our residents may have noticed that their 95-gallon refuse cart has been replaced with a 65-gallon cart. The City's contract for refuse collection & disposal has required only a 65-gallon cart since the City began contracting for services with Sunset's pre-

decessor White Lake Landco back in 1992. Sunset had continued to allow residents the benefit of the larger cart, but finds that the rapidly increasing disposal costs at landfills now requires that they enforce the 65-gal. cart provision. After receiving many requests from residents for the larger carts to be returned, the City has negotiated the option for residents to request the 95-gallon cart for an additional \$1.35/month (A 46% increase in size for a 17% increase in price.) **Please inform the City Offices @ 924-2101 by June 1st, if you are interested in retaining a 95-gallon cart for the price of \$9.28/month.** For residents that still have a 95-gallon cart and do not contact the City Offices, your cart will be exchanged for the 65-gallon cart. The change will be effective July 1st, with the quarterly billing to follow October 15th.

The City realizes this reduction in the cart sizes may be inconvenient and looked at as just another way to increase Sunset's fees. However, we have



watched along with Sunset the rapidly increasing costs of landfilling our wastes. The State of MI is also looking to add another fee per ton of wastes dumped at landfills, which they intend to use to increase recycling rates in the State. The City went on record against the establishment of the State fee and remains skeptical that it will result in any increase in recycling volumes in Michigan. Our City residents already recycle a large percentage of their wastes each week; our participation rate in recycling is one of the highest in West Michigan. For those of you that keep running out of space in your recycling bin, the City has offered for some time to deliver a second bin to your home at no additional monthly

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(Trash Talk ... continued from page 4)

charge. In this way, you can increase your recycling volumes and the remaining garbage should fit into the 65-gallon carts. Contact City Hall if you would like to receive an additional recycling bin.

We operate the refuse collection/recycling program on a “pay to throw” fee basis: the more you throw away, the higher the cost. This helps keep our fees very competitive with other communities. We should be thankful that we don’t live in one of our adjoining rural townships, where the fees for only refuse collection are more than double our in-town rates, without the availability of any additional services, such as recycling, bulky item pick-up, brush, leaf & yardwaste pick-up, etc.

Frequently Asked Refuse Questions

Following are some of the key points and most frequently asked questions about the City’s refuse program:

- All materials must be curbside by 7:00 AM on the day of pick up. However, no materials are to be placed at curbside earlier than 5:00 PM the day preceding the collection day. The exception is the brush pick-up run by City crews as noted elsewhere in this Newsletter. The intent of these placement limitations is to enhance our community’s appearance by not constantly having wastes at the curbside.
- All refuse must fit inside the rollout carts, with the lids fully closed. Any additional refuse must be placed in the specially purchased yellow mixed-refuse bags and placed beside the cart. Per State law, Sunset drivers will not pick up any rollout carts or mixed-refuse bags that contain yardwastes.
- Carts & bins must be removed from the curbside by noon the day following the collection day. Please store them in your garages or in a rear yard screened from the view of your neighbors and the street.
- The City continues to handle all service and billing questions for the program. In the past, we had asked that you contact Sunset regarding service issues. But by assuming those duties, we can track service and billing issues and intervene on your behalf to resolve any concerns.
- Occasionally, City residents receive a bill for refuse services directly from Sunset Waste, in addition to the refuse billing on the quarterly City utility bill. In the past, some residents have been mistakenly billed directly by Sunset Wastes. Please contact the City Offices if you receive such a bill and we will intervene on your behalf.



POLICE DEPARTMENT NEWS

You May Have Already Won!

The Fremont Police Department reminds residents that lottery and sweepstakes scams continue to flourish. Many of these companies operate outside of the U.S. Recently, several local residents reported receiving official-looking documents announcing the resident as the winner of money or prizes. Some tips to remember before you jump at the “can’t lose, free money”:

- Any contest that requires you to send money up front is **NOT** legitimate.
- Be suspicious of any prize offered, especially if you didn’t enter their contest.
- **NEVER** give your bank account or personal information to an unknown party.
- Most important, call us at 924-2100 or stop by if you have **ANY** doubts about prize information you might have received.

A new variation of the scam has a “law firm” sending letters to previous victims of scams. Included in the letter is a check, usually for several thousand dollars, which this law firm was able to obtain as a “settlement” for the victim’s loss. The resident is then billed several hundred dollars for this law firm’s role in getting the “settlement.” The victim deposits the settlement check, pays the law firm’s bill and discovers a short time later that the settlement check is counterfeit. Remember, just because your bank teller may accept from you the attorney’s check, money order or cashier’s check, it does not mean that it is a valid instrument. If you have ANY doubt, it only takes a moment to call the Department at 924-2100.

Identity Theft Prevention Measures

You have probably seen the TV commercials by one of the credit card companies where mysterious voices are substituted for the real voices of various victims of identity theft. While very humorous, the commercials are effective in highlighting the seriousness of one of the fastest growing crimes in the country. In this regard, we offer the following suggestions to minimize the theft of your identity, or personal information:

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(Identity Theft Prevention ... continued from page 5)

- Do not dispose of cancelled checks, invoices, account statements, sales slips with credit card numbers or any document containing your social security number in the garbage without first shredding them.
- Do not place outgoing mail with any of the above personal information in your rural curbside mailbox. To deter identity thieves, bring it to the Post Office or drop it in a secure postal box.
- NEVER give your bank account or personal information to an unknown party, whether over the phone or in person.
- Ensure that if you purchase products or services over the Internet that the website is legitimate and offers a secure method of encoding your personal information.
- Read the fine print on contracts, purchase receipts and websites to review a company's privacy policies and how they intend to use the personal information that you provide them. Often they will offer you a choice to decline their use or selling of your information to any other party.

GOPED = Motor Vehicle

GOPEDS...Do you know what they are? They are like scooters only with a motor, either electric or gas. Some have seats; some do not. Their use is increasing throughout the country. However, be aware that under the MI Motor Vehicle Code they are classified the same as a Moped. As such, Gopeds are motor vehicles and if they are driven on the street they are required to have the same safety equipment as any other motor vehicle, including horn, seat, headlight, brake light, front & rear brakes and muffler. The operator is required to have either a moped license or a driver's license, and anyone under the age of 19 must wear a Federal Dept. of Transportation (DOT) approved helmet. As restrictive as these requirements sound, it is good information to have before you spend the money to purchase one. For more information, contact the Dept. @ 924-2100 during regular business hours.

To Serve and Protect: Duties of Your Police Department

The Police Department handles a variety of requests and investigates complaints from our residents. Below is a sample of the many functions the Department performs to ensure that our community remains a safe and enjoyable place in which to live, work and play:

- 24/7/365 coverage
- Vacation property checks
- School participation & investigations
- Motorist assists
- Vehicle inspections
- Handgun registrations
- Subpoena service
- Alarm response
- Trial testimony
- Drug education & enforcement
- Traffic control & parking enforcement
- Curfew enforcement
- Scout presentations
- Fingerprinting
- Law enforcement Explorer program
- Kid's Triathlon
- Bike safety inspections & registration
- Junior Police Academy
- Abandoned vehicle removal enforcement
- Child safety restraint inspections
- Medical emergencies
- Criminal investigations
- Business watch program
- Home/business security advice
- 'Night Eyes' program
- Junk & Blight Ordinance enforcement

We remain committed to providing the best services available to our residents and are always open to your suggestions. Feel free to contact us at 924-2100.

Explorer Post Members Experience Law Enforcement



The Police Department has teamed up with the Michigan State Police and other agencies to enhance the Newaygo County Police Explorers program to high school kids from area schools.

Explorers is a law enforcement program run through the Boy Scouts of America that gives students the opportunity to learn about the career and develop valuable leadership and discipline skills for everyday life.



DID YOU EVER WONDER?

Did you ever wonder how much each individual person pays each year to improve and maintain our parks, recreation and cemetery facilities? Or, how much it costs per \$1,000 of your home's taxable value to provide for our safety with police protection? Or, what percent of the City's budget goes to support the Fremont Municipal Airport?

Well, you are in luck, because the table below will answer those questions and more. Staff prepared the data in the table for one of the initial sessions of our City/Township Cooperation Committee. We wanted our township neighbors to understand that there is always a cost to our residents and taxpayers for each of the services the City provides, many of which township residents use without cost. This has slowly changed over the last few years as Dayton & Sheridan Townships have contributed more toward the operation and construction of various services and facilities. The Governing Boards of these three entities have engaged in many joint projects and efforts and shared costs on many items, including:

- Comprehensive Development & Growth Mgmt. Plan
- Updated Downtown Development Plan
- M-82 Corridor Study
- Cable TV Re-Franchising w/ Comcast
- Areawide Park & Recreation Plan
- Joint Park & Recreation Advisory Committee
- New Skate/Bike Park
- New Multi-Purpose Court/ Ice Rink
- Feasibility Study & Engineering for new Path
- Construction of Phase 1a of the new Path Network
- New Playground @ Sheridan Township Hall
- Updated Fire & Emergency Services Agreement
- Joint Fremont Area Planning Commission
- 'Building a Sense of Place' Computer Info System

City of Fremont Cost of City Services Per Taxable Value & Per Capita				
Service Category	FY 03/04 Budgeted Expenditures	Percent of Total Budget	Cost Per \$1,000 of Taxable Value	Cost Per Capita (Pop. 4,224)
Debt Service (Bonds, loans, etc.)	\$ 1,350,187	20.6%	\$ 9.65	\$ 319.65
Construction (Water/Sewer/Streets/Airport)	1,152,696	17.5	8.24	272.89
General Administration	883,500	13.5	6.32	209.16
Police Services	521,950	7.9	3.73	123.57
Streets/Sidewalks/DDA/DPW Ops. & Maint.	521,100	7.9	3.73	123.37
Water System	385,740	5.9	2.76	91.32
Sanitary Sewer System	360,200	5.5	2.58	85.27
Parks/Recreation/Cemetery	295,800	4.5	2.12	70.03
Equipment & Motor Pool	278,895	4.2	1.99	66.03
Fire & Emergency Services	249,790	3.8	1.79	59.14
Community & Economic Development	200,400	3.1	1.43	47.44
Refuse/Recycling/Yardwaste/Leaves/Brush	178,000	2.7	1.27	42.14
Municipal Building Operations	141,000	2.1	1.01	33.38
Airport Operations	49,420	0.8	0.35	11.70
TOTALS	\$ 6,568,678	100.0%	\$ 48.76	\$ 1,555.09

Here are some examples of how to interpret the above table:

- 38.1% of the City's FY 03/04 Budget will be spent on construction **this** year and to pay off debts incurred for construction projects in **prior** years.
- If you own a house with a True Cash Value of \$150,000, your Taxable Value (TV) would be about \$75,000. This equals 75-1,000's of TV. Thus, your household would theoretically contribute \$279.75 for police services (75 times \$3.73) and \$26.25 (75 times \$0.35) for operating the Airport.
- Each and every person in Fremont contributes about \$70.03 each year to operate our park and recreation facilities and services and our cemetery.
- If the entire budget were 100% dependent on property taxes, the City's millage rate (expressed as dollars per \$1,000 of TV) would have to be 48.76 mills. That's 3.5 times higher than our current millage of 14 mills.

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(Did You Ever Wonder? ... continued from page 7)

The previous examples assume that all of the funds necessary to operate this City come from our local taxpayers and citizens. The City has done a very good job at diversifying our sources of revenue such that only \$2,038,922 or 34% of the total budget comes from local property taxes. The remainder comes in the form of service charges (26%); State Revenue Sharing (12%); transfers from reserves (10%); rental income (9%); interest earnings (3%); state, federal & private grants (2%); licenses, permits & fees (2%); miscellaneous revenues (2%); and fines & penalties (1%). The above figure for grant income, however, is a bit misleading. Many of the state and federal grants are not paid directly to the City, but are paid out to contractors and suppliers directly by the state or federal grantor agencies. Thus, while the City budget shows only 2% of our revenues coming from grants, the airport alone is actually receiving over \$1 million in grants this year for the improvements noted in the Newsletter article on capital projects.

'TIS THE SEASON OF SIGNS

Many of you baby-boomers should recall the song with lyrics "Signs, signs, everywhere a sign. Blockin' out the scenery, blowin' my mind." Well, it's again that time of year when temporary signs seem to sprout like morel mushrooms for events such as garage, yard & estate sales, auctions, real estate signs & others promoting those "special" events. While signage at the site of such an event is permissible, **directional signage located off-site is not.** Before placing a sign for your event, be aware of the following ordinance restrictions:



While signage at the site of such an event is permissible, **directional signage located off-site is not.** Before placing a sign for your event, be aware of the following ordinance restrictions:

- ❑ Signs may be displayed on only private property and only at the site of the sale or event.
- ❑ Signs must be placed at least fifteen (15) feet away from the curb. If a sidewalk is present,

the sign cannot be placed between the curb and sidewalk.

- ❑ Signs must be removed immediately after the sale has ended.
- ❑ Signs are not permitted on public property, in public street rights-of-way or on any utility pole, light post, sign, fence or tree.
- ❑ Off-site and directional signs are prohibited.
- ❑ City police, public works or administrative staff will remove and dispose of any illegal signs without notice or compensation.

The City is attempting to maintain the beauty of our community, its tree-lined streets and viable commercial districts. Sign clutter is a major detractor from a community's aesthetics, and can be hazardous for drivers and pedestrians when vision is obscured or a sign diverts a driver's attention. We encourage anyone choosing to announce an event to consider other forms of advertising such as area newspapers, shopper publications and radio stations or by requesting permission to have notices placed on the many message board portions of existing commercial signs.



CITY PARTNERS WITH NONPROFIT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

The City is very active in numerous partnerships with other organizations, groups and associations. Especially with the current tough economic times and shrinking resources, it is important to partner with others to achieve what an individual entity may not be able to do on its own. One key partnership is with the Newaygo County Economic Development Office, Inc. (NCEDO). Fremont is a founding member of the 501(c)(3), nonprofit organization whose mission is **"To create a dynamic environment of economic opportunities for the Newaygo County community."** NCEDO receives financial support from the Fremont Area Community Foundation, the County of Newaygo, the Cities

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The [Fremont City Beat](#) is a quarterly update of City activities and programs. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions about the publication please contact the City Offices at 231-924-2101 or stop by to see us at 101 East Main St., Fremont, MI 49412.

(NCEDO- City Partnership ... continued from page 8)

of Fremont, Grant, Newaygo and White Cloud, several townships and from private contributions. The organization held its annual meeting in March, and elected its officers for the coming year:

- President – Chris Yonker, City of Fremont
- Vice President – Joseph Frendo, Newaygo County Regional Educational Service Agency (NC-RESA)
- Treasurer – Kurt Humphrey, County of Newaygo
- Secretary – Tobi Lake, City of Grant
- Trustee-at-Large – Kay Cummings, MSU-Extension

Following the meeting, City Manager Chris Yonker offered the following comments:

“I am honored to be elected to a second year as President of this organization so that we may continue to build upon our successes. These are exciting yet challenging times for our County. NCEDO is particularly pleased with the partnerships we are developing with our neighbors through the West Michigan Economic Development Partnership to promote our region to the world. We will continue to make business retention our number one strategy, while looking for ways to diversify and strengthen our economy by promoting initiatives in tourism, agriculture, entrepreneurship and those that add to the already great quality of life we enjoy in Fremont and greater Newaygo County. The NCEDO Board reflects the diverse interests of the County and each member brings strengths that reflect their background and commitment to the betterment of Newaygo County. I want to thank them for their on-going contributions and look forward to a great year.”

To learn more about NCEDO’s services and how NCEDO can help your business, please contact Andy Lofgren, Executive Director, at (231) 924-8890, or on the web at www.ncedo.org.

WHOSE BIRTHDAY IS IT?

The Pine Street Primary School kindergarten classes conducted their annual visit to the City Municipal Building on Friday March 19th. Each year the entire Pine St. student body and their teachers descend on City Hall, where they receive tours of the Police and Fire Departments, the Council Chambers and the Administrative Offices. **That’s Councilmember Rob Mani and Firefighter Richard Rought above right** welcoming two of the twelve classes. Mr. Mani, who takes time away from his busy schedule at Fremont Mutual Insurance each



year to help with the tours, stated that, “We look forward to seeing the children each year and hope they not only enjoy their visit, but also learn a few things about their City. It is especially important at this age that they realize firefighters and police officers are “real” people who are there to help them and whom they can trust.”

The children always have wonderful questions or responses for their tour guide’s questions. One such moment came when City Manager Chris Yonker asked if anyone knew who was celebrating their 150th Birthday in 2004. Their answers included “Mr. Yonker, Mr. Mani, the Mayor and their teacher (she didn’t smile!)” The correct answer of course is the City of Fremont, which celebrates its Sesquicentennial this year. The classes received a brief history of the community and the famous person for which the area was named: the explorer, pathfinder and presidential candidate John C. Fremont. The Village of Fremont Center was one of the first names for the area, recognizing that when the Village was incorporated, it was located in the “center” of what was then Fremont Township. The next issue of the *City Beat Newsletter* will be a special **Sesquicentennial Edition** packed with information on historical events related to the City and its humble beginnings as Elm Corners and Weaverville.

The City of Fremont Municipal Building

Then



Now



WASTEWATER vs. STORMWATER

Wastewater or sewage generally comes from our homes and businesses and enters the sanitary sewer system through our sinks, drains, showers & toilets. This sewage then travels to the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant south of 72nd St. for treatment & discharge to the groundwater.

Stormwater or "clean" water generally comes from rainwater or groundwater. Sources of this water include footing drains, sump pumps, roof drains, **downspouts** and storm drains. Fremont operates separate storm and sanitary sewer systems. The discharge of clean water to the sanitary system increases treatment costs and could contribute to sanitary sewer overflows during the spring thaw and severe storm events.

Consequently, the City's Sewer Ordinance prohibits the discharge of clean water (groundwater or rainwater) to the sanitary sewer system. The proper point of discharge for this water is the storm sewer system, into a holding container (such as a rain barrel) or simply onto the ground. **The series of pictures below demonstrate the proper disconnection of a downspout from a sanitary sewer line** and redirecting the stormwater onto a splashblock away from the building foundation and into the yard.



The MI Dept. of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) is now requiring most communities to reduce or eliminate as much of the discharges of clean water into the sanitary system as possible. Our ability to secure future grants & loans to help expand capacity or renovate our wastewater system may be hampered if MDEQ does not see a significant reduction in the amount of stormwater entering the sanitary system.

Please inspect your home or business to determine where your stormwater goes and relocate all drains to the storm sewer system or onto the ground. Our Public Works staff would be glad to advise you on your particular options to comply with the Ordinance. Please contact Public Works Superintendent Brian Hettinger @ 924-2101 to arrange for an inspection or consultation.

Watch for the next issue of
Fremont City Beat
Special Sesquicentennial Edition



HISTORIC PICTURE SEARCH

With this year being the City's Sesquicentennial, we are requesting your help locating old historic pictures (pre-1930?) of Fremont. If you have or know of someone who has an old photograph of a scene in Fremont that you are willing to loan to the City, please contact Gay Krouse @924-2101.

The picture must be an actual photograph; copies or postcards will not work. We wish to enlarge them for additional prints to be placed along the hallway of City Hall and to replace several of the original pictures that are becoming faded or discolored.

All pictures should have your name, address & phone number on the back so we can return them to you. If possible include a brief description of the scene in the photo and the approximate date it was taken.

NEW ORDINANCE ADOPTED PROHIBITING FREESTANDING OUTDOOR FURNACES

Living in an urbanized area such as Fremont, with relatively small lots and denser development, requires that certain common sense rules apply to preserve our quality of life. In that regard, the Fremont City Council recently adopted Ordinance 0-04-01 amending Chapter 9 "Fire Protection" of the City Code, to prohibit Freestanding Outdoor Furnaces within the City limits. These units typically have long burn times and short smokestacks, both of which lead to serious smoke emissions that travel great distances throughout a neighborhood and the community. The smoke is not only a nuisance, but leads to poor air quality, which affects human health, especially for those with chronic breathing problems such as asthma or emphysema.

The Ordinance is an extension of the existing ban instituted several years ago on the burning of trash, yardwastes, leaves and other materials. It does not limit the use of indoor wood-burning stoves, fireplaces or furnaces, or outdoor barbecues and recreational wood-burning fires. However, please be aware that emissions from this equipment may still create a nuisance and health concern and could be subject to other rules under the general Burning Ordinance and/or the Zoning Code.

Fremont City Beat
101 E. Main Street
Fremont, MI 49412

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