



Sunfish Lake Quarterly

Spring 2025 Volume 25 Issue 2

Spring Updates from City Hall

I hope everyone enjoyed winter in Minnesota and maybe escaped for a warm weather reprieve. We’re all no doubt looking forward to a vibrant spring and a fun-filled summer!

Middle Housing Bill Returns

Once again, the legislature is considering a bill similar to last year’s Middle Housing Bill—one that many of our residents successfully opposed. The new bill, SF 2231/HF 2140, would require the creation of mixed housing zones, significantly impacting the character of our community.

The City, along with five other small cities—Hilltop, Landfall, Lauderdale, Lilydale, and Mendota—has signed a joint letter, prepared by the Minnesota Association of Small Cities, opposing the bill’s application to our communities. We strongly encourage residents to reach out to their legislative representatives and voice their objections. Given our reliance on well and septic systems, this mandate simply isn’t feasible for SFL. This bill is being heavily lobbied by the construction industry and other interest groups. It will likely keep resurfacing until people tire of fighting it and it becomes law. Let’s stay engaged and ensure our voices continue to be heard!

Community Safety & Resident Survey

At our March City Council meeting, Safety Committee Councilmembers Steve Bulach and Shannon Nelson reported on their efforts to engage a survey company to conduct a survey regarding resident opinions on security options for SFL, which include the Flock System and other potential security measures. After consulting the League of Minnesota, they received two survey company quotes ranging from \$8,000 to \$10,000—amounts they felt were too high for our city. The City of West St. Paul, which has experience conducting similar surveys, offered to assist at a much lower cost. Our City Attorney is now working with them to draft an agreement outlining the process and options for the City Council and Safety Committee to review.

Residents on the SFL email alert list recently received a Public Safety Alert from our Police Chief regarding a string of burglaries in several western metro cities, believed to be linked to the same criminal network that targeted SFL. Fortunately, to date we’ve had no further incidents in our community. Of note, our border communities of West St. Paul and Inver Grove Heights are in the process of negotiating purchase of the Flock System. Please remember to set your security alarms when leaving home!

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City Council Dan O’Leary, Mayor Steven Bulach Tom Hendrickson Mike Hovey Shannon Nelson	Planning Commission Ginny Beckett Jeannine Naves Claire Noble John Oakman Kevin Wu	City Clerk/Administrator Christy Wilcox cwilcoxclerk@gmail.com	In this Issue Message from the Mayor What’s an Illicit Discharge? Protecting Our Water Exciting News From the SFL Party Planning Committee Cleaning is Easy at the Recycling Zone Arbor Day Announcement
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 18281 West St. Paul, MN 55118	Mattress & Box Spring Collection for Recycling May 31, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. WSP Public Works (403 E Marie, West St. Paul) \$10 per mattress or box spring; \$5 crib mattress; Cash or check Open to residents of Sunfish Lake, West St. Paul, Mendota Heights, Lilydale and South St. Paul only		

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New Crime Watch Signage

In an effort to deter crime, the Safety Committee proposed installing “Neighborhood Crime Watch” signs with a “24-Hour Video Surveillance” message at key entry points to SFL. The purchase of eight signs for \$1,697.36 was unanimously approved by the City Council in our March meeting.

Community Events

I encourage everyone to join our Forester, **Jim Naves, on Arbor Day—Saturday, May 3rd**—for a morning of tree planting to help keep our city beautiful. It’s always a great time for all (even in the rain!).

Lastly, our wonderful group of residents who organize the annual community gathering have decided to move this year’s event to the fall instead of spring. Keep an eye out for more details in this newsletter!

Wishing you all a wonderful summer!

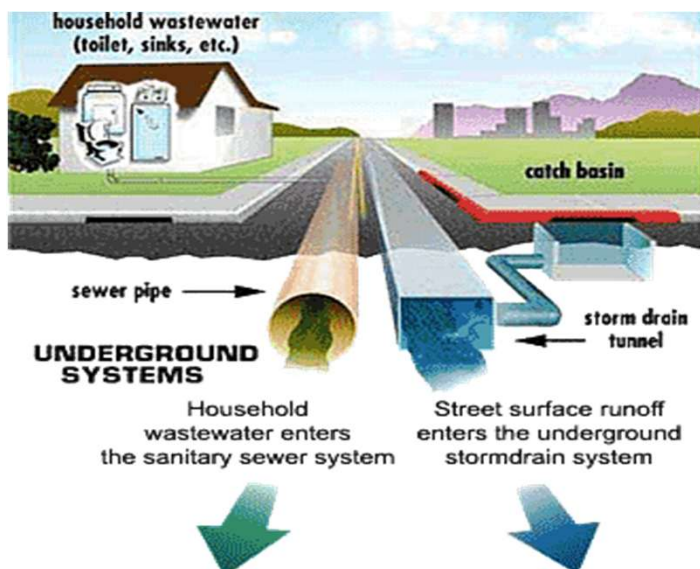
Dan O’Leary

WHAT’S AN ILLICIT DISCHARGE?

Lakes, rivers, and streams are an important part of our ecosystem, and we all have a part to play in keeping them clean. One way to fulfill this role is to report illicit discharges. What exactly are illicit discharges? And what do they have to do with keeping our waters clean? The answer to these questions starts with storm drains.

Everyone has seen the storm drains along the side of the roads and probably wondered where they go. A lot of people don’t know this (or haven’t thought about it), but unlike the wastewater from your home that is sent to water treatment facilities, the water that flows through these storm systems is drained directly into lakes, rivers, and streams. This water isn’t treated or filtered before reaching surface waters. This is why avoiding and/or reporting illicit discharges is so important.

Illicit discharge refers to any discharge to the stormwater drainage system, (commonly through drains in streets, gutters, ditches, and ponds) lakes, rivers, and streams other than stormwater.



Substances that could be harmful include:

- paint
- trash
- car fluids (like oil and gas)
- cleaning materials.

These are only a few common examples, so it’s important to remember that the only thing that should be entering the storm system is stormwater.

Reporting an illicit discharge can be a crucial act in stopping water pollution and keeping our waters clean, **so please, if you witness an illicit discharge, report it to the City, at 612-718-4282 immediately.** For spills of potentially hazardous substances, call 9-1-1 right away.

Non-stormwater discharges are prohibited and are enforced under local ordinances.

PROTECTING OUR WATER

Adopt-A-Drain

Adopt-a-Drain is a program where residents can “adopt” a storm drain of their choosing in their community. When a drain is adopted, the adopter is responsible for keeping it clear of leaves, trash, and other debris to reduce water pollution. Residents volunteer fifteen minutes, twice a month, for cleaner waterways and healthier communities.

Tips for Residents:

- **Sign up:** [Adopt-a-Drain - Minnesota](#)
- **Keep your drain clear.** Sweep leaves, trash, and other debris off the drain surface year-round.
- **Track your impact.** Keep an estimated total of the debris you collect and enter it into your online account so the Adopt-a-Drain team can gauge the cumulative results of your work.
- **Lead by example.** Let friends and neighbors know about your commitment and, if they ask, tell them about small things they can do at home to prevent water pollution

Vehicle Washing

Appropriate vehicle wash water treatment and disposal helps to maintain the clarity, temperature and oxygen levels of downstream water bodies by keeping associated pollutants out of storm drains.

Tips for Residents:

- **Designated Area** – Wash all vehicles in designated areas only. Wash vehicles inside or under cover when possible.
- **Collect Wash Water** – Wash all vehicles in designated areas designed to collect and hold wash water before discharge to the sanitary sewer system.
- **Minimize run-on** – Minimize the run-on of rain water or snowmelt to the designated wash area through berming or diking the area.
- **Avoid Detergents** – Avoid detergents whenever possible by considering power washing and steam cleaning. If detergents are necessary, use phosphate free non-toxic, biodegradable soap.
- **Conserve Water** – Conserve water when rinsing and washing vehicles.

Fertilizers

A “stormwater friendly” lawn is one that absorbs rainwater and does not harm local streams due to the over application of chemicals, like fertilizer. The contaminants from pesticides can result in water that are not fishable or drinkable.

Tips for Residents:

- **Fertilize sparingly** – If you must fertilize, September is the best month. Be sure to use slow-release fertilizer. Do not fertilize in the spring until you have mowed the lawn three times.
- **Mow high and leave grass clippings on the lawn.**
- **Avoid using fertilizers or pesticides near wellheads or within 75 feet of waterways.**
- **Check the weather forecast before application.**
- **Hand pick weeds when possible or spot treat them.**

EXCITING NEWS FROM THE SFL PARTY PLANNING COMMITTEE!

We are thrilled to announce that we are revamping our traditional spring party! Instead of our usual spring event, we are planning an even more spectacular celebration this fall.

If you're interested in hosting or joining the planning committee, we'd love to have your help! Please reach out to Ginny or Shannon for more details.

Stay tuned for more updates, and we can't wait to celebrate with you all in the fall!

The SFL Party Planning Committee

Ginny: scott.beckett@usfamily.net Shannon: snelson@nelsonww.com



CLEANING IS EASY AT THE RECYCLING ZONE

Bring cleaners, auto products, electronics and other stuff that doesn't belong in your trash to The Recycling Zone in Eagan for safe disposal. Dropping off is easy—that's why residents dropped off over 2.9 million pounds of materials last year. You stay in your car while staff unload materials from the trunk or backseat. Put smaller items in a box that you can leave behind.

Accepted items – free drop-off unless noted

- Auto products like motor oil, antifreeze and gas
- Bug killers/repellants
- Cleaners
- Electronics (fee for TVs and computer monitors)
- Lightbulbs – all types
- Needles and sharps (in a closed rigid container, keep in front seat)
- Paints and stains
- Personal care products like nail polish and hair dye
- Propane tanks and aerosol sprays
- Scrap metal
- Tires (fee)
- Small household electronics like toasters and vacuums
- String lights and cords
- Vaping devices
- Weed killer
- Most products that say caution, warning, danger or poison

If you have an unknown or unique household chemical, email recyclingzone@co.dakota.mn.us before dropping off to work with The Recycling Zone staff about safe handling.

The Recycling Zone does not accept

- Appliances
- Carpet
- Humidifiers and dehumidifiers
- Lumber
- Furniture
- Mattresses
- Medical waste and medications
- Yard waste



The Recycling Zone, located at 3365 Dodd Road in Eagan, is open all year, four days a week. For a complete list of accepted items and drop-off hours, visit www.dakotacounty.us, search *recycling zone*.

Partially funded by Dakota County and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

ARBOR DAY ANNOUNCEMENT

Sunfish Lake's 2025 Arbor Day Event will be held on Saturday, May 3, from 9 am till 1 pm along the side of Salem Church Road (Highway 494 side) west of the corner of Windy Hill near 45 Salem Church Road. Please join us for some lovely outdoor time with our neighbors to plant trees, share treats and conversations, buy baby trees and welcome spring to our City.

The book **"Mini-Forest Revolution"** by Minnesotan Hannah Lewis is a guide to using the Miyawaki Method to plant small new fully functioning forests in as little space as about three parking lot stalls. Thousands of these tiny forests have been installed around the world and information on the method will be available at the Arbor Day event.

