

City of Union News Letter

"Promote rural values, protect local assets and foster community pride"

City of Union
342 South Main Street * P.O. Box 529
Union, OR 97883
541-562-5197 * Fax 541-562-5196
eMail: cityhall@CityOfUnion.com
Website: CityOfUnion.com

CITY HALL HOURS: Monday thru Thursday
10:00 am - 5:00 pm - Open during lunch

August 2015

Union Carnegie Public Library
Mon 10:30am - 6:00pm Thurs 1:00pm - 6:00pm
Tue 10:00am - 5:30pm Fri 9:00am - 3:30pm
Wed 4:00pm - 8:00pm

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER **Tests show Coliform Bacteria in the City of Union Public Water System**

Our water system recently (July 9, 2015) violated a drinking water standard. Although this is not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we are doing to correct the situation. The City routinely monitors for the presence of drinking water contaminants. Six water samples were taken in July for coliform bacteria. Four of the six samples representing sixty-six percent of the total samples taken showed the presence of coliform bacteria. The rule for public water systems is that no more than one (1) sample per month may show the presence of coliform bacteria.

What should you as the consumer do?

- **You do not need to boil your water or take other corrective actions.** However, if you have specific health concerns we recommend consulting your doctor.
- People with severely compromised immune systems, infants, and some elderly people may be at increased risk. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by microbes are available from EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791 or the Department of Human Services Drinking Water Program at (503) 731-4381.

What does the presence of coliform bacteria in the water system mean?

This is not an emergency. If it had been you would have been notified immediately. Total coliform bacteria are generally not harmful themselves. *Coliforms are bacteria which are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that other, potentially-harmful bacteria may be present. Coliforms were found in more water samples than allowed by Oregon Administrative Rules and this is a warning of potential problems.*

Usually, coliforms are a sign there could be a problem with the treatment or distribution system (pipes). Whenever we detect coliform bacteria in any sample, we do follow-up testing to see if other bacteria of greater concern, such as fecal coliform or *E. coli*, are present. **We did not find these or other harmful bacteria in our subsequent testing.** If we had, we would have notified you (the customer) immediately. **Three (3) water samples taken from throughout the water system were tested for coliform and other bacteria July 24, 2015. No bacteria of any kind were present.** Five (5) water samples will also be collected and tested the first week in August 2015 to verify the coliforms and other bacteria are not present in the water. Routine bacteriologic sampling required by the Regulatory Agencies each month assures that the water quality remains good.

What happened? What is being done?

The coliform bacteria that was recently detected in the City water system is likely the result of the combination of the extreme hot weather that occurred in June of this year coupled with prolonged retention of water in the distribution system pipelines together with heating the water in the City's storage reservoir. Water use by consumers, even during periods of high usage for irrigation does not result in the required pipeline velocities necessary to scour the insides of the pipe and refresh the water in the system. Fire hydrant flushing is necessary to move enough water in the system to scour and freshen the water in the pipes.

All of the fire hydrants throughout the community will have been flushed by the time this notice is received. This flushing will help clean the pipes and refresh the water being delivered to the customers. Disinfection levels in the system are being increased and steps are being taken to refresh the water in the City reservoir.

For more information, please contact Rod McKee, P.E., and Public Works Director at (541) 562-5197. Or, you can mail your questions and concerns to:

Rod McKee, P.E., Public Works Director, or
Paul Phillips, Public Works Lead

Union Grassroots Festival/Free Entertainment for the Whole Family

Saturday, August 8th, 2015

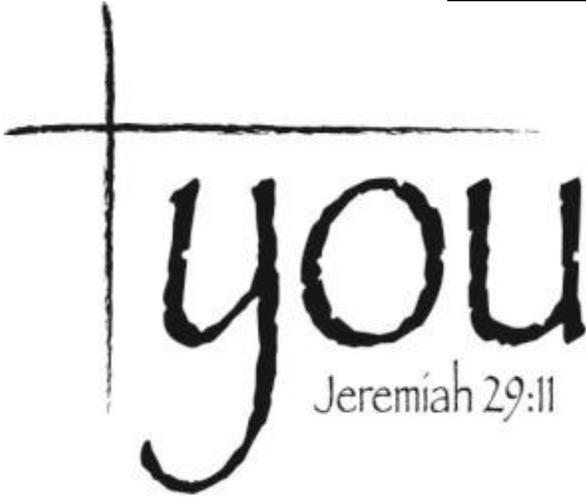
- 7 am **City Wide Yard Sales** Maps at Post office and Info Booth in Park
- 8 5 k Fun Run Registration Race starts at 8:30 (Race starts on Arch Street)
- 8-9 am **Legacy Car Show** Check in Main St across from the Post Office
- 9 am Official Grassroots Opening VFW presenting the Flag/National Anthem at the park**
- 9 am **OPEN** Car Show/Vendors/Reptile Show/ Friends of Library Book and Bake Sale
- 9 to 5:30 Barbeque Contest in the Park (vote at 5:30)
- 11 to 12:30 **Pepsi Stage**/Live Music in the Park/**Porter & the Pale Ales (Oldies)**
- 11 to 4pm **Free Kiddy Carnival** in the Park/**George the Balloon Man** (11-2)
- 11 to 5 **Raffle Tickets Drawn every hour by DJ Denny in the Park**
- 12 to 1:30 pm Live Music/**Chrome Country** at the Post Office lot (Country) from La Grande
- 12:45 to 2:15 Live Music/**James Kindle & the Eastern Oregon Playboys (sock hop)**
- 2 pm **Duck Races down Catherine Creek** (UHS Senior Class 2015 fundraiser) Buy your duck from a Senior or at the Park the day of the Festival.
- 2:30 pm-4P **Pepsi Stage**/Live Music/**Hillfolk Noir(Folk Rock)**
- 4:15-5:45P **Pepsi Stage**/Live Music/**Wasteland Kings** (Americana)
- 4 pm **Pie Eating contest** Next to the kiddy Carnival (check in by 3:50) Ribbons
- 4 pm Legacy Car Show/Kiddy Carnival and Most Vendors **Close** (Food Vendors still open)
- 5:45 pm **Lawn Mower Races**/Sign up by 5:30
- 7:30 pm **Family Street Dance by PaPa Murphy's with DJ Denny** (Bring your lawn chairs and dancing shoes)

Grassroots is only possible because of the many volunteers and sponsors that contribute!! Thank you to all of you!

****Legacy Ford****Pepsi-Cola****PaPa Murphy's****Elkhorn Media Group****The Nickel****Union Sanitation**** Clark & Daughter Auction****Young Woodsman of America****EO Rental Center



YOUTH MINISTRY TEAMS



YOUTH GROUP

Team leaders: Joe & Karen Wing

YOU stands for Youth of Union, our middle school and high school youth group. YOU has its own special meeting area in the former garage, a space that was designed and remodeled just for them, and during the school year the regular meeting time is Sunday afternoons from 4:00 to 6:00.

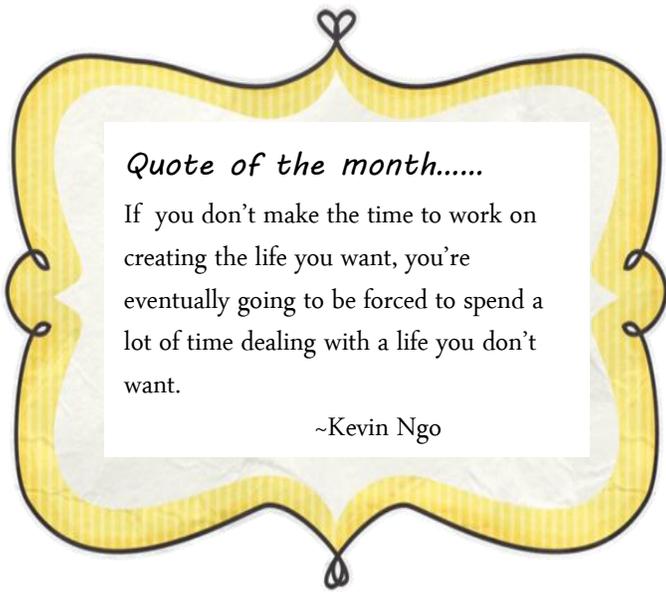
YOU has its own live band and weekly activities include worship, Bible study, games, small group discussion and of course eating! In addition to the weekly meeting, YOU sponsors many other activities throughout the year, including Christian rock concerts, hockey games, mini-golf, bowling, camping trips, scavenger hunts, movie nights...well, you get the idea! Youth are also encouraged to participate in several service projects each year. Past projects have included wood cutting, yard clean-up, a community Valentine's lunch, and work days at Camp Elkanah.

All 7th through 12th graders are invited to join us at YOU for fun, fellowship and Christian growth!

Check us out on Facebook and see pictures and updates about current events and activities.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT:

YOU will be meeting on Thursday evenings from 5:59 pm to 8:01 pm for the remainder of the summer. Our summer schedule is focused on fun and fellowship, and we have a lot of exciting activities planned. Invite your friends and join us every Thursday evening in the barn at 212 W. Grande Street!



Quote of the month.....

If you don't make the time to work on creating the life you want, you're eventually going to be forced to spend a lot of time dealing with a life you don't want.

~Kevin Ngo

Sounds of Summer

Let's unplug and enjoy some music in the park. Grab the kids, bring your picnic dinner or snatch a bit from one of the great takeout's and park it in Union's Historic Park. Starting Thursday August 13th from 6 pm to 8 pm local artists are welcome to play their favorite tunes every Thursday through September as long as there are entertainers.

Gratuities would be appreciated.



Union Utility Rates are Comparable

Average water bill for 5000 gallons with a 3/4" meter for a residential customer by region in Oregon (Dollars)

City size	Average	Low	High	Range
Coastal	38.01	17.40	60.75	43.35
Valley	40.26	20.10	69.75	49.65
Southern	30.12	10.57	76.65	66.08
Portland/Mt. Hood	33.19	14.85	57.32	42.47
Central	31.96	14.26	57.94	43.68
Eastern	31.73	10.00	45.92	35.92
All Cities	34.88	10.00	69.75	59.75

It is important for the City of Union to review and compare our utility rates in order to remain viable. The numbers you see in these charts come from a 2014 Rate Survey by The League of Oregon Cities.

Union water rate for a single family is \$22.23 and Union's sewer rate for a single family is \$42.67. The survey is done every five years, this year 168 communities participated. The complete report can be found on the home page of LOC at their website www.orcities.org.

Average wastewater bill for 5000 gallons with a 3/4" meter for a residential customer by region in Oregon (Dollars)

City size	Average	Low	High	Range
Coastal	51.18	28.00	79.18	51.18
Valley	45.44	30.00	70.00	40.00
Southern	41.54	15.85	90.00	74.15
Portland/Mt. Hood	42.00	23.05	61.99	38.94
Central	41.44	15.00	63.00	48.00
Eastern	40.25	21.25	59.89	38.64
All Cities	43.84	15.00	90.00	75.00

My Hot Water Stinks!

If your hot water stinks, but not your cold water, it is highly likely your hot water heater is the culprit. The hot water in City Hall has had a strong, disgusting rotten egg like odor for years. A few years back, running the hot water heater out of hot water and replenishing the tank with fresh water would keep the smell in check for about a week. Recently that hasn't been effective at all. Researching the problem on the web we found four (4) factors that can lead to this strong odor in the hot water.

The factors that need to be present typically include:

- Sulfate ions (SO₄²⁻). Naturally occurring sulfur and sulfate ions are present in the City's deep well water sources in very low concentrations.
- Energy for the chemical conversion that produces the hydrogen sulfide gas that gives the water the odor. Excess electrons can occur in the hot water taken as part of the corrosion process. The excess electrons provide the energy.
- Nonpathogenic, sulfate reducing bacteria, *desulfuubrio desulfuricans*, produces enzymes that have the power to accelerate the sulfate-reduction reaction. However, the sulfate-reducing bacteria lack the ability to reduce the sulfates to sulfides without the excess energy provided by free electrons.
- How long the water sits in the hot water tank with the above factors present contributes to the chemical conversion.

Therefore, if one or more of the above factors can be eliminated, chances are very good that the hydrogen sulfide gas production can be markedly reduced or eliminated. For example a short term solution can be to "shock" the tank with hydrogen peroxide to kill the offending bacteria. If nothing else changes, the bacteria will likely return along with the smell after some period of time. Using the hot water more frequently and refreshing the tank will help in some cases by interrupt the chemical conversion process.

On older hot water heaters, the sacrificial anode that protects the hot water tank is composed of magnesium. During the cathodic process of protecting the tank, excess free magnesium electrons are present in the hot water tank. Sufficient magnesium free electrons will provide the energy necessary for the chemical conversion to occur and produce the odor. Replacing the anode is fairly straight forward job that a plumber can accomplish without too much expense. Experts advise only using an aluminum/zinc anode replacement. Aluminum anodes which may be available will not provide the cathodic protection necessary for your tank.

In the City Hall hot water heater the hot water tank was "shocked" and allowed to sit over the weekend. The existing anode which was near completely gone was replaced with an aluminum/zinc anode. The hot water was exchanged in the tank two (2) or three (3) times. The water has been odorless for the last three weeks.

Information for this article was provided by a July 1990 article written by David J. Hack, P.E. which appeared the American Water Works Association monthly publication *Opflow*. The entire article can be found at http://boguebankswater.com/documents/175/Phew_My_water_smells.pdf. You can also call City Hall at (541)562-5197 if you have questions.

Performers Needed

Musicians, bands, performers, comics, needed for family entertainment in the Union City Park Gazebo Thursdays starting Augusts 13th from 6 to 8 pm, and every Thursday through September. First come first serve, gratuities only, equipment will not be provide.

Call city hall for more information 541-562-5197.

City Water Quality

There is a Notice in this month's newsletter explaining a minor water quality issue that occurred in the water distribution system this month. Harmless *coliform* bacteria were detected in both routine and special water quality samples that the City had tested. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rules that are implemented through the Oregon Health Authority – Drinking Water Services required the City to retest following the first *coliform* bacteria detection. Of the subsequent five (5) samples tested, three (3) of those tested positive for *coliform* bacteria. However, no bacteria were detected in the well water prior to disinfection. The City's well source water quality remains excellent. Presence of the coliform bacteria constituted a Tier 2 violation according to Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 3233-061-0042(3) (b).

A Tier 2 violation requires that the City provide a public notice to persons served water from the City system as soon as practical but within 30 days of learning of the violation. The City learned of this violation on July 9, 2015. A newspaper article written by reporter Dick Mason, explaining the violation, the suspected causes, and corrective action being taken by the City appeared in the July 15, 2015 edition of the La Grande Observer newspaper.

All of the fire hydrants throughout the community will have been flushed by the time this newsletter is received. This flushing will refresh the water being delivered to the customers. Disinfection levels in the system are being increased and steps are being taken to refresh the water in the City reservoir. Three (3) water samples taken July 22, 2015 from throughout the water distribution system all tested negative for the presence of *coliform* bacteria. The City will retest the five (5) locations in the water system previously tested where *coliform* bacteria was detected in three (3) of those samples. With the recent water samples testing negative for the bacteria, the City is confident the five (5) samples to be tested in August will likewise test negative. If you have any questions please call City Hall at (541) 562-5197.



From The Fire Chief...

In Oregon, speeding is the number one contributor to death and injury in traffic crashes.

Don't exceed posted speed limits – they're there for a reason. Consider the weather and road conditions, and slow down accordingly. Speeding shortens the amount of time you have to react to an emergency. But you can give yourself more reaction time and help avoid a serious crash by slowing down.

One of the most dangerous combinations is high speed and corners. The largest percentage of speed related traffic deaths occur when a vehicle leaves the roadway, often on a corner and it crashes into a large fixed object, such as a tree or rock. Watch for, and obey, posted speeds going into corners.

Speeding also exponentially increases the forces on the body in a crash. That means that even a small increase in speed- say 5 to 10 miles per hour- can mean the difference between life and death for you or the loved ones in your vehicle. The human body simply cannot travel from a high speed to zero abruptly without damage. That's why many people in higher-speed crashes die on impact even while belted.

Last year, nearly 500 people in Oregon died in crashes. Statewide, 40 % of the people who died in speed-related crashes were innocent victims, not the speeding driver. They were sons, daughters, wives, husbands, parents, grandparents and friends.

That's far too big a price to pay for getting there "a little faster". So Slow Down!

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Reading Your Utility Statement:

We have had quite a few payments that are received on accounts that actually have a credit balance. If your statement shows a balance with parenthesis this means you have a credit balance and nothing is due on your account.

Of course you can pay even though you have a credit balance if you wish. This will increase your credit which you may need to use at some time in the future.

Do you use your banks auto-pay system?

Remember to make sure you have the correct account number on your bank auto pay. Your utility billing amount changes each July, and with higher usage it changes during the summer months, make sure your payment reflects the correct balance due.

Also, it takes your bank time to process your check and mail them to us. This can often times take a week to ten days, and that will reflect on the date the check is posted to your account.

Note: For your convenience there is a payment drop box in the foyer of City Hall



NAME	
SERVICE ADDRESS	
PREVIOUS BALANCE	285.14
PAYMENTS	-453.78
CURRENT CHARGES	325.05
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE BY 7/15/15	(\$43.59)

REMIT TO:

CITY OF UNION
342 SOUTH MAIN STREET
P.O. BOX 529
UNION, OR 97883-0529
(541) 562-5197

If your name or address is incorrect, please check box
Correct on reverse side, and return with your payment

Caring for Your Lawn, Landscaping, and Garden

If you want to maintain a green area of lawn, landscaping, or a garden, the cost of the water need not be prohibitive. What is required is however, a bit of planning on when to water, how long to water, and providing the proper nutrients to the lawn or plants. While there have been books written about lawn and garden care that are available for review, the purpose of this article is to show what a green lawn might cost with the current water rate structure and basic techniques to try if a green lawn or healthy garden is desired.

An underground, automatic irrigation system is the most efficient, water saving method for maintenance of yards capes and gardens. However, the initial investment can be quite substantial. Combining hoses and sprinklers together with irrigation timers that can be purchased locally for as little as \$12 can effectively regulate how much water is used for irrigation. Also, watering before 10 a.m. in the morning and after 6 p.m. in the afternoon greatly reduces irrigation loss to evaporation. Regular fertilizing and weed control of your lawn should also be a part of its maintenance program. Lee at Hometown Hardware can likely help you in that regard.

So what does it cost me in addition to my base water charge to water my yards cape? Some basic assumptions are that you will only water early and late; that the total amount of water you irrigate will not exceed 2-inches per week; the yards cape will be regularly fertilized with the proper nutrients; watering will not result in runoff or application in buffer areas (street, parking, or sidewalk, etc.); irrigation times will be controlled automatically with timers; and the lawn will be mowed regularly, removing no more than 1/3 the height of the grass.

Therefore, for irrigating 5,000 square feet of yards cape the total amount of water required above the base amount of 1,000 cubic feet would be approximately 3,500 cubic feet which would result in a total water bill of \$22.23 (Base) + \$35 (3,500 cubic feet overage) or \$57.23 per month. To irrigate 10,000 square feet of yards cape the total amount of water required above the base amount of 1,000 cubic feet would be approximately 7,000 cubic feet which would result in a total water bill of \$22.23 (Base) + \$70 (7,000 cubic feet overage) or \$77.23 per month. By optimizing the irrigation schedule and amount of water applied, these amounts could likely be less. Also, mulching in gardens and landscape areas will reduce the evaporation and irrigation to maintain those areas.

For more information on maintaining and caring for yards cape, please contact the OSU extension office in La Grande or visit the OSU Extension website



Hot Weather Tips For Pet Owners.....

Summertime is a time for fun, but it's also fraught with danger for our pets. When the temperature rises, we need to take extra caution to make sure our pets are okay in the heat. Here are a couple of tips to help keep your pet cool and safe:

First and foremost! Never leave your pet alone in a car!

Despite the constant warnings, every year, pets die after their owners leave them in a parked car that overheats. Within a few minutes, a car can get extremely hot, stifling, and deadly. Experiments have been done that prove on a warm summer's day a parked car, with the windows cracked, within 30 minutes it was 117 degrees inside the car. Never leave your pet in a parked car, for any length of time.

Give your pets access to shade and plenty of water!

Pets get dehydrated or get heatstroke quickly so any pet outside needs plenty of water and access to shade. Giving your pet a lightweight summer haircut can also help prevent overheating. Never cut their hair shorter than one inch so they have protection from the sun. Watch for heat stroke. Pets with heat stroke become increasingly restless and will appear uncomfortable as their temperature rises. They will pant excessively, and show signs of labored breathing. Being diligent in watching for these signs and contact your veterinarian immediately can protect and prevent your pet from heatstroke.



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

If you would like to advertise your monthly event or activity email cityhall@cityofunion.com or call 541-562-5197.

ORGANIZATION	MEETING DATE	LOCATION	TIME	PHONE
Booster Club Meeting			6:00 pm	
City of Union Chamber	2 nd Tues of the month	See Nick @ Union Drug	12:30	www.visitunionor.org
City Council	2 nd Mon of the month	City Hall	7:00 pm	541-562-5197
CUP Medical Association	3 rd Tues of the month	Health Clinic	6:15 pm	541-562-5441
CUP Senior Assisted Living	2 nd & 4 th Thursdays	Union Drug Co.	6:00 pm	541-562-5441
Order of Eastern Star	2 nd Wed of the month	Masonic Hall	7:30 pm	541-805-0779
EMS Department	1 st Mon of the month	Rural Fire Hall	7:00 pm	541-562-5660
EOLS Board	2 nd Tues of the month	EOLS Club House	7:30 pm	541-562-5631
Food Bank	3 rd Friday of the month	First Baptist Church	10-noon	541-562-5531
Friends of the Library	2 nd Tuesday of the month	Union Library	7:00 pm	541-562-5807
Library Board	3 rd Wed of the month	Library	4:00 pm	541-562-5811
Lions Club	1 st Wed of the month	Union Library	5:30 pm	541-562-5685
Municipal Court	1 st Wed/every quarter	City Hall	5:30 pm	541-562-5197
Planning Commission	3 rd Wed of the month	City Hall	7:00 pm	541-562-5197
Senior Lunch	Every Tuesday	Methodist Church	12:00 pm	541-562-5675
School Board	2 nd Wed of the month	Athletic Complex	7:00 pm	541-562-5166
South County Health Dist	3 rd Tues of the month	Health Clinic	7:00 pm	541-562-6180
TOPS	Every Wednesday	Union Health Cntr	8:30 am	541-562-9009
VFW Bingo	Every Wednesday night	VFW Hall	5 pm	541-562-6035
VFW Formal meeting	1 st Thursday of month	VFW Hall	7 pm	541-562-6035

