



The Connection

October 2021

106 N. Main St. P.O. Box 92 Canton, MN 55922 (507) 743-5000

Minnesota Energy Assistance expands to pay water bills

The Minnesota Department of Commerce is expanding the state's Energy Assistance Program (EAP) to pay water and sewer bills for



Minnesotans who apply and qualify for energy assistance. Commerce is using \$15 million in additional American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding designated for water assistance.

Minnesota is the first U.S. state to receive federal approval on a plan to provide water bill assistance payments to households, with a focus on preventing households from being disconnected from water and sewer utilities.

- Homeowners and renters can qualify for energy assistance.
- Income eligibility has increased to 60% of median household income. For example, a household with four people can have annual income of up to \$67,765 to qualify.
- Services include payments for current and past-due bills for water and wastewater utilities when disconnection is threatened.

Starting October 1, residents may apply with Semcac by calling (800) 944-3281 or completing an online application on semcac.org. The City of Canton is not involved with the determination of EAP eligibility or fund distribution.

Council sets preliminary budget & tax levy

The Canton City Council unanimously approved the preliminary 2022 General Fund budget and tax levy at its regular monthly meeting on September 8. The proposed \$271,020 operating budget represents a 5.1% increase from the present-year budget. Known and expectant increases include:

- 4% increase to policing services contract with Fillmore County (\$24,000 to \$24,960)
- \$3,000 operating supplies increase to account for rising fuel costs and other goods
- \$1,500 professional services increase to account for unplanned legal fees
- \$55,000 capital outlay increase to account for backhoe replacement (current one purchased in 1997) and lawnmower replacement (current one purchased in 2020; transition to two-year replacement for higher trade-in value)

Final Annual Budgets	
2021	\$257,945
2020	\$252,596
2019	\$298,946
2018	\$343,308
2017	\$325,053
2016	\$302,647

The preliminary 2022 budget does not include an increase to employee wages.

On the revenue side, to account for the proposed expenditures, an additional \$8,754 would be needed from the tax levy. That represents a 5.5% increase to the 2021 certified final levy of \$159,157.

The council was reminded the certified proposed levy, for taxes payable in 2022, must be submitted to the Fillmore County Auditor/Treasurer by September 30. The proposed levy can be lowered, but it cannot be raised, come December, when the council will approve the final 2022 General Fund budget.

Other business

- The Utilities Committee will meet prior to the next council meeting to review water and sewer rates. The committee will provide a report in October.
- The council approved applying for an Arlin Falck Foundation grant to replace the main doors at the town hall with automated doors to improve accessibility. The application deadline is October 2.

The next city council meeting is October 13 at 6 p.m. in the town hall.



With leaf raking season upon us, please do your part to make the weekly collection process more efficient.

- All leaves must be in disposable bags or boxes. **No loose leaves will be picked up.** Bags and boxes will not be returned.
- Do not put leaves in your garbage or recycling containers, or any other containers.
- Grass clippings and garden remnants may be included with your leaves.
- Small branches and sticks should be piled separately and in neat fashion for easy collection.
- Do not place items for collection on the roadway.

Weekly collections will occur on Monday mornings, with the last scheduled pick-up on Monday, October 25. Please have your items curbside by 8 a.m. to ensure collection. No special pick-ups will be accommodated.

The City's brush dump will remain open for residential use until the first snowfall. The dump is located behind the wastewater treatment facility, located at 407 W US 52. No lumber, building materials, furniture or other household items are allowed. Disposal of inappropriate materials can result in a fine and may result in the closure of the site. Your cooperation is appreciated.



Fire Prevention Week is October 3-9

The Canton Fire Department is teaming up with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)—the official sponsor of Fire Prevention Week for more than 90 years—to promote this year's Fire Prevention Week campaign, *Learn the Sounds of Fire Safety*. This year's campaign, October 3-9,

works to educate everyone about simple but important actions they can take to keep themselves and those around them safe.

“What do the sounds mean? Is there a beep or a chirp coming out of your smoke or carbon monoxide alarm? Knowing the difference can save you, your home, and your family,” said Lorraine Carli, vice-president of outreach and advocacy at NFPA.



The Canton Fire Department encourages all residents to embrace the 2021 Fire Prevention Week theme.

“It's important to learn the different sounds of smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. When an alarm makes noise—a beeping sound or a chirping sound—you must take action!” said Bill Richardson, Canton Fire Chief. “Make sure everyone in the home understands the sounds of the alarms and knows how to respond. To learn the sounds of your specific smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, check the manufacturer's instructions that came in the box, or search the brand and model online.”

Follow these safety tips to *Learn the Sounds of Fire Safety*:

- A continuous set of three loud beeps—beep, beep, beep—means smoke or fire. Get out, call 9-1-1, and stay out.
- A single chirp every 30 or 60 seconds means the battery is low and must be changed.
- All smoke alarms must be replaced after 10 years.
- Chirping that continues after the battery has been replaced means the alarm is at the end of its life and the unit must be replaced.
- Make sure your smoke and CO alarms meet the needs of all your family members, including those with sensory or physical disabilities.

For more information about Fire Prevention Week and fire prevention in general, visit www.fpw.rg.

A graphic for an American Red Cross Blood Drive. It features a red blood bag with a white cross on it, a red heart, and the text 'American Red Cross Blood Drive' in a bold, sans-serif font. Below the graphic is the text 'Save a Life, Give Blood' in a bold, sans-serif font.

Wednesday, October 6
12 to 6 p.m.
Canton Town Hall
Scheduled appointments
are encouraged; masks required
1-800-733-2767
or
redcrossblood.org

A graphic with the text 'DID YOU KNOW?' in a large, white, sans-serif font inside a blue speech bubble. Below the speech bubble is the text 'There are currently 173 water service connections in the City of Canton. Per Minnesota Statutes, we are required to collect \$9.72 annually from every service connection served by our water supply. That equates to \$1,681.56 payable to the Minnesota Department of Health. The fee funds MDH's regulatory and technical assistance services for public drinking water systems.'

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