

City of  
**MEXICO**  
MISSOURI  
*Newsletter*

November 2019

## PROGRESS AS PROMISED...

Since the passage of the 0.5% Parks Sales Tax in 2013, the City has been busy delivering park improvements as promised. You might not notice all of the improvements made in the last 5 years since the projects are spread around the community. Some projects like electrical improvements are not easy to see. Electrical system improvements have been completed at Lakeview, Garfield, and Fairgrounds to create a safer park or to provide for future projects such as lighting improvements. Some money has been invested in practical items like storm water culverts that prevent trails from washing out, asphalt micro sealing of the Green Estate Trail, aluminum picnic tables for park shelters, or restroom expansion tanks that save money by keeping flushing valves from sticking open in the running position.

There are also some additions to the Parks as a result of private fundraising through the Mexico Parks Foundation. Park staff works with any groups that want improvements that the City cannot afford, by pairing donors and foundations with people who have a passion for the parks. These efforts have resulted in the addition of a new electrical transformer at Fairgrounds Park, two new tennis courts at Fairgrounds Park, competition grade horseshoe courts at Fairgrounds Park, and two pickleball courts at Fairgrounds Park.

Pictured are some of our more notable park improvements.



Hardin Park



Garfield Park



Skate Park at  
Plunkett Park



Fairgrounds Park



Lakeview Park

## DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that the City of Mexico has code requirements relating to the installation or replacement of water heaters?

A water heater is an appliance or equipment that heats potable water for supply to a building's hot water system. The system distributes hot water required for any fixtures or appliances intended for bathing, washing or culinary use.

A temperature/pressure relief valve is required for all water heater installations or replacements. A functioning valve ensures that the water heater does not exceed set limits which could lead to damage or injuries. Valves should be tested annually to ensure they will open in the event the water heater malfunctions.

A correctly installed valve will connect to a drain that empties to the water heater pan, adjacent

floor drain or to the outside with an air gap that can be monitored. Concealed drains can release hot water that will promote mold growth or rot structural components.

Fuel-burning water heaters must be vented to the exterior with properly constructed chimneys and/or vents. Fuel-burning water heaters are not allowed in bedrooms and bathrooms due to the carbon monoxide they produce. All water heaters are prohibited in storage closets where the heat produced could ignite nearby combustibles.

A building permit is required before the installation or replacement of a water heater within the city limits of Mexico. Inspections are essential to prevent hazards due to improper installation. For questions or concerns regarding water heaters or other building safety topics, contact Matthew Kreyling, Building Official at 573-581-2100, ext. 335.



## FIREPROOFING YOUR HOME



Winter is coming and it's time to start "fire-proofing" our homes. Each family needs to have fire prevention measures, an escape and rally point and maintain smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.

It is also the start of wood burning season – don't forget to check your fireplace, stoves and chimney. For more fire protection tips or questions call Sgt. Jim Day at 573-567-5623 at Mexico Department of Public Safety.

### Heating Safety Tips:

Have your heating system cleaned and inspected by qualified and licensed HVAC technicians before you start it up. Keep your family safe using some of these tips.

### Furnace

- Check that the thermostat is working.
- Put in a new filter.
- Clean the permanent filters.
- Check the exhaust fan for debris.
- Move stored items away from the furnace.
- Replace the old furnace with a more efficient one.

### Fireplace and Stoves

- Get a chimney cleaning and inspection.
- Don't use flammable liquids to start fires.
- Only use dry seasoned wood in the fireplace.
- Never burn paper or trash in the fireplace.
- Be sure to have a good screen to stop sparks.
- Put the fire out completely before leaving the house or going to bed.

- Put cooled ashes in a metal can or bucket and store outside.
- Be sure to use only wood stoves that are airtight and have controlled airflow.

### Portable Heaters

- Always follow the owner's manual.
- Heaters should be three feet from anything that burns or melts.
  - DO NOT use an extension cord with a heater.
  - When not in use, turn off and unplug the heater.
  - Make sure your heater has an automatic shut off, should it be tipped over.
- Do not use a portable heater as your sole source of heat.
  - Keep heaters off carpet and rugs.
  - Do not use a heater with a worn out or damaged cord.



Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, tasteless, odorless, toxic gas that people cannot detect

unassisted. CO poisoning can and will occur anywhere, homes, cars, or public places. Be sure to have a CO detector in your home. If the detector sounds an alarm, leave the house immediately. Never go back into the home until it is declared safe by your gas utility. If you suspect a gas leak, call Ameren Missouri to have them check (1-800-552-7583). Ameren Missouri responds to gas leak calls 24/7 and does not charge for the service.

## TROUT PROGRAM AT KIWANIS LAKE

Mexico Parks and Recreation and the Department of Conservation have once again teamed up for the winter trout program at Kiwanis Lake. November 1 - January 31 is catch and



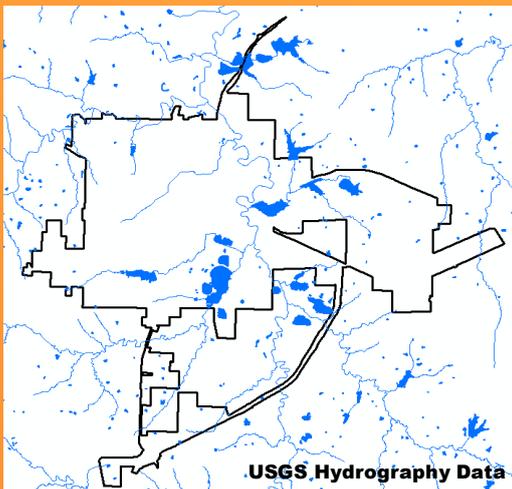
release only. A valid Missouri fishing license for ages 16-64 is needed. During this season artificial bait must be used. Catch and keep season opens February 1.

All legal fishing methods are allowed, including the use of live bait. Daily possession limit is four. A valid Missouri fishing license for people ages 16-64 and a trout stamp are required after February 1.

## STORMWATER POLLUTION DID YOU KNOW?

The City of Mexico takes stormwater pollution seriously. The City's Public Works Department has implemented a plan to detect, trace, and eliminate stormwater pollutants discharged into the environment. Stormwater runoff can transport pollutants from lawns, streets, and parking lots into one of the many streams or water bodies in and around Mexico. While monitoring and testing is an important aspect of this process, public involvement is the key to keeping our environment clean. If you see what looks to be a chemical spill, or other suspicious discharge, please contact the City's Public Works Department immediately.

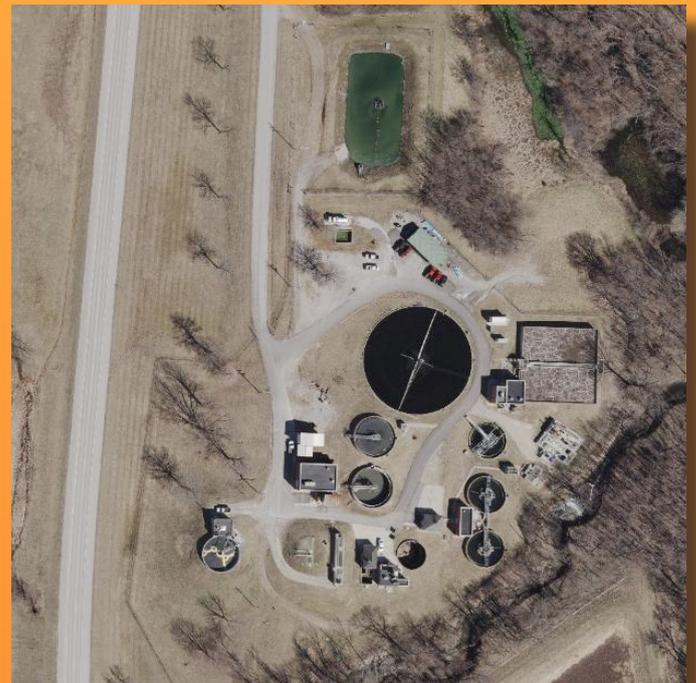
Utilizing advanced mapping techniques, a full investigation can be conducted to assist in tracing the discharge to its source. Once the source has been



identified, a plan can be developed to keep the pollution from reoccurring. Help keep our environment safe by calling your local Public Works Department at 573-581-2100, ext. 315.

## WASTEWATER 2020

Wastewater collection and treatment is constantly evolving with changing technology, aging infrastructure and rising environmental concerns. Cities and communities have invested millions of dollars in wastewater collection and treatment in order to protect the health of their residents and protect the environment. The City of Mexico is no exception. Nutrients, micro-plastics, facility plan, hydraulic model, grit removal, inflow and infiltration are things that must be considered, changed, upgraded, or enforced in the system. About 10 years ago, a facility plan was developed for the wastewater system which laid out a plan for upgrades and changes to the system to help meet future needs. Around \$11 million has been spent on upgrades to keep up with environmental permit requirements and to replace aging equipment. That plan is currently being updated to consider new requirements for new pollutants such as phosphorus and nitrogen, that need to be removed prior to discharging the treated water. As part of that work, a hydraulic model of the collection system is being developed. This will help identify areas that may be flow bottlenecks, as well as areas that may be getting excessive storm water in the system. Both of these efforts will provide a master plan for the wastewater system for the next 10 years. A wastewater collection and treatment system is not an inexpensive endeavor. Costs are covered by wastewater rates and analysis and planning helps the City anticipate and hold cost increases to manageable increments.



## MEXICO'S ECONOMIC FUTURE

Mexico has made great strides in diversifying the economy for its citizens and will continue as business changes occur. As a community we were able to weather the downturn in the economy, however, inevitable changes in the market and international operations out of our control have affected the community with losses current and future at TEVA Pharmaceuticals and Brookstone. Despite these unfortunate and painful job losses, the economy remains strong with an unemployment rate of 3.3%. Another large employer and enormous benefit to the Mexico area, SSM Audrain remains in negotiations for a potential sale, the impact of which is truly unknown.

The farming industry in mid-Missouri also plays a vital role in the economy of Mexico and Audrain County. In 2018 Audrain County had 112,500 acres of corn which produced over 14 million bushels and 159,000 acres of soybean-producing almost 8 million bushels. Out of 114 counties in Missouri, Audrain ranks number 1 in soybean production and number 2 in corn production according to the USDA. Obviously, agriculture plays a very large role in the community and as it ebbs and flows this also affects the community both positively and negatively.

The recent and current expansion of Spartan Light Metals and continued job growth at True Manufacturing, Soft Surroundings and others have benefitted the community with solid job growth. According to the Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC), Audrain County's average annual wage is \$36,336 or an average hourly wage of \$17.47 which compares similarly to surrounding counties.

An area that the Chamber of Commerce, County of Audrain, the City of Mexico and the Mexico Public Schools are all working on is improving our workforce. Whether it is educating 8th graders on careers available in the local manufacturing community or by creating the Mexico Sustainability Project to strengthen the existing workforce of the area. Local manufacturers are also involved in and organize a career day called "Find Your Path". All of these entities working together in a positive way will create a better workforce and community for the future.

Mexico's diverse economy, low unemployment rate and strengthening of the future labor force are all important factors for the community's future economic well-being.

## RECYCLING ASPHALT - HOW DOES THE CITY OF MEXICO DO IT?

The City of Mexico does the JIVE. Not the form of the jitterbug dance made popular by Cab Calloway, but by using an agriculture product made by POET Biorefining at Laddonia, Missouri.

JIVE is a corn based product that rejuvenates asphalt by replacing some of the elements lost due to aging and oxidation. This past year the City's Street Department purchased an asphalt recycler that is used for making hot mix patches. The recycler allows Street Crews to make a higher quality patch year round without having to depend upon an operating asphalt plant. Most asphalt plants close during the cold weather season. Chunks of asphalt pavement from utility repairs, pavement demolition and previous patches are heated and mixed with a rejuvenator to reactivate the asphalt portion. The hot mix is then used for pothole patching. Any leftover mix can be reheated and used another day.



When you drive the streets of Mexico, what looks like a black patch is really green. Recycled asphalt plus local ag product equals a win-win.

## ANIMAL LICENSE FOR 2020

Don't forget to register your dog, cat or ferret with the City of Mexico. Owners may obtain a 2020 license from the City Collector. The license fee is \$5.00 per animal for spayed/neutered animals or \$10.00 for non spayed/neutered animals. The tag must be secured to the collar or harness of the animal and worn at all times.

Owners will also need to have their dog, cat or ferret that is four (4) months old and older obtain a rabies vaccination and a booster vaccination within twelve (12) months of the initial vaccination. All vaccinations are to be administered by a veterinarian.



Applications for the license can be obtained from Administrative Services, 2nd Floor City Hall.

## HIRING PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS

Hiring in law enforcement has always been feast or famine. Years ago, the hiring process was so fruitful and abundant that police hopefuls began to put themselves through the Law Enforcement Academy in order to hasten the hiring process and make themselves more appealing as a candidate. The course started at 120 credited hours and has now increased to 600 credit hours. That fact alone, stops a lot of potential candidates from starting the process. The current environment with law enforcement across the country has been one of drastic change for the last few years. All Public Safety Departments are clamoring to hire quality recruits and the Mexico Department of Public Safety, is adapting to the shortfall by hiring and providing educational opportunities for the recruits by paying tuition to the Law Enforcement Academy. We consider this a way to take obstacles out of the paths of quality recruits.

This is a unique opportunity in the process because the Mexico Public Safety Department will be available to cross train the recruits as Police Officers and Firefighters. Police Officers must be 21 years old; however, firefighters do not follow the same requirement. The Mexico Department of Public Safety can hire good quality people and start training for fire service while waiting for the Academy. Upon graduation from the Academy and after obtaining their Missouri POST license, the

recruit will immediately start Field Training with fire service training already in hand.

Public Safety has been recruiting, interviewing, and doing background investigations since August when the process was given the green light. We are now looking to hire five candidates from this group. Some will already have completed the

Law Enforcement Academy and some will be attending at the first opportunity. Our hope is to have these five candidates ready and fully trained by summer 2020. This new process is very forward thinking and supports the City's mission of Work Force Sustainability.

We will be accepting job applications until positions are filled for Probationary Public Safety Officer in the Public Safety Department. This position would continue until successful completion of the law enforcement academy and POST certification.

(The law enforcement academy costs would be paid for by the City of Mexico.) At which time, the status would change to Public Safety Officer and field training would begin. Annual Salary while in the academy would be \$30,014.40 with an excellent benefit package. Applications and complete job descriptions are available in the Administrative Services Department of City Hall or on our website at [www.mexicomissouri.net](http://www.mexicomissouri.net). Send applications to City of Mexico, Administrative Services Department, 300 N. Coal, Mexico, MO 65265. EOE/AA/E-Verify/Tobacco Free workplace.



Pictured are Damon McQueary, left, who will be starting Law Enforcement Academy in January and Scott Sendelweck, who was sworn in as a full fledged officer on September 13, 2019.

## CHRISTMAS TREE PICK-UP

Christmas Tree pick-up will be done on Wednesday, January 8 and Thursday, January 9, 2020. Please place the tree at curbside next to your driveway. No artificial trees, wreaths, trimmings or lights.



For more information or to schedule a pickup, please call 573-581-2100, ext. 315.

## FREE FIREWOOD

FREE firewood is available at the brush yard. You must load it yourself.

Winter hours: Saturdays 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. beginning November 23, 2019.



## MEXICO PARKS AND RECREATION UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Visit the City's website at [www.mexicomissouri.net](http://www.mexicomissouri.net); visit "City of Mexico Parks and Recreation" on Facebook or contact Parks personnel at 573-581-2100, ext. 234 for upcoming events.

## PREPARING TO MAKE A SPLASH IN THE COMMUNITY

The Fairgrounds Pool was built in 1985 and has proven to be very expensive to operate. Due to its massive 485,000 gallon capacity, the pool's footprint requires a large team of personnel to safely operate. Naturally, an aging pool has presented other challenges, such as decaying concrete, aging equipment and failing infrastructure. Operationally, the current city pool has lived beyond its life expectancy.

The City Council has established a \$3.6 million dollar budget to fundamentally correct operational problems and provide a quality facility. The updated pool facility will include a new bath house, shade structures, zero-depth entry, splash pad, competitive swimming lanes and lots of play features for youth and families.

### How are we paying for it?

The planned funding for this project is 1/3 in cash from the City's Capital Project Reserve Fund; 1/3 from the Parks and Recreation Fund via dedicated park funding, grants, donations and operational savings; and the remaining 1/3 will require the approval of a new funding source.

### What is the process?

City Council and Staff considered several approaches to renovating the current facility and is proceeding with a competitive design-build method. At City Council's direction, City Staff drafted a request for company proposals to become the chosen contractor. Three qualified, Missouri-based, firms submitted design proposals for the competition. Westport Pools of Maryland Heights, Missouri, has been selected as the design-build contractor for this project.

### Why use the design-build method?

The design-build method is an approach to construction that allows City Staff, citizens, the builder, and the design team to all work together from start to finish. This collaboration sets the tone for efficient communication, streamlined construction schedules and the opportunity to minimize the overall cost and time to complete the project.

### What are we going to get?

Based on research and experience, we're confident that the \$3.6 million dollar budget will satisfy our community's need for an aquatics facility. A priority in an updated facility is providing safe water quality by updating and replacing pool pumps, pipes, mechanics and filtration systems. Another major component of the project will be to create an inviting space that is accessible for all by providing a zero-depth entry. The remainder of the budget will be providing play structures, shade and bathhouse accommodations. Additionally, a new facility will also feature a 25-meter pool for competitive swimming, swimming lessons and a splash pad that is operable outside of the pools regular hours.

### What Happens Next?

The City will negotiate an agreement with Westport Pools by the end of 2019. Westport Pools along with City Staff will prepare a preliminary concept that will be made available for citizen input and discussion in the spring of 2020. Following citizen input, a final design will be prepared by Westport Pools within the established budget for City Council approval. A timeline for project construction will be contingent upon finalizing all funding sources.

## BRUSH YARD WINTER HOURS

The Brush Yard  
Winter Hours begin  
Saturday, November 23.

**Hours of Operation**  
Saturday's ONLY  
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

## WINTER HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE FACILITY HOURS

The City of Mexico's Household Hazardous Waste Facility will be moving to Winter Hours for the months of November, December, January and February. The facility will be open on the 2nd Wednesday of the month by appointment only. Items accepted include: latex and oil based paints, stains and varnishes, oils, flammable liquids, antifreeze, oil filters, aerosols, herbicides, pesticides, fertilizers, acids, cleaners, alkaline liquids, fluorescent bulbs, all types of batteries, and sharps. Please call 573-581-2100, ext. 350 to schedule an appointment.

## ARE YOU PLUGGING UP THE PIPES?

First it was baby wipes, then it was hand towelettes and don't forget makeup remover wipes. There are also disinfecting wipes for the kitchen and oh yes, furniture wipes.

There are so many wipes but where do all of them go? Some wipes, not an insignificant number, get flushed down toilets. These wipes contribute to home plumbing blockages, septic system trouble, municipal sewer overflows and can clog pipes. Wipes cause expensive and time consuming repairs for homeowners and wastewater crews.

Products like wipes, fat, oil, grease and chemicals do not dissolve. These products can clog public sewer pipes and pump station equipment, leading to sewer backups.

Save yourself from a pain in the drain and follow the tips below. Tips to keep your drains clean and functioning:

1. Remember – only wastewater, toilet tissue, and human waste belong in your drains and into the sewer.
2. Don't block the sewer: wrap up sanitary products, diapers, wet wipes and put them in the trash.
3. After cooking fat, oils and grease, let it cool – it can then be disposed of in the trash.
4. Chemicals, solvents, engine oil and paint should be taken to Household Hazardous Waste at 201 South Morris. Call 573-581-2100, ext. 315 to make an appointment.



## CITY COUNCIL IS CONSIDERING A USE TAX TO RESTORE REVENUES

For better or worse, most local government operations are partially funded on a consumption model. People in a city buy things, pay a local tax, and the receiving government can fund fire protection, police, roads, parks, capital improvements and other daily services to the community.

The City of Mexico has enjoyed decades of strong retail sales which has helped pay for the ever increasing cost of providing essential city services.

Retail once was only a few mom-and-pop stores and five-and-dime stores that brought lots of goods in for our surrounding community members to purchase. Nationally, in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, big box stores entered the landscape and the City of Mexico was no exception; but purchases were still bought largely face-to-face within our retail community. In the 2000s, and exploding over this past few years of this decade, internet shopping has changed the face of retail forever.

Currently, the City of Mexico does not collect a use tax on out-of-state internet purchases and finds itself in the minority, with the State of Missouri and over 160 Missouri cities having a Use Tax in place as of the date of this article.

The erosion of local sales tax revenue and non-captured revenue from out-of-state internet sales is notable. Based on data obtained from the Missouri Department of Revenue, if Mexico had a local Use Tax in place, an estimated \$152,000 of additional revenue would have been made available last year to support City services.

A local Use Tax will essentially curb the increasing loss of sales tax revenue needed to support City services and of equal or more importance level the playing field for our local brick and mortar retailers who directly invest in our community and provide local employment. Without question, in the absence of a Use Tax, our local businesses are undercut by out-of-state internet retailers through the sale of products void of collecting sales tax.

### Why is this important to City of Mexico's residents?

The Use Tax levels the playing field for local businesses who are required to pay the local Sales Tax. With no local Use Tax in place consumers have an incentive to purchase items from out-of-state vendors instead of buying locally. The City of Mexico needs to maintain this revenue stream for vital City services such as construction of a city swimming pool, purchase of public safety equipment, improvements to walking trails and sidewalk construction, road and storm water system construction.



## MEXICO, MISSOURI

City of Mexico, Missouri  
300 North Coal Street  
Mexico, MO 65265

### HOLIDAY TRASH SCHEDULE

The Holidays are rapidly approaching. The Holiday Trash Schedule is:

- Thanksgiving Week - Normal Schedule
- Christmas Week - Wednesday's route will run early on Saturday, December 28
- New Year's Week - Normal Schedule

City of Mexico Offices will be closed on the following days in observance of Holidays:

Thursday and Friday

November 28 & 29, 2019 - Thanksgiving

Wednesday, December 25, 2019 - Christmas

Wednesday, January 1, 2020 - New Year's Day

Monday, January 20, 2020 - Martin Luther King Day

Monday, February 17, 2020 - Presidents' Day

### CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS 2019 - 2020

Mayor: Dr. Ayanna Shivers

Chairman Pro Tem: Chris Williams

Council Members

Steve Nichols • Chris Miller • Vicki Briggs

### CENSUS 2020

The federal government is getting ready to ask some personal questions for the 2020 census. By next April 1, the Census Bureau plans to send a letter or a door knocker to every U.S. household. It's part of a once-a-decade tradition of counting every person living in the U.S.

The census is required by the Constitution, which has called for an "actual enumeration" once a decade since 1790. The 2020 population numbers will shape how political power and federal tax dollars are shared in the U.S over the next 10 years. The number of congressional seats and Electoral College votes each state gets are determined by census numbers. They also guide how an estimated \$880 billion a year in federal funding is distributed for schools, roads and other public services in local communities.

Ultimately, the success of the census depends on everyone's participation. The Census Bureau depends on cross-sector collaborations with organizations and individuals to get people to participate.

The 2020 Census is important for you and your community, and you can help.

Learn more about at [www.2020Census.gov](http://www.2020Census.gov)

### City Hall 573-581-2100

Bruce Slage, City Manager

Marcy LeCount, City Clerk

Roger D. Haynes, Deputy City Manager/Administrative Srvc.

Russell Runge, Assistant City Manager/Economic Development

Rita Jackson, Director of Community Development

Kensey Russell, City Engineer/Public Works Director

Chad Shoemaker, Director of Parks & Recreation

Mexico Animal Shelter, 101 S. Morris, 573-581-0779

Municipal Court, 573-581-2100, ext. 247, Jamie Pehle, Court Clerk

Public Safety

Susan Rockett, Chief of Police

Emergency: 911

Non Emergency: 573-581-2100 ext. 144 or 573-473-5800

Tip Hotline: 800-392-TIPS (8477)