

## Fairmont Water....A Year in Review

by  
**Troy Nemmers, Public Works Director/City Engineer**

This past year brought new challenges to the City's drinking water system. The Minnesota (MN) Department of Health requires quarterly testing of our water. In May, testing revealed the nitrate levels in the lakes had increased due to runoff. This prompted the City to start blending groundwater and well water to meet the maximum contaminate level (MCL) set by the MN Department of Health. While the City was able to reduce the nitrate levels below the MCL within days of receiving notification from the Department of Health, it did not come without a cost. Staff estimates an additional daily expense of \$1,000 to \$1,300 for the additional chemicals used to treat the blended water. City staff continues to work with the MN Department of Health to better prepare for and predict this type of challenge in the future.

More recently, the drinking water system experienced a taste and odor event due to significant algae bloom in the Fairmont lakes. Taste and odor events are generally not a health concern, but more of a nuisance to those drinking and using the water. While taste and odor events were fairly common with the City's old water treatment process, the new plant's treatment process uses Granular Activates Carbon (GAC) filters to help control these issues. It was estimated that the GAC filters would last 6 to 8 years before needing to be replaced. The City planned to replace the filters based on those recommendations, however due to the recent taste and odor events, two of the four filters were replaced immediately. As it is obvious these filters need to be replaced more frequently, the City plans to replace one of the four filters each year to maintain a more balanced system.

While there are many challenges with the operation of the municipal facilities, the City's staff is prepared to respond to those challenges and strives to provide the best level of service. Whether plowing the streets, providing safe drinking water, keeping the lights on or treating sanitary sewer flows, City staff is committed to providing exceptional service to City of Fairmont residents and businesses.



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Not on the electricity to light it!!!***

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Receive a Rebate from Fairmont Public Utilities.

Light emitting diodes (LED) are 90% more efficient, cool to the touch and longer lasting than standard Christmas light bulbs. Rebates forms are available at City Hall and will be accepted until December 31, 2016.

For additional information, contact Julie Zarling at 507-238-3937.

# Winter Chills & Snowflake Swirls

## Fairmont City Code on Winter Snowfall

By Elizabeth Bloomquist, City Attorney

As I write this article, it is 65 degrees and sunny outside. I am having a difficult time accepting the fact that winter is coming and soon it will be snowing. On the other hand, it is November in Minnesota, so facts are facts, and it will snow. Here are a few reminders of the regulations involving snowfall:

- \* Fairmont City Code Section 16-28 states that a snow emergency shall be declared automatically upon the falling of two or more inches of snow. It is every motor vehicle owner's responsibility to be aware of the weather and in the event two or more inches of snow falls, their vehicle must be removed from a snow emergency route so that snow plows can clear the road. City employees will generally declare a snow emergency by radio and social media but not hearing the declaration is not a defense to receiving a ticket and incurring towing expenses. Parking is prohibited on snow emergency routes for 24 hours after the declaration of a snow emergency or until the street has been cleared from curb to curb.
- \* On all non-snow emergency routes, any motor vehicle left parked in one place for more than twenty-four (24) hours will be considered to be in violation of a snow emergency regulation and may be ticketed and towed.
- \* From November 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup> it is unlawful to park a motor vehicle on Downtown Plaza from Blue Earth Avenue to 4<sup>th</sup> Street between 2:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. This regulation aids in snow removal all winter long.
- \* Snowmobiles are not to be used in town for general winter transportation. They may be ridden from a place of storage to a place where they are permitted to be operated (such as out in the country or on designated snowmobile trails) so long as it is a direct route between the beginning and the destination (City Code Sec. 16-76). When the snowmobile is ridden in town, it should be ridden in the street on the far right hand portion of the lane used for traffic traveling in the same direction. No riding should be observed on private property, sidewalks, boulevards, golf courses, playgrounds or any property posted "No Snowmobiles". Snowmobiles may not be ridden in the City from 1:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m.
- \* City Code Sec. 23-3 requires property owners or tenants to clear their sidewalks of snow and ice within 24 hours after the snow or ice has stopped falling. If a property owner fails to clear the snow and ice from their sidewalk, it is considered a public nuisance. The City may come out and clear away the public nuisance and then reimburse the costs of the removal through the special assessment process to the property owner/tenant. Keep in mind that Minnesota State Statute Section §160.2715 makes it a misdemeanor crime (punishable by a maximum jail sentence of 90 days and a maximum fine of \$1,000) to deposit snow or ice upon the street. Therefore, please do not shovel the snow from your sidewalk or driveway into the street.

The Fairmont City Code can be found online on the City website at [fairmont.org](http://fairmont.org) or at the Martin County Public Library.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 507-238-3939.



### City Council

Meets 2nd & 4th Mondays at 5:30 pm  
City Hall Council Chambers

Bob Wallace	238-2007	Mayor
Wes Clerc	238-2979	Council Member At-Large
Bruce Peters	238-4507	Ward 1
Chad Askeland	236-9661	Ward 2
Jim Zarling	238-9303	Ward 3
Terry Anderson	236-4653	Ward 4

### City Hall

Office hours Monday-Friday, 8:00 am - 4:30 pm  
100 Downtown Plaza, Fairmont

Mike Humpal	238-3936	City Administrator
Elizabeth Bloomquist	238-3939	City Attorney
Paul Hoyer	238-3934	Finance Director
Patty Monsen	238-3935	City Clerk
Troy Nemmers	238-3942	Public Works Director/City Engineer