

November, 2009



www.ci.desoto.tx.us
972.230.9600

City Lights DeSoto, Texas



Council Corner, A Message from Denise Valentine, City Council, Place 3



Staycation!!!

We are enduring some tough economic times. In brighter times, some would be planning vacations that included beaches, boats, and snorkeling. Others would look forward to family trips home to visit relatives and eat our favorite comfort foods. However, many have decided to stay home during the upcoming Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday season. What plans have

you made to make this Staycation FUN? What does the City of DeSoto have to offer?

If you would like to spend the night away from home, we have seven hotels in DeSoto which offer a comfy get away. Some have recently opened and offer rooms and suites. Anyone wishing they could spend a portion of their Staycation at the spa with a relaxing massage, facial, and painted fingers and toes? There are several spas and salons within our city limits only minutes away.

Perhaps you were looking for activities that are more physical...start with a brisk walk or run along Roy Orr Trail which follows Ten Mile Creek. We have beautiful natural scenery along this water way. Or you may prefer exploring the Dallas County - Windmill Hill Preserve in DeSoto. The nature preserve is 75 acres and includes a hiking trail with gentle slopes and steep hills. Look for the bridge named for the late Steven Ray Vaughn. The DeSoto Recreation Center, in the Town Center Complex, offers a fitness center with state of the art exercise equipment for a reasonable monthly fee (no contract required). Speaking of the Town Center Complex, if you want to spend a few hours relaxing and reading, visit the DeSoto Library. You can have coffee, sandwiches, salads, or smoothies while reading or surfing the internet either inside or outside on the plaza.

Want to go out on a date? Want to enjoy some quality entertainment? The Corner Theater is conveniently located in

the DeSoto Town Center Complex. Like Jazz? Saxophonist, Joseph Vincelli is in concert the evening of November 7th at 8 p.m. You can't beat the cost of this quality entertainment - only \$10 per person! Looking for something the whole family can enjoy? Attend the Winter Jam - Stories of Family and Home presented by the Dallas Storytelling Guild on November 21st. You can also enjoy a musical presented by the African American Repertory Theater just in time for the holidays. The Gifts of the Magi opens December 4th and runs weekends until December 20th. End the evening by dining in one of the restaurants right here in DeSoto. Are you over 55? You can come to the DeSoto Seniors Prom for dinner, dancing and entertainment on November 7th.

Like going to sports events? The DeSoto High School football team closes its regular season play on November 6th in Tyler and what a great season they are having! Let's hope they continue into the playoffs...stay tuned. The DeSoto High School basketball team will defend their 2009 State Title as their season begins on November 7th. District play begins in January 2010. Our Lady Eagles Basketball Team reached the state finals in 2008 and they also have a great season ahead. Go Eagles!!!

The city will kick off the Holiday season with Breakfast with Santa sponsored by the DeSoto High School Eagelettes on Saturday, December 5th at the DeSoto Civic Center and the Annual DeSoto Holiday Parade of Lights will take place that evening at 6 pm along Hampton Road. The Concerned DeSoto Citizens will sponsor a Kwanzaa display in the reception room at City Hall throughout the month of December and a Kwanzaa Celebration in the City Hall Atrium December 29th.

Wow! It seems that you can have a Staycation in DeSoto and end up just as tired at the end of it as you do when you go out of town. Instead of spending your Staycation organizing closets or cleaning out drawers, enjoy yourself and entertain the family by visiting some of our local attractions and events. To get additional information on these events, check the rest of this newsletter or the City of DeSoto web site at www.ci.desoto.tx.us.

**Denise Valentine,
City Council, place 3**

Did You Know.....

That a toilet leak left undetected and uncorrected for any length of time can result in both a huge loss of water and money? The American Water Works Association estimates toilets account for 45 percent of total water use in a typical household and that 20 percent of them leak. In just one year, a leaky toilet can waste over 22,000 gallons of water. If your bill has been creeping steadily higher, you could have a leak caused by one of the following problems:

Water Trickling Into the Bowl, or "Phantom Flushes"

You may periodically hear your toilet begin to spontaneously refill, as though someone had flushed it. A toilet that cuts on and off by itself, or runs intermittently, has a problem that plumbers call a phantom flush. This is often the hardest problem to detect. Generally, it is caused by a deteriorated or defective flush valve (flapper) ball at the bottom of the toilet tank. If the flapper or ball valve does not seat properly and form a water tight seal, water will leak around it into the toilet bowl and down the sewer. The flapper valve should be replaced every 3 to 5 years. Most hardware, plumbing and home improvement stores supply flappers.

Water Trickling Into the Tank

If you hear a sustained hissing sound coming from your toilet, it's probably the result of water trickling into the tank via the supply line. This can be caused by an improperly adjusted or broken fill (ball cock) valve. If the float is set too high or if the shut-off valve fails to close completely, water will continue to enter the tank and flow into the overflow tube. This type of leak can be seen simply by taking the tank top off and observing if water is flowing into the overflow tube once the tank is full. Float balls occasionally need to be adjusted or replaced. They can also be easily fixed with replacement parts from the local hardware or home improvement store.

The Bowl Empties Slowly

A bowl that empties slowly -- also known as a weak flush -- is usually the result of clogged holes underneath the rim of the bowl. You may want to contact a plumber to verify and repair the leak. Or if you consider yourself an experienced "do-it-yourselfer", use a curved piece of wire to poke gently into each flush hole to clear out any debris. Coat-hanger wire works fine, and a small mirror will help you see under the rim. You can also use wire to loosen debris that may be blocking the siphon jet in the bottom of the drain. Be careful not to scratch the bowl.

The Dreaded Clog

Clogs are the most common toilet problems.

CITY CALENDAR

November

- 2 Park Development Corp. Mtg. - 6:30 p.m. - Recreation Center
- 3 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall - Election Day
- 5 Keep DeSoto Beautiful Board Mtg. - 6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 5 Library Advisory Board Mtg. - 7 p.m. - Library Conference Room
- 7 Jazz Concert with Joe Vincelli - Corner Theatre - call 972.230.9648 for tickets
- 10 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall 7 p.m.
- 17 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 21 Winter Jam - 7 p.m. - Corner Theatre
- 23 DEDC Board Meeting - noon - City Hall
- 24 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. City Hall
- 26 Thanksgiving Holiday - city offices and facilities closed
- 27 Thanksgiving Holiday - city offices and facilities closed

December

- 1 City Council Meeting - City Hall - 7 p.m.
- 3 Keep DeSoto Beautiful Board Mtg. - 6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 3 Library Advisory Board Mtg. - 7 p.m. - Library Conference Room
- 4 *The Gifts of the Magi* - opens in the Corner Theatre 972.572.0998
- 5 DeSoto Holiday Parade of Lights -- Hampton Road 6 p.m.
- 7 Park Development Corp. Meeting - 6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 8 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 15 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 21 DEDC Board Meeting - noon - City Hall
- 22 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 24 Christmas Eve Holiday - city facilities closed
- 25 Christmas Day - city facilities closed
- 29 CDC Kwanzaa Celebration - 7 p.m. - City Hall

Did You Know....(cont.)

Several tools can clear a clogged drain, but some repairs are best left to the professionals. If you suspect you have a clogged toilet, consult a plumber.

Leaky Seals

A standard toilet has at least five seals with the potential for leaking. In each case, the solution is to identify the faulty seal and tighten or replace it. The largest seal is the one between the tank and bowl. A break here will cause a major leak, with water spraying from underneath the tank at every flush. The final seal is the wax seal mounted on a plastic flange underneath the toilet base. If this seal fails, water leaking underneath the toilet base will eventually rot the floor. Caulking around the base of the toilet without repairing the leak will only trap the water, making matters worse. Contact a qualified, licensed plumber to detect and repair this type of leak.

A simple leak check can be performed using toilet tank leak detector tablets which are available free of charge to DeSoto Water Utilities customers. Please visit the Utility Billing Department located in City Hall to request the tablets. For more information regarding your water service, please call 972.230.9627.

Code Enforcement.....It's Everyone's Job

Junk Vehicles - City Ordinance requires that you maintain your property free of any junk motor vehicles. A junk motor vehicle is any vehicle that is inoperative and remains inoperative for more than 45 days or is inoperative and does not have a current registration sticker or inspection sticker. A junk motor vehicle is also any vehicle which is wrecked, dismantled, partially dismantled or discarded. These vehicles may not be visible anywhere in the public view, public right-of-way, street or on any other private property.

DeSoto Code Enforcement is stepping up enforcement on inoperable vehicles around the city. In the past, a door hanger was



left on the residence where the vehicle was parked asking that it be moved. Now a certified letter and a first class mail letter will be sent to the resident stating that if the vehicle is not moved in 10 days, Code Enforcement will pursue securing a court order to have the vehicle towed.

Downed Fences - City Ordinance requires that the fence on your property be maintained at all times. It is unlawful to allow your fence to lean or to have missing, loose or broken slats or panels. It is also prohibited to have barbed wire, hog wire, or chicken wire or to have an electric fence.

The fence is not allowed to have any symbols, writings or other graffiti except for signs which pertain to the address or occupancy of the property. (If you find graffiti on your fence, report it to the Police Department at 469-658-3000 and volunteers from the Citizens On Patrol will clean up the graffiti at no cost to you.)

If you have a swimming pool, a fence, structure or gate is required to completely surround the swimming pool to prevent small children from inadvertently wandering into the pool. This fence, structure or gate shall not be lower than (6) six feet in height, and not have any openings that will allow a four-inch diameter sphere to pass through. All such gates should have a self-closing and self-latching device designed to keep gates closed and locked at all times.



A permit is required to build any fence on your property and can be obtained from the Building Inspection Department at City Hall, 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd. or by calling 972. 230.9610.

If you have any questions about junk vehicles or downed fences or you would like to report a code violation in your neighborhood, please call the Code Enforcement office at 469.658.3076.

Answers To Your Questions Regarding How Your Sewer Charges Are Calculated

How are winter sewer averages calculated for residential customers?

Each year, residential customers have their monthly water consumption during the winter months averaged to establish a maximum sewer charge. We take the water consumption shown on your December, January, February and March billings, discard the two highest months and average the remaining two months to establish the maximum sewer charge that will be used from April of that year through the following March. For example: if your water usage is 10,000 gallons in December, 15,000 gallons in January, 8,000 gallons in February and 6,000 gallons in March, the new average is 7,000 gallons. The December and January bills would be discarded because they are the two highest of the four months and the remaining February and March billings would be averaged.

Why do you average only two of the four winter months?

Lawn sprinkling, entertaining guests during the holidays, filling a swimming pool or having a toilet leak, for example, can all increase a monthly bill. Being able to discard the two largest of these water bills prior to averaging the two remaining months gives a more accurate measure of water going into the sewer system.

Once I have my average, does this mean I will be charged this same amount every month?

This is a maximum charge. You will not be charged more, but you could be charged less. If your average water usage is 8,000 gallons and you only use 5,000 gallons of water one month, you will be billed for 5,000 gallons of sewer.

Why do you use the winter months for averaging?

Normally residential customers are not watering their lawns during this time period and all of the water usage is inside the house. Generally this is the time of the year that the majority of the water is going down the sewer system. If you operate your irrigation system year round, it would be advisable to have a separate meter for watering your lawn so that the water used on your lawn would not calculate into the winter average.

What is my average if I am a new customer and do not have a winter months' history?

All new residential customers receive a 7,000 gallons average until they have established their history during the winter months. Remember that is the maximum and the charge is less if your water consumption is less.

If you have questions regarding the charges on your utility bill, please call 972.230.9627.

DeSoto's Christmas Parade is December 5th at 6 p.m.

Planning is underway for DeSoto's 37th Annual Holiday Parade of Lights which is scheduled for Saturday, December 5th at 6 p. m. The theme is Winter Wonderland. Line up will take place behind the DeSoto ISD Administration Building at 200 E. Belt Line Road and the parade will travel west on Belt Line turning north on Hampton Road and continuing north on Hampton ending at DeSoto Town Center.

The DeSoto Lion's Club, Chamber of Commerce and City are partnering to host the parade but we need your participation to make it a success. Parade applications can be downloaded from the city's website at www.ci.desoto.tx.us or by calling the DeSoto Chamber at 972.224.3565. We invite churches, scouts, youth sports teams, school groups and anyone who loves a parade to submit an application and start making plans to participate. The deadline for early bird (free) registration is November 13, 2009.

Winter Jam

presented by The Dallas Storytelling Guild
Saturday, November 21st, 7p.m.

Five nationally known storytellers will make you laugh, make you think, and definitely put you in the mood for the holidays. If you love a great story, the Dallas Storytelling Guild invites you to join them at DeSoto's Corner Theatre at 7 p.m. on Saturday, November 21st, for an evening of family-oriented stories for the holidays. Tickets are \$7.50 for adults, and children 12 and under are \$5. To purchase advance tickets or for information on group sales, visit the Dallas Storytelling Guild at www.DallasStorytelling.org. This program is made possible in part by a grant from the DeSoto Arts Commission and the support of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Dallas Alumnae Chapter. For more information call 972.230.9648.

ACAPULCO'S
 partners with



**to thank ALL
 DESOTO CITIZENS
 for their support!**

EVERYONE is invited to lunch!

November 22, 2009

10:30 a.m. - until all food is gone
 Ceremony at 12:30 p.m.

**FREE
 Thanksgiving lunch
 to ALL!**

**225 E. Beltline Road
 NO RESERVATIONS REQUIRED**



Seasonal flu and novel H1N1 virus infections can spread quickly.
 Prevention is key! Simple actions can prevent the spread of the illness.

*It's going to be a busy flu season.
 Are you and your family prepared?*



PREVENT ILLNESS

- Get a flu shot every year.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water and use hand sanitizer regularly.
- Wash your hands before touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

PREVENT SPREADING

- Stay home if you have flu-like symptoms.
- Use your elbow to shield your cough or sneeze.
- Don't share personal items such as toothbrushes, drinking glasses or towels.

Dallas County Health & Human Services

Zachary Thompson, Director Dr. John Carlo, Medical Director

Breakfast With Santa sponsored by the DHS Eaglettes
 Saturday, December 5th - 8 to 11 a.m.
 DeSoto Civic Center - For info call 972.230.9651



**AFRICAN AMERICAN
 REPERTORY THEATER
 PRESENTS**

*the
 GIFTS
 OF THE
 Magi*
 A MUSICAL



Show Dates & Times:
 December 4 - 20, 2009
 Friday - Saturday Nights @ 7:30pm **\$25**
 Saturday & Sunday Matinee @ 2:30pm **\$20**
 Preview Performance on
 December 3 @ 7:30pm **\$12**

To Purchase Tickets:
 Box Office - 972.572.0998
 Web - www.aareptheater.com

DeSoto Corner Theatre
 211 E. Pleasant Run
 DeSoto, TX 75115

Sponsored by:

