

Dear Citizens – August 2008,

I am very excited to announce that we have closed on the property for our new water tower and well location. We can now go out for bids for both items. It took much longer to acquire property than I originally anticipated which has delayed our new water system. Now that we have the property, we should have the project completed by July of 2009. The completion of this project will double our current capacity to allow for future growth, and more importantly will increase water pressure for all areas of our City. Having a gravity pressurized system will also allow us to maintain water pressure throughout the City in the event of a power outage. This will be a great benefit for everyone.

Since it has been two years since we originally planned this project, we were recently informed by our engineer that the projected cost for the water tower has increased. Due to the sharp rise in steel prices, the cost has increased by \$160,000. We allowed a cushion when we passed the bond for this project, and this increase will be absorbed by this cushion. We are currently under budget on this project, and we will do everything we can to keep the project under budget through to completion. If you have any questions about this water project, please contact City Hall.

Due to the rising costs of doing business as a City, the City Council recently authorized utility rate increases for Water, Sewer and Gas. The rate increase for water and sewer will be around \$11.50 for the average home owner using 10,000 gallons of water. Gas will increase \$1.32 per MCF used, and a base charge increase of \$3.00. This was a very hard decision for the council to make, but the City cost of doing business have increased during these times as well. This is the first rate increase the City has implemented in about 10 years. We are doing our very best to hold costs down where we can to minimize the impact on your wallet.

We recently had some issues with our Emergency Alert Siren. None of these issues would prevent the siren from going off during an actual emergency, but we found some issues with our monthly testing procedures. We have fixed these issues, so our siren should resume its normal 3rd Tuesday of every month at Noon test. Please contact City Hall if you have any issues or questions about our siren.

I also want to make a request to everyone in Winona. We are looking for historical photographs and other memorabilia for the City of Winona. Photos, newspaper articles, letters and anything else you can find are welcome. If you have anything of historical significance, please contact City Hall. We would like to scan some old photographs into the computer, and photograph any other memorabilia we can find. The City has its 50th anniversary coming in April of 2009, and we would like to put something together to commemorate our City.

I also want to remind everyone that the City has a dumpster available full time for bulky items, or anything that you might have missed on trash day. The cost to use the dumpster is five dollars up to a pickup bed size load. We can take larger loads if we have space available. Please call or come by City Hall for more details on the use of our dumpster. City Hall can be reached by calling 903-877-3381.

Sincerely,
Rusty Smith
Mayor
City of Winona