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What is backflow and why should I be concerned?

We've all had our kids drink out of our cup and warn them not to put backwash into the cup. The same principle holds true for a city's water distribution system.

Both lawn and fire sprinkler systems have the potential to put backwash, or backflow as it's more commonly referred to in relation to drinking water, in a community's water system.

Louisburg is one of many cities that require any structure that has either a lawn or fire sprinkler to have an annual backflow compliance test. Louisburg's rules comply with regulations established by the Kansas Department of Health & Environment in accordance with the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act.

Backflow happens when water flows in the opposite direction from what is normal. When a lawn sprinkler or fire sprinkler is connected to a water distribution system, there is the possibility of contamination or pollution entering the system without a backflow prevention device.

WHAT IS A BACKFLOW PREVENTION DEVICE?

These devices protect public water systems from contamination or damage through cross-connections. These



A backflow prevention device is installed in this water meter setter to prevent a contamination of the City's water supply.

devices are mechanical and are made of springs, moving parts and rubber seating surfaces that can wear over time. An annual test assures the device is working properly.

These devices are designed to keep hazardous contaminants such as herbicides, pesticides, fertilizers, bacteria, organisms or any other foreign matter from entering the line. Backflow prevention devices are installed where the water line comes into your house to prevent water from flowing backwards. When drinking water is pulled through the main line by using a sink, toilet or other water source, it can siphon water through one of your branch lines such as a sprinkler system line. When the water is siphoned, it pulls whatever is in the line with it. In a lawn irrigation system, herbicides and pesticides can be siphoned through the drinking water system through sprinkler heads. A backflow prevention device prevents water and contaminants from getting through.

WHO NEEDS A BACKFLOW PREVENTION DEVICE?

Any residential home or commercial business with a lawn sprinkler irrigation and/or fire sprinkler system connected to the drinking water supply.

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Swelling with pride

During the Jan. 16 City Council meeting, Louisburg High School band director John Cisetti shared a slide show with the Council that highlighted the band's trip to the Tournament of Roses Parade. It really helped us to understand how exciting and special this trip was to not only everyone who was involved in the trip, but to the community of Louisburg as a whole. It gave us a chance to swell with pride as our city was being presented in a pristine way on a national stage. You cannot ask for more from these young people who deserve a huge congratulations of a job well done.

One of the things that stuck with me from the presentation was how it took many tries and a few rejections until the goal and dream of marching in the Granddaddy of all parades was accomplished. Mr. Cisetti and the students dared to dream and made it happen. Mr. Cisetti did ask during the presentation if we could move mountains and bring a beach to Louisburg,

so not everything can be accomplished, but it never hurts to ask. It is always exciting when teenagers show you they care by daring to dream and taking an active role in spotlighting their community.

During the next few months I want to challenge all of the youth in our community to stay involved by continually showing the same pride in our community that you displayed on New Year's Day. We are proud of you and keep up the good work.

As always, I hope the citizens of Louisburg both young and old continue to share their ideas of how we can continue to improve our community. If you have ideas or suggestions, feel free to email me at msouthard@louisburgkansas.gov or call 913-908-6384.

Marty Southard

MAYOR'S MINUTE

Financial programs assist businesses

Two programs can help area businesses with financial assistance.

Miami County offers microloans to help first time, as well as expanding, small businesses in the county.

The loan program, managed by the Justine Peterson organization, is available for real or personal property purchase, renovation projects and inventory expansion. The loan may help new businesses get started or help those businesses that might need to improve their credit score before they can secure traditional financing.

The loan program is flexible and can provide assistance for projects as small as \$500 up to \$10,000.

In addition to the financial assistance, a business is also offered help in completing their business plan, credit coun-

seling or other training specific to the borrower's needs.

A mini grant program is also offered jointly through the City and the County. This grant assists small start ups and existing firms to help underwrite the cost of technical assistance or training.

Miami County offers a mini grant of \$250 and the City of Louisburg matches that for a limited number of applicants. The money can be used for customer service or workforce training, financial management and professional services like accounting or attorney consultation.

For details on either program, contact the City of Louisburg.



Avoid falling for a scam with these tips

The phone rings and the caller indicates that you are past due on your gas bill and demands instant payment. Is this a scam?

This very situation happened to a local business just a few weeks ago. The business owner didn't fall for the scam but said the bill had been paid. She then hung up and called City Hall to verify payment had been received.

City Utilities Clerk Jessica Stiles said the City, and most utilities, would never call to demand payment on an account. If an account is past due, the City will mail a past-due notice, she said.

Scams will usually come with a sense of urgency and request you to

take action immediately, says Louisburg Police Chief Tim Bauer.

If you receive a suspicious phone call, tell the caller you can't talk and ask for a name and phone number to return the call. Scammers generally won't provide that information. If you have Caller ID and don't recognize the number, don't answer the call and let it go into voice mail. Scammers typically don't leave a message.

If you receive a suspicious email or an email that you didn't request to be sent to you, do not open it and delete it, Bauer said.

If you think you have been scammed or have provided money, personal identification information

or other financial account information, contact your local law enforcement agency.

Bauer said the key tips to avoid becoming a victim of a scam is alertness and prevention.

The Louisburg Police Department has a brochure available from the Federal Trade Commission that covers scams. If you receive a scam either by phone or email, let your friends know so they can avoid becoming a scam victim.

If you want to avoid scams in the future, sign up for the FTC's scan alert at ftc.gov/subscribe.

Don't fall for



phone scams

backflow

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HOW DO I REGISTER MY BACKFLOW DEVICE?

You are required to have a Certified Backflow Installer/Tester inspect your backflow device annually. On completion of the inspection, your contractor should submit your test results to the City. When your backflow test results are received by the City of Louisburg, the annual registration process is complete.

City staff will send you a reminder letter at least 30 days prior to the expiration of your current backflow registration. Starting in 2019 all Backflow Device Test Report Forms are due to the Utilities Department July 1.

DO YOU NEED TO HAVE YOUR DEVICE TESTED?

Yes. To ensure the device is functioning properly City ordinances require a certified tester must test it annually. For new facilities, the assembly must be tested when it is in-



City Hall has a backflow prevention device on the fire sprinkler system in the building.

stalled and then annually after that. If the tester finds the assembly is not working properly, you must arrange to have it repaired and tested again. The tester is required to provide a copy of the test report to you and the water supplier.

WHO CAN COMPLETE AN INSPECTION?

The City of Louisburg does not maintain lists of certifiers, but there are a number of them in the area. Check with local landscapers and plumbers, or you may search for backflow testers in the phone book or on the internet.

IS THE INSPECTION COSTLY?

A survey of prospective certified testers showed the cost was between \$50 and \$100 for the test. Maintenance costs depend on what is wrong with the device.

HOW DO I KNOW IF THERE IS A PROBLEM WITH MY WATER?

If you notice a change in the smell, color, taste or presence of foreign objects in your drinking water, call the City immediately at 913-837-5371 or call 913-837-5371 option 1 after regular business hours.

Getting to know.....**Training**



Above left: City Utilities Clerk Jessica Stiles, back row, far left, is pictured with her class at the Municipal Clerks Certification Institute. She will complete the four-year program next year. Above right: Public Works Supervisor Craig Hufferd is honored at his graduation from the KU Emerging Leaders Academy.



The City of Louisburg invests in its employees by sending them to training that will benefit their role with the City.

Jessica Stiles, city utilities clerk, recently completed her third year of the Municipal Clerks Certification Institute. The Institute is offered through the City Clerks and Municipal Finance Officers Association in cooperation with the Hugo Wall School of Public Affairs at Wichita State University.

City Clerk Traci Storey also completed the same coursework finishing her certification in 2012. Storey has served as City Clerk since 2008.

Craig Hufferd, public works supervisor, completed the Emerging Leaders Academy through the University of Kansas in the fall of 2016. This training is targeted to non-supervisory/non-managerial staff and helps prepare them for leadership roles in their departments and organizations. The class is a 12-week class conducted by the KU School of Public Affairs & Administration.

City management staff, City Administrator Nathan Law and Finance Director Pat McQueen, attend several workshops and conferences throughout the year sponsored either by the League of Kansas Municipalities, Kansas Association of City/County Management or other organizations geared to their roles with the City.

All the public works employees have a monthly safety class where an instructor comes to City Hall and provides additional training.

Public works employees also attend gas or water training or certification based on whichever utility they are generally assigned. Future employees assigned to the

wastewater treatment plant will take similar training.

Each year, public works along with City police and fire departments and County EMS conduct an emergency response training event. The volunteer fire fighters also conduct training at the station twice a month.

Police officers are required to complete 40 hours of law enforcement related in-service training annually to keep their Kansas Police Officer Certification current. The training may be through classroom training, fire-arms training or online classes. The training is reported to the Kansas Commission on Police Officers Standards and Training Central Registry, where it is recorded towards the individual officer's annual requirement.

CALENDAR & REMINDERS

- Did you know you can check the times and dates of all City meetings on the calendar located on the City's website? Just click on the calendar link at the bottom of the page for more information. www.louisburgkansas.gov
- Watch the City of Louisburg's Facebook page for information on when pool passes will go on sale. While you are there, be sure to "like" the City's page.
- Facade of Louisburg Improvement Program applications are being taken now for those businesses that are on Broadway between Amity and S. Third St. and those homes located in the older part of town. For complete details, check out the homepage on the City's website.
- Now that the first of the year has rolled around, dog owners are reminded to stop by City Hall for their dog licenses. Dog licenses are \$3 for a spayed or neutered pet and \$5 for a non-spayed or non-neutered pet. A copy of the dog's rabies vaccine is required.