

City of Fremont Update

Date: January 24, 2020

To: City Employees/ City Boards/ Mayor & City Council

Citizen Thanks Street Department

A Fremont citizen emailed me recently to thank the Street Department for a job well done. He complimented several employees for replacing a sign in his neighborhood and thanked the whole department for doing such a good job sanding the streets after a recent snowfall.

Whether it is sanding streets, plowing snow, or filling potholes, we greatly appreciate the work that the Street Department does to keep our streets clear and safe all winter long!



Senator Walz Introduces LB876

Fremont Senator Lynne Walz recently introduced LB876 dealing with extreme blight conditions on the City's behalf. After March's historic flood, much of the area impacted by the flood would have qualified as extremely blighted; however, the City cannot designate more than 35 percent of the City as blighted. By declaring the flooded area as extremely blighted, the City would be up against the 35 percent limit. To solve this problem, Senator Walz introduced LB876, which exempts extremely blighted areas from counting against the 35 percent blight limit.

The bill has been assigned to the Urban Affairs Committee for an upcoming public hearing.

Governor Recommends Flood Relief

In his State of the State speech, Governor Ricketts recommended spending \$50 million to rebuild some of the devastating flood damage to communities in 2019. He also recommended another \$9.2 million in aid to counties most severely impacted by the disaster. The Governor said that communities across the state have been rebuilding from the devastating floods, but work remains. The federal government will step up to provide significant support, but the state must do its part as well, he said. Eighty-four counties and five tribal nations have submitted more than \$400 million in disaster relief projects to the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Cold Weather Emphasizes Need for Heating Assistance

Low-income customers needing assistance to help pay their heating bills can apply for Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funds. The funds are part of a Community Development Block Grant program through the Federal Department of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies. In November, the agency released \$3.2 billion in federal funding. Nebraska's share of the funds is \$28,768,439. LIHEAP plays a critical role in helping low-income families pay their energy bills or pay for healthcare, food, and childcare.



Sinkhole on 23rd Street

The picture on the right is a sinkhole that suddenly appeared next to an electrical switching cabinet at the Don Peterson & Associates Office on 23rd Street. The sinkhole was caused when a Cox Cable contractor hit the 8-inch sewer line when they bored in fiber optic cable this fall. According to Keith Kontor, Water Department Superintendent, the boring machine damaged more than half a block of sewer line along 23rd Street. In order to fix the problem, Wiese Plumbing was brought in to pull in a new sewer pipe by using a technique called pipe bursting.



Lincoln Looking to Tax Short-term Rentals

The City of Lincoln is proposing new regulations to tax short-term rentals like Airbnb, Vacation Homes by Owner, bed and breakfast properties, and others. The change to the City's zoning code would permit property owners to rent out part or all of their primary residence for up to 30 days at a time by obtaining a license. There would be no limit on how often a residence is rented out, as long as it does not exceed 30 consecutive days. The proposed annual fee for the license is from \$150 to \$300. Rentals would also be subject to City safety standards as well as sales tax and the City's hotel occupation tax. Airbnb said Lancaster County residents made \$1.1 million through its site in 2018.

Drivers with Ice and Snow on their Car Risk Fines in Some States

Four people were injured in Massachusetts earlier this month when ice dislodged from a truck and smashed through the windshield of a pickup. A Minnesota woman suffered facial and head injuries after a huge piece of ice flew off a pickup truck and trailer last month and shattered her windshield.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, these are just a few examples of the injuries caused by ice missiles flying off cars and trucks and endangering those in vehicles behind them. Ice missiles can crack windshields, cause injuries, and sometimes can even cause deaths.

Police and safety officials encourage drivers to keep their vehicles' roofs and windshields clear of snow and ice, but not everyone takes heed. In some states, police can ticket motorists if their vehicle is covered with snow and considered a danger. Other states are considering bills that would require drivers to clear off excessive ice and snow.

The point is to clear ice and snow off your vehicle before heading out on the road.

There is no job so important and no service so urgent that we cannot take the time to do the work safely!