

the town crier

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Ellis, Kansas



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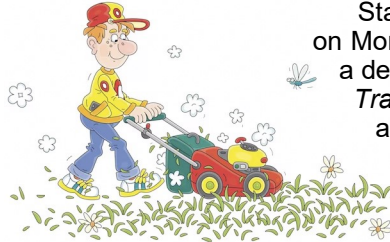
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Grass Pickup Resumes

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk



Starting April 1st, the grass route will be ran on Monday of each week, unless the Monday is a designated City holiday. (Consult the *Holiday Trash Schedule* in this newsletter for the alternate pick up day.)

Grass carts are available for \$2.33 per month, per cart, and only billed from May to November. Call the City Clerk's office to request a grass cart.

The grass cart has a number that is assigned to your house address when it is delivered. **Please do not move carts from one house to another.** Also, respect the homeowner who chooses to rent a grass cart for their grass. Do not put your grass clippings in someone else's cart without their permission. Perpetrators may be charged with theft of service for doing so.

We ask that you put only GRASS in the carts as it is fed to livestock. We will not pick up leaves or branches in the grass carts, however, the City opened a compost pile area near the City's shooting range on the east end of town for you to take your leaves to. See page two for more details about the compost pile.

If you would like the City to pick up your bagged leaves, put them in the TRASH carts to be hauled to the landfill. We will not pick up bags or other items left on the ground without a special pickup order.

If you have branches that need picked up, call the Clerk's office at (785) 726-4812 to schedule a special pickup. Remember branches need to be bundled and cut into 4-foot lengths.



Annual Sewer Rate Evaluation

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk

City Code states each customer's sewer charge must be reviewed annually and adjusted if necessary with the April 1st billing. The Code states that **a monthly average of the water used between the December meter reading and the March meter reading is computed, and that average is then applied to a sewer rate table.** The resulting sewer charge will remain in effect for the next 12 months starting with the April 1st billing. Water meters are read around the 10th of each month.

New residents who have moved into Ellis before December 2023 started their service with the base rate of \$26.42 for the sewer charge. Once the evaluation period is completed, the average water usage during that time period will determine your sewer rate change accordingly to the sewer rate table.

To the right is a brief sampling of the current sewer charges.

thousands of gallons of water used	monthly sewer charge
1	\$26.84
2	\$27.26
3	\$27.68
4	\$40.58
5	\$55.77
10	\$88.92
15	\$120.17
20	\$151.42
25	\$173.17





Benefits of Rain Barrels

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk

Rain barrels offer numerous benefits, both for individuals and the environment. Below is a list of reasons as to why one should consider using rain barrels.

1. **Water Conservation:** Rain barrels collect and store rainwater that would otherwise run off into storm drains or be lost to evaporation. This stored water can then be used for watering gardens, lawns, or indoor plants, reducing the need for municipal water and lowering water bills.
2. **Reduction of Stormwater Runoff:** By capturing rainwater from rooftops, rain barrels help to reduce stormwater runoff, which can contribute to soil erosion, flooding, and pollution of waterways by carrying pollutants such as fertilizers, pesticides, and oil into streams, rivers, and oceans.
3. **Mitigation of Soil Erosion:** By capturing rainwater and releasing it slowly into the ground, rain barrels help to mitigate soil erosion by reducing the force of runoff and allowing water to infiltrate into the soil, replenishing groundwater supplies.
4. **Promotion of Plant Health:** Rainwater collected in barrels is free of chlorine and other chemicals typically found in tap water, making it beneficial for watering plants. It also tends to be at a moderate temperature, which can help prevent shock to plants compared to cold tap water.
5. **Sustainable Water Management:** Rain barrels promote sustainable water management practices by encouraging individuals to use natural resources more efficiently and reduce their reliance on treated water from municipal sources.
6. **Cost Savings:** Using rainwater collected in barrels for outdoor watering can result in significant cost savings on water bills, especially during dry seasons or in areas with water restrictions.
7. **Reduction of Demand on Municipal Water Systems:** By reducing the demand for municipal water, rain barrels can help alleviate pressure on water treatment facilities and infrastructure, leading to potential cost savings for local governments and taxpayers.



Overall, rain barrels offer a simple, yet effective way for individuals to conserve water, reduce pollution, and contribute to more sustainable and resilient communities. Every gallon of harvested rainwater you use around the house is a gallon you don't have to pay for.

If you are interested in purchasing a rain barrel for \$40.00 each, reach out to the City of Ellis Clerk's office at (785) 726-4812 or stop by for more information. Every drop saved counts towards a more sustainable future!



Compost Pile

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk

It's the season to clean up our yards! Don't forget the City of Ellis has a compost site available for homeowners to transport their yard and garden waste to. The compost site will be open 24 hours/seven days a week, as long as everyone respects the type of materials that are allowed to be disposed of at the compost site. The compost site is located near the shooting range on the east end of town along Highway 40.

Yard waste accepted at the compost site includes:

- Garden Waste ❖ Grass Clippings ❖ Mulch
- Leaves (not branches, shrubs or twigs)

ELLIS RECYCLING CENTER

▶▶▶ HOURS ◀◀◀

Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri & 1st and 3rd Sat of Month

8:30 to 11:30 AM



Wednesday – 3:00 to 7:00 PM



Let's Create S'more Memories for Our Visitors!

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk

Camping season brings so many opportunities to enjoy the great outdoors. Roasting marshmallows around a campfire, stargazing under a clear night sky, or just hanging out with family and friends for the weekend, Ellis Lakeside Campground is the place to be!

In 2023, Ellis Lakeside Campground received over 1,875 paid receipts. That is 275 more paid receipts for overnight stays than in 2022. A comment from one of our visitors in 2023: "We have stayed in many city park campgrounds across the country, yours is the best yet! Thank you!" As a small community, the use of this local attraction by visitors is important to the success of our community's museums and businesses. Taking care of and improving the campground will entice more visitors to our community.

This year, there will be a lot of activity at the campground. With the area south of the expansion under construction, the Campground Committee would like to remind community members to please be mindful of the extra pedestrian and vehicle traffic at the campground. Remember to slow down to 20 MPH as you drive through the campground area. Let's do our best to make everyone's stay in our community a pleasant and safe one!



An update on Phase II of the campground project includes bids have been received for the playground equipment and installation of it. We are in the process of gathering bids for the construction and installation of a new prefabricated restroom/shower facility. Once the bids are reviewed and the project is awarded, it will be exciting to see construction begin. The goal for completion of the campground project is year-end 2024.

The campground project will offer some fantastic amenities for families to enjoy! Adding a modern, ADA-accessible playground and restroom/shower facility will make the campground more welcoming and inclusive for all visitors. These amenities will encourage more families to spend time outdoors together, fostering a sense of community and creating lasting memories.



Making Informed Decisions on Flood Risk

Submitted by Steve Homburg,
Certified Floodplain Manager

ASFPM's flood mitigation resource library continues to work to bring flood mitigation to the masses with the addition of 22 things property owners can do to reduce flood risk. The new strategies range from relatively simple projects, like landscaping and plumbing improvements, to more complex engineering options, such as constructing an earthen levee or installing underground water tanks.

Home and business owners looking to make informed decisions around the actions they can take this year to lower their risk of flooding, we encourage them to use the [ReduceFloodRisk.org](https://www.reducefloodrisk.org) website. Developed by ASFPM with financial support from FEMA, this interactive website demystifies flood mitigation and empowers people to protect themselves and their most valuable asset.

The Reduce Flood Risk website was launched in May 2022 and now has approximately 45 flood mitigation strategies to help property owners reduce their flood risk. Each strategy includes a detailed description of the process and its benefits, as well as photos, graphics, and links to additional resources.

To get started, go to [ReduceFloodRisk.org](https://www.reducefloodrisk.org), answer a series of five simple questions, and receive a detailed list of mitigation options recommended to reduce flood risk for their specific property type. The curated results can then be filtered and sorted by key attributes, such as cost, complexity, and level of required maintenance.

In addition to its decision-support engine, [ReduceFloodRisk.org](https://www.reducefloodrisk.org) features a variety of resources to help property owners and renters better understand flood risk, flood insurance, financial assistance and funding options, and who to contact with any questions they have about flood mitigation. The site is completely free and users do not need to create an account to gain access to the resources.

(Source: Association of State Floodplain Managers Newsletter)



While doing your yard work,
please remember that the City's

BURN SITE

accepts **ONLY** tree limbs,
branches and brush.

The Site does **NOT** accept grass, leaves, lumber,
or miscellaneous wooden items.

Take your grass, leaves and
garden waste to the
COMPOST SITE.



Scam Awareness

Submitted by Avery Smith, Chief of Police

The Ellis Police Department has fielded several calls of our community members being scammed in the last few months. In one instance, a community member was contacted by a suspect reporting to be from the Bank of America. The suspect informed our community member that they had won a large sum of money as well as a free vehicle. During the conversation with the suspect, the community member divulged their entire social security number, as well as their banking login information, routing information, as well as their account number. Through swift actions and reporting the breach of information to an Ellis Police Officer, the community member was able to close their bank account and open a new one, and no loss was reported. This is not par for the course however. In another instance, a community member had a pop-up appear on their computer. The pop-up stated that the community member needed to contact "Microsoft Tech Support" in regards to a virus on their computer. The community member contacted the number that was listed on the pop-up and spoke to a suspect about the pop-up. The suspect



was able to gain access to the community member's banking information and steal a sum of \$32,000 from the community member's bank account.

Other common schemes that are ran consist of a suspect calling you reporting themselves to be from the FBI, IRS, or your local law enforcement agency, wanting you to pay off a warrant that has been put out for your arrest. In these instances, the scammer will want you to pay off the fine using gift cards. Government agencies will never call you asking you to pay off a warrant, especially using gift cards. Another common scheme is through text message. A phone number or email address will text your phone, informing you that a package that was scheduled for delivery was stopped, due to an issue with either your payment information or your Amazon account. The text message will ask you to follow a link to clear up the issue. Following that link can potentially leak your personal information to the scammer that sent you the message.

The biggest takeaways from these instances should be this: if it seems too good to be true, it is. If you win a prize, you will never have to pay money to the organization that you won the prize from. You may have to pay taxes on the item that you won, but that will go to the State of Kansas or the Federal Government. If you didn't enter into any giveaways or contests, you won't be contacted by an organization because you won a prize. Scammers play off of your emotions to try to gain the upper hand on you. Nothing is more shocking than getting a call from an unknown number, stating that you have a warrant for your arrest. They play off of the shock, telling you that you will go to jail if you don't pay the fine. The scam centers that run these operations want one thing from you - your money.

If you receive scam calls or strange text messages, the easiest way to get them to stop is to not reply. Most modern phones also have the ability to have calls from numbers not in your contacts list sent straight to voicemail. If you receive a large number of scam calls, consider enabling this feature to alleviate some of the headache that comes with scammers trying to get your information. If you have any questions about suspicious calls or texts you have received, please contact Ellis County Communications via the non-emergency number at (785) 625-1011 and ask to speak to an Ellis Police Officer about the suspicious activity. You will be transferred to an officer who can take a look at the calls or messages for you and advise you if you are being scammed.



Reporting Procedures

Submitted by Avery Smith, Chief of Police

In the last few months, Ellis Police Department Officers have reported that they have had several instances of community members coming to their houses to report suspected criminal activity, or have received messages on their personal Facebook pages reporting suspected criminal activity.

Did you know that the Ellis Police Department has an officer on-duty at all times? The Ellis Police Department is currently fully staffed and has an officer available to respond to calls 24/7. The **FASTEST** and most **EFFECTIVE** way to have an officer respond to a call for service is to contact Ellis County Communications either by calling **911** or the non-emergency line at **(785) 625-1011**.

This brings the question of; "Why do we call, instead of going to an officer's house? They live right next to me, surely that's faster, right? We need an officer now!"

The answer is this - it is always faster to call and speak to a dispatcher, who sends the information you are reporting to the officer that's on duty, in real time. Dispatchers will gather all of the relevant information such as call type, location, who is involved, what is happening, as well as if there are weapons or injuries involved. Giving the information you have to a dispatcher can also summon additional resources to assist with what you are reporting. Reporting to an officer's house or to their Facebook messenger can delay the response from first responders. In the time it takes for the officer whose door you've knocked on to get ready to respond appropriately equipped, the officer that is on-duty could have been on scene, handling the call for service.

Officers will never respond to a call for service that they've received on their personal Facebook pages. They will instruct you to either call 911 or the non-emergency line, depending on the situation.

When do I call 911? I'm not sure if this is an emergency.

If you are unsure you are reporting an emergency, it is best to call 911.

Examples of emergency situations are as follows:

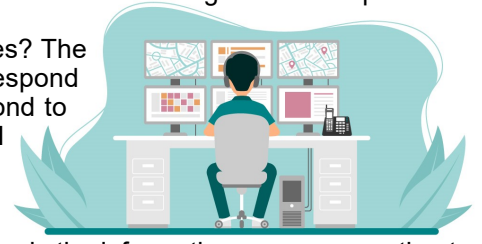
- ◆ You have been the victim of a crime
- ◆ You have witnessed a crime
- ◆ You have either witnessed or been involved in a traffic accident
- ◆ You or your neighbor's house is on fire
- ◆ You or someone else is currently experiencing a medical issue, and you need emergency medical services
- ◆ Your child has gone missing

Examples of situations that require police response and aren't considered emergencies are as follows:

- ◆ There is a dog running at large that is not being aggressive
- ◆ You have questions about city ordinances
- ◆ You need to request a welfare check on someone that didn't show up to work today
- ◆ You need to be fingerprinted for employment
- ◆ You would like to request a civil standby

No matter which reporting method you choose, a dispatcher will answer the phone. They will begin gathering relevant information from you and get the call for service dispatched appropriately. The biggest help that you can give them is to answer their questions completely and calmly. Our dispatchers are trained in Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD). They may give you instructions on performing CPR, and will coach you through performing CPR, should the situation require it. The moment all required information is gathered, the call for service is sent to Law Enforcement, EMS, or Firefighters, who will then respond to the scene.

Help us maintain quick response times and quality of service by reporting through the proper procedure!



City of Ellis

Vision Statement

A truly unique Kansas community, Ellis celebrates its rich heritage of friendly people that value family and strong work ethics while actively promoting quality education and public services.



Lead Copper Rule Survey

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk

The City of Ellis is seeking the community's assistance in meeting recent U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations requiring all public water supply systems to develop a Lead Service Line Inventory (LSLI) of public-owned and resident/business-owned water service lines. The City is **REQUIRED** to obtain surveys from all of our customers and submit the water supply line inventory to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) by October 16, 2024.

Thank you to those who have returned the survey! **If your household/business received a survey in this mailing, please return the survey to the City of Ellis by April 1, 2024.** If you **DO NOT** return the survey, the Public Works Department will begin going door-to-door to complete the survey for your household/business-owned water service lines.

City code prohibits vegetation watering between the hours of Noon to 7:00 p.m. year round.



Neighborhood Revitalization Plan

Submitted by Amy Burton, City Administrator/Clerk

After further revisions, the City Council approved the proposed Neighborhood Revitalization Plan (NRP) at the February 5th council meeting. The plan is intended “to promote the revitalization and development of the City of Ellis.” If eligible, participants will be provided tax rebates for new construction or improvements to existing properties. The entire City of Ellis is included in the Plan!



- Improvements and new construction must conform to all applicable building/ fire codes, rules and regulations in effect at the time improvements are made.
- Tax rebate will be based on the increase of appraised value on January 1, the year *after* completion of the project. That fixed dollar differential will be the incremental difference used for calculating the tax rebate for the entire 10 years.

- Applications **MUST** be submitted and approved prior to starting any project.

The Plan was revised to use a minimum investment amount for eligibility instead of a minimum increase in valuation:

- Minimum investment of **\$15,000** for residential improvements or **\$25,000** for commercial properties is required for eligibility.
- **95%** of increased taxes (based on assessed value after improvements) paid in the first year after completion of the project and each year thereafter for 10 years.



Community Blood Screening Scheduled

Submitted by Toni Jensen, Clerk 1

The Ellis County Health Department will be holding a community blood screening on March 21, 2024 from 8:00 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. in the City of Ellis Council room. Payment in the form of a check or cash is due at the time of service. Fasting for 12 hours prior is required. The following is a list of blood screenings that will be done:

Profile..... TBD HbA1c..... TBD
PSA..... TBD Vit D..... TBD



Time for Spring Cleaning

Submitted by Tim Kohlrus, Firefighter

With Spring just around the corner, the Ellis Volunteer Fire Department wants to encourage you to do a little extra spring cleaning this year, and wants to share these tips with you.

When the time ‘springs forward,’ don’t forget to change the batteries in your smoke detectors. Also give the smoke detector a good cleaning with your vacuum attachments to pull any dust out of the housing.

Dryer vents are sneaky little spaces that can very dangerous. On the outside of your home, clean the hood flap so it opens and closes properly. On the interior, disconnect the hose that connects the dryer and the duct coming through wall. Once disconnected, run a long brush through the vent hose to remove any lint build up. You can also use an air compressor or a vacuum to remove lint. Use a skinny brush or vacuum attachment to clean the interior lint trap section.

Mow, weed eat, or pull overgrown brush by the house, garage, and other outbuildings. Keeping brush down, and grass and weeds low provides very little fuel for fires. Make sure trash and brush are removed from your fire pit area. Check wind direction and speed before lighting a fire, and don’t use gas to light your fire. Kids and pets should also be kept away from the flames.

Check your grill before you fire it up for the season. Check connections, electrical cords, and hoses for any leaks and give the grill a good cleaning. If you use charcoal, only use approved charcoal lighter fluid.

One final tip is to prepare for our spring and summer storms. Gather items such as water, batteries, flashlights, non-perishable foods, and necessary medications, and keep them in a storage container. Invest in a weather radio that alerts you to oncoming storms and take cover when advised.

Last, but not least, the Ellis Volunteer Fire Department would like to thank the community for making our first pancake and sausage feed a huge success! We served around 260 people and enjoyed the good conversations throughout the evening. We **TRULY** appreciate your continued support over the years!



City of Ellis **MISSION STATEMENT**

The City of Ellis efficiently promotes infrastructure and beautification programs, supporting community growth while preserving its intrinsic small town charm.

To all persons decorating graves at
Mount Hope Cemetery

The Cemetery maintenance personnel will begin trimming and mowing soon. If you wish to retain any decorations that are not permanently mounted,
please remove those decorations by

MAY 3, 2024

After that date, the maintenance personnel will discard them without any further notice as part of the spring cleanup process.

If you have any questions, please contact the

Public Works Department
 785.726.4741 785.726.1741
 ellispw@eaglecom.net

Thank you for your cooperation.



Cemetery Decorating Regulations

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk

Per Ordinance 1402:

Toys, boxes, banners, balloons, alcoholic or non-alcoholic beverage containers meant as decorations, shells, objects made of glass, wood, tin, porcelain or clay, baskets, and unapproved containers will not be permitted as long-term grave decorations, and when used, will be removed without notice.

No permanent urns, decorations, ornaments, organizational emblems, or embellishments such as decorative statues, or decorative stones shall be permitted on or around a grave space, unless they are permanently anchored in a concrete foundation that is aligned with the monument foundation; provided that the total foundation, including monument and decorative item does not exceed the maximum foundation length allowed.

Flowers, wreaths, and other temporary decorations will be permitted during the grass-mowing season (April 1 until October 31) provided they must be placed in an approved permanent receptacle or hung from an approved shepherd's hook which shall not exceed forty-eight (48) inches in height on regular grave spaces.

Artificial and fresh flowers, wreaths, and other temporary decorations are permitted for Valentine's Day, Easter, Mother's Day, Memorial Day, Father's Day, Independence Day, Veteran's Day, and Christmas Day with seven (7) days allowed before the holiday for decorating and seven (7) days after for pickup of decorations. All decorations shall be placed within six (6) inches of the memorial marker and secured in a manner that they will not become dislodged or scattered by the winds. No holes may be dug in and around a grave to support flower vases or any other type of container. After the designated decoration time, all decorations not in approved permanent containers will be removed by the City.



Rabies Clinic a Success

Submitted by Toni Jensen, Clerk 1

The City of Ellis held its annual rabies clinic in the City shop on February 10, 2024, where patrons could bring their dogs and cats to be vaccinated. Dr. Brandon Weidenhaft, DVM at Big Creek Veterinary Service, was present to conduct the clinic. Nine customers took advantage of the event. Rabies, Distemper and Bordatella vaccinations were offered.

In addition to the vaccinations, 2024 City dog tags were also available for purchase. Fourteen dog tags were purchased during the event and 10 vaccinations were administered.

CITY ORDINANCE requires any dog over six months of age to be registered each year with the City. The registration year runs from January 1st thru December 31st. **To purchase a dog tag, simply bring a certificate of rabies immunization to the Clerk's office.** The tag fees are \$5 for spayed/neutered dogs and \$10 for intact dogs. Please note that tags purchased after March 1st will be assessed a \$2 per month penalty fee.

Residents are encouraged to stop by City Hall any time between the hours of 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. to purchase tags. We appreciate your support of the clinic!



calendar

MARCH

1	Municipal Court 8:00 am
4	City Council 6:30 pm
4-8	WEATHER AWARENESS WEEK
6	State-wide Siren Test 10 am
10	Daylight Saving Time Begins
15	Municipal Court 8:00 am
17	ST PATRICK'S DAY
18	City Council 6:30 pm
25	Planning Comm 7:00 pm
29	GOOD FRIDAY - City offices open
31	EASTER

APRIL

1	Grass Pickup begins
	City Council 6:30 pm
5	Municipal Court 8:00 am
15	City Council 6:30 pm
	Income Tax Filing Deadline
19	Municipal Court 8:00 am
22	Planning Comm 7:00 pm

MAY

3	Municipal Court 8:00 am
5-11	MUNICIPAL CLERK'S WEEK
6	City Council 6:30 pm
12	MOTHER'S DAY
12-18	NAT'L POLICE WEEK
17	Municipal Court 8:00 am
20	City Council 6:30 pm
19-25	NAT'L PUBLIC WORKS WEEK
27	MEMORIAL DAY
	<i>City offices closed</i>
28	Planning Comm 7:00 pm
	Public Works - Summer Hours Begin
	Swim Pool Opens 12:30 pm



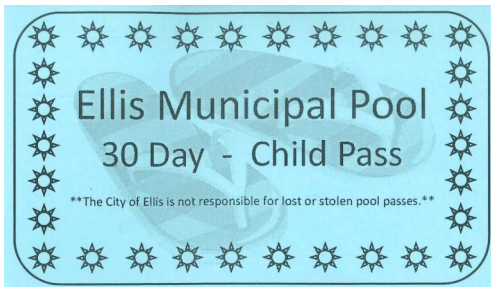
Election Filing Deadline

Submitted by Amy Burton, City Administrator/Clerk

Have you ever considered serving in your local government? Would you like to become more involved in the decisions affecting our community? If so, then consider filing for election as a Council member! This November, local voters will head to the polls to elect three Council members. The positions are currently held by Council members Kellie Crnkovich, Martin LaBarge and Jolene Niernberger. Here is what you need to know to get your name on the November ballot:

- ☆ The candidate filing deadline is NOON on June 1st.
- ☆ Candidates must file their Declaration of Intent with the County Clerk's office in Hays.
- ☆ Pay the filing fee of \$20.00.

Completing the above will ensure that your name is on the November ballot. Don't rely on the chance of a write-in vote; make sure you properly file as a candidate!



Swimming Pool Passes

Submitted by Amy Burton, City Administrator/Clerk

The City will once again offer 15-day and 30-day passes for both children and adults; however, passes will no longer be maintained by the pool staff. We have designed a business-sized laminated punch card that will need to be presented for entry. Passes are now simplified by no longer being designated by person, but simply adult or child. Also, passes no longer expire on July 1st of each year! The passes will be available for sale at the pool.

Children 6-12	15-day pass	\$21.00
Children 6-12	30-day pass	\$40.00
Adults 13 and Up ..	15-day pass	\$28.00
Adults 13 and Up ..	30-day pass	\$54.00



Tools for Business Success!

Submitted by Amy Burton, City Administrator/Clerk

According to Entrepreneur.com, approximately 20% of new small businesses fail in the first year and approximately half of new businesses by the fifth year. The City of Ellis is committed to helping new small businesses succeed by offering a variety of new business incentives:

❖ New Business Incentive Utility Program

Eligibility: a commercial entity newly formed and operating in the City of Ellis. This can include new branches or franchises of chain stores, but cannot include existing businesses which change name or ownership.

Incentive: free sewer (up to \$500) and sanitation services for one year.

❖ Sales Tax Rebate Program

Eligibility: new retail businesses which locate within the Ellis city limits. Applicant must be a legal business and registered with the Kansas Department of Revenue as the business in operation.

Incentive: During the first 12 consecutive months of business (Year 1), 50% of the one-cent general City sales tax timely paid to the Kansas Department of Revenue; the second 12 consecutive months (Year 2), 25% of the one-cent general City sales tax timely paid; the third 12 consecutive months (Year 3), 25% of the one-cent general City sales tax timely paid.

❖ Industrial Revenue Bonds

Eligibility: Owner of new business petitions City Council for consideration.

Incentive: Up to 100% tax abatement for up to 10 years. The petitioner pays for legal services and bond costs.

❖ Neighborhood Revitalization Plan (NRP)

Eligibility: A minimum investment of \$25,000 for new construction and improvements of commercial and industrial properties.

Incentive: 95% of increased taxes (based on assessed value after improvements) paid in the first year after completion of construction and each year thereafter for 10 years.

(See related article on page five for NRP incentives available for residential improvements as well.)

Please contact the City Clerk's office for a copy of official policies for additional requirements. Incentives must be approved by Council through application. Thank you for investing in Ellis!



HOLIDAY TRASH SCHEDULE

Monday, May 27
Tuesday, May 28

NO trash or grass pickup on **MEMORIAL DAY**

Monday and Tuesday trash and grass routes will be run





Stage 2 Water Warning Guidelines

Submitted by John Leiker, Public Works Director

Looking back over the last few months we have seen some fairly big weather changes, from a blizzard in January to spring like days in mid-February. The January blizzard was a challenge, but it was also a blessing. After the snow melted and receiving a nice rain around the same time, Big Creek is nearly full again. That is a welcome sight. Hopefully that is the start of a wet Spring, and we will eventually be able to come back out of the Stage 2 Water Warning we are currently in. As we look forward to that, I would like to remind everyone of what those restrictions are.

These regulation actions apply to City residents (including private domestic well users, if authority is delegated by the Chief Engineer under K.S.A. 82a-733(i)).

1. The escape or loss of water through breaks or leaks within the water user's plumbing or distribution system for any substantial period of time shall be prohibited, it being presumed that a period of eight hours after the water user discovers or should have discovered such leak or break, is a substantial period of time.



2. Outdoor water use, including lawn watering and car washing, but not limited to, the irrigation of lawns, shrubs, flowers, trees, gardens and other outdoor vegetation, shall be prohibited between the hours of noon and 7:00 p.m. year round.

3. No water user shall allow substantial amounts of water to escape or drain from private property onto public property, including, but not limited to, public sidewalks, rights-of-ways, streets, alleys, and highways, provided that substantial shall mean an amount sufficient to cause a discernible flow of water presumed that the resident(s) of property from which water escapes or drains knows of such escape or draining. However, the escape of water from private property due to washing of vehicles shall not be construed as substantial, provided the user of the water has not allowed water to flow from a hose or open tap when not directly being used to wash down the vehicle.



4. Excess water use charges for usage of water over the average amount used during the sewer evaluation period will be imposed.
5. Waste of water will be prohibited.

As spring arrives, we are all hoping for a very wet one, so the Stage 2 Water Warning can be lifted by Council.



Mowing Violations

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk

In an effort to maintain the beautification of the City, Public Works Director John Leiker is charged with ensuring residents maintain their property in accordance with City Codes. Many of the Spring/Summer code violations issued deal with mowing and/or weed control. City Code 8-402 states weeds and grasses shall not exceed 12" in height.

If a resident/property owner is cited for a violation under Code Section 8-402, by Ordinance, the City must notify that resident by personal service or certified mail. Due to the rising costs of certified mailing, the City primarily uses personal service by the Ellis Police Department. Once received, the resident has 10 days to remedy the violation. If a resident would like a hearing before the Governing Body on the violation notice, a request must be made within 5 days of receipt of the violation notice. If the violation is not remedied in 10 days, the City is authorized by ordinance to cut the grasses/weeds and assess the cost of mowing to the resident or property owner.

The City charges \$50 per hour, with a minimum of 2 hours charged regardless of how long it takes to mow the property. All costs are assessed to the resident or property owner. **No further notice is given during the calendar year once the first violation notice is issued.** Therefore, if the resident has been notified one time of a violation, the City has the authority to mow grasses and weeds in excess of 12" in height without notification to the resident and assess the costs as explained above.

If you see a property that needs attention, please contact Public Works Director John Leiker with any questions at (785) 726-4741. A property inspection will be done, and if the grass/weeds exceed 12", the Public Works Director will start the violation process. Let's all do our part to help keep our community beautiful!



Emergency Alert System

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk

The City of Ellis implemented an alert system through Nixle that will send out a text/email if there is an emergency situation, or even if a water leak is in your area. All you have to do is **OPT IN** to receive notifications for free. There are two ways to sign up below.

- ❖ TEXT "ELLISCITY" to 888777 and follow prompts.
- ❖ Go to www.nixle.com and click on "Resident Login", then click on **GREEN** "Sign Up" box.

If you sign up through text, you will still need to go to www.nixle.com to set up an account in order to select notification preferences. On the "Settings" tab, mark the box for City of Ellis. On the "Locations" tab, we strongly encourage putting your address in. This will enable us to ONLY send out messages relevant to your neighborhood, i.e. waterline breaks, police activity, etc.

The alert system is a great way to stay informed! If you are not sure how to set it up, please call the Clerk's Office (785) 726-4812 or stop by, and we will help you.



Beginning
Tuesday, May 28th
Public Works Department
will work

SUMMER HOURS

7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The City Clerk's office will continue
working regular hours
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. during the summer.



DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME

begins at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, March 10th. Spring clocks forward one hour. Check the batteries in Fire/Smoke/CO2 detectors



Constitutional Home Rule

Submitted by Amy Burton, City Administrator/Clerk

The topic of "Home Rule" has come up in the news recently. But what is Home Rule, and what does it mean for cities in Kansas?

Home Rule powers were granted to all cities in Kansas in 1961 by an amendment to the Kansas Constitution. Before the adoption of the Home Rule amendment, cities were ENTIRELY dependent on the State legislature for authority to take any action. Anytime our Council members adopt an Ordinance or Charter Ordinance, they are exercising their Home Rule powers.

Why is Home Rule important? In simplistic terms, Home Rule means local control. Home Rule allows local elected officials to make decisions for their community, and allows residents to determine where local dollars are spent. Home Rule allows for true government of the people, by the people and for the people.

Home Rule power is not absolute. Cities MUST comply with state laws that apply "uniformly" to all cities. When a Kansas statute allows the provision to be applied "nonuniformly", cities are allowed to adopt an ordinance or charter ordinance.

An ordinary ordinance supplements Kansas law, therefore an ordinance is the local law of the City. Ordinances stay in effect until repealed by another ordinance. Ordinances are required to be published and become effective on the date of publication. Council may adopt an ordinance at their Monday Council meeting, but the ordinance does not become law until that Thursday when it is actually published.

Whereas an ordinary ordinance supplements Kansas law, a charter ordinance exempts or amends Kansas statute. Therefore, there is a much more extensive process to adopt a charter ordinance. Once the charter ordinance is passed by 2/3 vote of the Governing Body (includes the Mayor), the charter ordinance is published for two consecutive weeks. The charter ordinance then becomes effective 61 days after the second publication.

Since the adoption of ordinary ordinances and charter ordinances supplement or amend the Kansas Constitution, there is extra consideration by Council before adoption. Council traditionally performs two readings of ordinances, with a vote at the meeting of the second reading. Since the adoption of the Home Rule Amendment in 1961, the City of Ellis has adopted 1,494 ordinance ordinances and 26 charter ordinances.

(Source: 2022 Governing Body Handbook: A Reference for Elected Municipal Officials, The League of Kansas Municipalities)



Water Leaks Can Be Costly

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk

Water leaks may seem like minor nuisances, but their financial implications can quickly escalate into significant burdens. From dripping faucets to hidden pipe leaks, every droplet wasted translates to dollars lost. Understanding the true cost of water leaks is essential for homeowners and businesses alike, as it underscores the importance of prompt detection and repair.

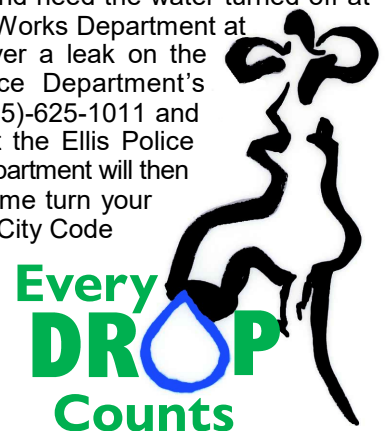
What is the cost of a water leak? The answer to this question is not a simple one. Several variables affect what a leak will cost, such as the length of time the leak lasts, the size of the leak hole and the water system pressure. Even seemingly minor leaks, such as a dripping faucet or a running toilet, can result in hundreds of gallons of water wasted each month. Over time, these seemingly insignificant leaks can add up, significantly inflating water bills without providing any tangible benefit. Below is a chart which demonstrates how a small leak can develop into a large cost.

Size of Leak	Gallons/Day (if water pressure is 60 LBS/Sq. in.)	Water Cost/Day (at \$0.005 per gallon)	Gallons/Month (if water pressure is 60 LBS/Sq. in.)	Water Cost/Month (at \$0.005 per gallon)
• 1/16"	360	\$1.80	10,800	\$54.00
● 1/8"	3096	\$15.48	92,880	\$464.40
●● 3/16"	8424	\$42.12	252,720	\$1,263.60
●●● 1/4"	11,324	\$56.62	339,720	\$1,698.60
●●●● 5/16"	14,952	\$74.76	448,560	\$2,242.80

Beyond the financial toll, water leaks contribute to environmental degradation by wasting a precious resource. In regions experiencing water scarcity or drought conditions, every drop counts. By conserving water and promptly repairing leaks, individuals and businesses can minimize their environmental footprint while simultaneously reducing utility expenses.

Water leaks represent more than just a minor inconvenience - they pose significant financial risks to your wallet. It's crucial to promptly repair leaks to avoid unnecessary expenses and water wastage.

If you have a water leak and need the water turned off at the meter, contact the Public Works Department at (785) 726-1741. If you discover a leak on the weekend, call the Ellis Police Department's non-emergency number at (785)-625-1011 and request to talk to someone at the Ellis Police Department. The Ellis Police Department will then notify the correct person to come turn your meter off. Remember that it is City Code that **ONLY** City employees are to turn the water services on/off at the water meter, otherwise, there is a fine of up to \$500.00 for tampering with the meter.





Welcome Back!

Submitted by Amy Burton, City Clerk

We are super excited to welcome you back to our swimming pool facility this year! The pool will officially open for the season on Tuesday, May 28th at 12:30 p.m. We will again offer pool parties, adult open swim, water aerobics and swimming lessons! Rates for the 2024 season remain the same as prior years.

Open Swim

12:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. everyday
 5 and Under Free
 Age 6 - 12 \$1.50
 Age 13 and over \$2.00
 15-day & 30-day passes are available also!

Adult Open Swim/ Water Aerobics

6:15 p.m. to 7:15 p.m.
Mondays & Wednesdays ...\$3.00/session

Pool Parties

6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Evenings (except for Mondays & Wednesdays)
 Must be booked at least two weeks in advance!
 Without Slide..... \$75.00
 With Pool Slide..... \$100.00

Swimming Lessons (Price per Session)

1st Session: June 17 - June 28
2nd Session: July 8 - July 19
 \$25.00 ...First Child in Immediate Family
 \$20.00 ...Second Child in Immediate Family
 \$15.00 ...Third Child & Subsequent Children in Immediate Family
 \$20.00/hour...Private Lessons (Scheduled through Pool Manager)



Thank you for your continued support!

We can't wait to welcome everyone back this summer!

Stage 2 Water Conservation Rate Begins April 1st

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk

In December 2023, the City of Ellis took proactive steps to address water conservation by implementing Stage 2 Water Warning measures. By adjusting utility billing for water usage based on water conservation rates as outlined in the resolution, the City aims to encourage residents to use water more efficiently. Delaying the water conservation rates until the April 1, 2024 billing cycle allowed residents time to prepare for the change and adjust their water usage habits accordingly. This initiative reflects the City Council's commitment to sustainable water management and ensuring the long-term availability of water resources for the community.

During the sewer evaluation period, each customer is assigned a Base Water Allowance calculated from the average gallons of water used between the December meter reading and March meter reading. This average is rounded up to the next whole thousand gallons for the Stage 2 Base Water Allowance. The current Stage 2 conservation rate states customers will receive an additional 4,000 gallons added to their Base Water Allowance before the conservation rate is applied.

ACCOUNT NO.	ANY3-009999-000Z-99	FROM	02/10/2024	TO	03/10/2024
PROPERTY ADDRESS	9999 Anywhere St #Z	SEQ #	0009000123	Customer Name	
PREV READ	CURR READ	USAGE	CODE	AMOUNT	
42	46	10.0	WT	\$10.06/1,000 gal.	113.72
42	46	6.0	WF	+ 3/4" Meter Fee	.19
		8.0	WC	\$5.03/1,000 gal. Credit	-40.24
			BD		26.13
			SW		40.58
			SN		29.27
			TR		9.37
			GR		2.33
Gallons/1,000 Used in Billing Cycle				AMOUNT DUE	181.45
Average Water Usage (4.0) Established in Sewer Evaluation Period + 4.0 gallons/1,000 added to average water usage				PAY THIS LATE AMT.	199.60

the next whole thousand gallons for the Stage 2 Base Water Allowance. The current Stage 2 conservation rate states customers will receive an additional 4,000 gallons added to their Base Water Allowance before the conservation rate is applied.

Water usage in excess of a customer's Base Water Allowance + 4,000 gallons will be billed at the Stage 2 conservation rate of \$10.06/1,000 gallons. Any water usage under the Base Water Allowance + 4,000 gallons will be billed at the normal rate of \$5.03/1,000 gallons.

If you are a new customer and have not established an average gallons of usage between the December and March meter readings, the Base Water Allowance usage will be assigned at 1,500 gallons per person in your household, with usage re-evaluated at three months and again at six months.

When the City is in Water Conservation Rates, to work within the capabilities of our utility billing program, ALL water is billed out at \$10.06/1,000 gallons and then the Base Tier usage is credited back at \$5.03/1,000 gallons. A sample of what your utility bill would look like is provided to the left. If you have any questions about your Base Water Allowance or billing, please contact the Clerk's office at (785) 726-4812.

Utility Billing Codes on back of Utility Bill

BD	Water Plant Bond Pmt	PB	Previous Balance
WT	Water	SN	Sanitation
WF	State Water Fee	TR	Trash Polycart
TX	State Sales Tax	GR	Grass Polycart
WC	Water Credit	XT	Extra Sanitation Pickup
WX	Water Tax Credit	SW	Sewer
RM	Read In/Out Meter Fee	MR	Railroad Museum Roundup
PN	Penalty	CF	Administrative Fee