

# 2023 Spring/Summer Newsletter



Happy Spring... It has been a challenging and rewarding first term as your mayor. As I stated in my last letter, long-term goal setting is at the top of my to do list. It has been challenging to narrow down the priorities, needs and wants of our residents and council, and then get something implemented, but I hope to see this accomplished over the next few months.

One of the most rewarding aspects of this job and serving on council the previous 10 years has been working on grants to provide improvements that are difficult to fund in our small town. It has been a learning curve to find and work on many grants; but it has been very rewarding to see projects completed and in the works that we wouldn't have been able to do without these grant funds. Potentially the next big project(s) I see on the horizon is Plaza Drive and possibly developing the land behind Elk Run School, so my next goal is to find grant funds to help.

We have recently been awarded \$250,000 for our new Wastewater Treatment Plant. The plant is up and running - it is truly a technological and engineering

wonder! The water that leaves the plant is above DNR standards and I hear you could literally drink it... I'm not planning to try this, but it is something to be proud of! A ribbon cutting ceremony and open house is being planned for July or August - please keep an eye out for more information.

We have completed many portions of our park projects but will continue over the coming months to finish out grants received, totaling close to \$600,000! It has been a pleasure to meet so many residents out on the trail while using our Mayor's Park!

Construction on Gilbertville Rd. and Lafayette Rd. is scheduled to begin in the spring of 2024. The new roads will include curb and gutter, as well as sidewalks on both sides of the road.

How exciting to be able to walk along these roads safely - it has been a goal for us, and I am so excited to see this project finally funded! The city has a small match against about 1.5 million in STBG grants that we had to compete for. Thankfully we were able to fund our portion without adding any debt to our city.

This spring I represented our city while teaching Junior Achievement to 4



classrooms at Poyner Elementary...The lessons were titled "Our City". It is a priority and a privilege for me to inspire our youth to understand government and feel empowered to serve their communities.

Thanks again for giving me this opportunity to serve our Elk Run Heights! I hope to see you in the office, at a park or hopefully at Creek Days August 12th!

Lisa Smock, Mayor



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Last year the City held the second annual Creek Days City Celebration. We cannot express enough gratitude for everyone who came to help kick off our new tradition!

This year the celebration will be August 12<sup>th</sup> **MARK YOUR CALENDAR!** It will include all day events again including craft show, even more kid activities, food vendors, and some amazing local musicians. Please keep a close eye on our Facebook page for information as it becomes available.

**Mayor's Park Improvements** We are so excited about our completed





improvements at Mayor's Park! But there are more to come!!! Watch for a new shelter this year, lots more native plantings, and a new park sign! If you have not made it out to Mayor's Park recently, please take time to do so... you won't be disappointed! Our trail is complete, and a map will be up soon for you to track distance on your walks. The trail is largely funded by a grant from the state Transportation Alternatives Program.

We are planning to put in a veteran's memorial in the pollinator area this year.

We are continuing to work on improvements at the creek, including the clean-up of debris and plantings to preserve the banks along the creek. Please note there is a large area near the creek and around the front bridge that was seeded last fall for a beautiful wildflower garden, so watch your step! Seeding takes up to three years to fully develop, so please be patient.

😊 Creek enhancements are made possible through a grant from REAP.

We do hope you are enjoying the new restrooms and fountains that were made possible by grants from Land and Water Conservation Funds and the Black Hawk County Gaming Association.

We hope to see all our residents enjoy these improvements to our largest recreation area in Elk Run Heights!

**FRIENDLY REMINDER:**  
Please make sure to pick up your animal's waste when at the park or on walks.

**Building Permits**  
Remember if you are making any home improvements, call City Hall to see if you need a permit.

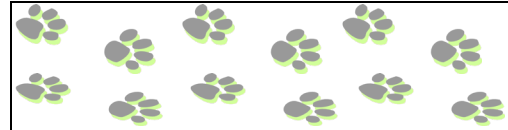
\*\*\*CALL 811 BEFORE YOU DIG\*\*\*



**HOLIDAY SCHEDULE:**  
CLOSED: MEMORIAL DAY, May 29<sup>th</sup>  
CLOSED: Tuesday JULY 4<sup>th</sup>  
CLOSED: September 4<sup>th</sup>, LABOR DAY

**Parking in the street**  
Some residents are still parking on the street. A ticket could be issued if parked for over 24 hours.

**Golf Carts**  
Just a reminder to please get your license renewed or purchased if you have not done so. The cost is \$20.00 per year and enables you able to ride in Elk Run Heights and Evansdale.



**2023 Pet Licenses**

If you have a cat or dog over six months old, please stop in with your rabies vaccination certificate and get your pet tags. If your pet ever gets loose and is picked up, we can trace who it belongs to and contact you. This year we have entered into a contract with Evansdale Animal Control. If you need anything please call 319-291-2515 and the dispatch will contact someone right away.

**Barking Dogs**

It is that time of year when people like to open their windows or sit in their yards. They should be able to do so without being disturbed by your animal. Ordinance 55.10 (5) states "No person owning or having an animal under his or her control or care and custody shall permit such animal to create a noise disturbance or to bark or make any loud or unusual noises during times which such owner knows or should expect that such noise will disturb one or more neighbors, or otherwise disturb the peace."





### Dog Park

A volunteer committee of residents from Elk Run Heights, Evansdale and the surrounding cities have been planning and fundraising to bring an off-leash dog park to our community. We are excited to work with Evansdale to bring this amenity to our communities. The Evansdale Park Board has committed space within Bunger Park for this project. We are currently under construction!

The committee is planning the grand opening of Willow Run Dog Park on June 17<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 to 12:00! Details will be posted on the Willow Run Dog Park Facebook page (Evansdale/Elk Run Willow Run Dog Park) or visit [elkrunheights.com](http://elkrunheights.com) or [evansdale.govoffice.com](http://evansdale.govoffice.com).

### Junk in your yard

We have some residences with junk in their yards. While the City understands winter can have a play with getting things cleaned up, the City's code enforcement officer will be writing citations for this if it is not cleaned up.

### Mowing of properties

Our ordinance states any property within the City of Elk Run Heights, Iowa whether vacated or occupied, including residential, commercial, or industrial



zoned districts, is required to be mowed any time the vegetation (grass, weeds, non-purposely planted trees, or shrubs) reaches a height of more than (8) eight inches during the months of May, June, July, August, September, and October of each year. This shall be considered a health, safety, or fire hazard.

\* Please do not blow your grass clippings or leaves into the street. Please blow all clippings back into your own yard after mowing and trimming. Thank you in advance!

### Holiday Garbage pick-up schedule:

Monday May 29, 2023: Memorial Day,  
Monday September 4, 2023: Labor Day

Pick-up will be on the following Tuesday.

### RECYCLE FOR OUR PLANET!

Please remember to do our part and recycle! You can call Waste Management and set up your own cart for only a small amount per month, just call 1-888-960-0008!



### ILLEGAL DUMPING AT THE RECYCLE BINS:

**DO NOT** put your unwanted junk beside, **OR IN** the recycling containers! We

have found refrigerators, old AC units, cans of paint and garbage. If you truly do

not know what to do with something, call us and we will help you figure it out. **There are surveillance cameras located on the back of City Hall and violators will be sought after and prosecuted.**

### ABANDONED, INOPERABLE AND JUNK VEHICLES

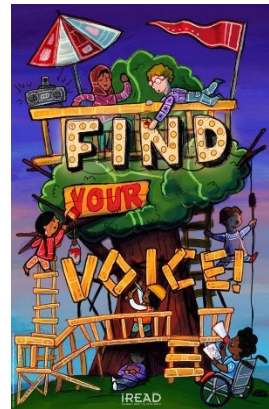
It is unlawful to have vehicles parked at or on your property if they are unlicensed, inoperable or a junk vehicle. For a detailed explanation on this code please contact City Hall. The City is able to fine anyone who violates this ordinance.

### Dunkerton Library Summer Program

Our summer reading program theme is "Find Your Voice". It will start June 1st and run through July 31st. Registration information will be available on our website in May.

Sign up children under 5, who live in Black Hawk County, for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. Each registered child will receive a free book until they turn 5!

You can sign up for a card online! Every card holder has free access to all of our online resources, including Hoopla, Transparent Languages, and Brainfuse! To access these services or to find out more, go to our website at [www.dunkerton.lib.ia.us](http://www.dunkerton.lib.ia.us).







# Managing Storm Water in Our Community

*City of Elk Run Heights Special Storm Water Newsletter*

## What does storm water management really mean?

It boils down to uncontrolled urban runoff wrecking havoc in our natural environment and polluting our drinking water sources. This, in turn, affects our health, the environment and the state.

### STORM WATER POLLUTANTS AND SOURCES INCLUDE:

- Oil, grease, and antifreeze from car leaks, gas stations and industrial areas
- Litter - Carelessly discarded trash such as cigarette butts, paper wrappers, and plastic bottles
- Illicit connections to storm sewers
- Illegally dumped pollutants
- Nutrients from lawn fertilizer
- Pesticides and fertilizers from lawns, parks, and roadsides
- Bacteria from pet waste and septic systems
- Sediment from construction sites
- Grass clippings and leaves



### STREET SWEEPING

Last week, the Street Department completed its seasonal street sweeping route through town.

Street sweeping helps remove sediment, debris and sand from the street to help prevent the materials from getting into our storm water system.

### Depositing Yard Waste onto City Streets

The Elk Run Heights Municipal Code prohibits anyone from depositing debris or yard waste of any kind onto the street, or curb and gutter. Violators may receive a warning or citation and clean up charges may be assessed against your property.

Grass clippings that are discharged by lawn mowers or dumped onto the street, curb or gutter end up clogging storm drains and preventing optimum flow. Mowers should discharge grass back into the yard not onto the streets. During hard rains, blocked storm drains back up water into the street causing flooding of streets and property. In addition, yard waste dumped into our streams and ponds can cause increased natural bacteria growth (blue-green algae) which can release toxins that can be harmful if ingested by humans and pets.

**What you can do:** Aim your mower discharge away from the street. Sweep, rake, blow any remaining clippings or leaves that get in the street. You can also collect your grass clippings and drop them off at the Yard Waste Center.

### Sump Pumps

As the rainy season approaches, make sure your sump pump drainage isn't being discharged to your floor drain. This practice of discharging sump pump drainage into the sanitary sewer system is illegal and can inundate the sewer pipes, lift stations, and the sewer plant. This practice may also lead to sewer back up in homes.

Instead, direct your sump pump drainage to the outside rear yard or side yard. For more information or questions, call the City Hall at 232-0020.

## Storm water



### The Scoop on Poop

It's not the most glamorous subject to think about, however, when it comes to protecting the water quality of our streams and lakes it's worthy of discussion. So what's the harm in a little poop left behind every once in a while? Turns out to be a

bigger problem than most people think.

#### Dog Waste FAQ's:

##### 1. Why should I be concerned about dog poop?

Everyone wants the water they drink, swim in, or fish in to be clean. Studies have found high concentrations of indicator bacteria called fecal coliform in urban streams. **Just one ounce of dog feces contains 23 million microorganisms of bacteria - nearly twice that of human waste.**

**2. How big is the problem?** The average-size dog produces about a half-pound of poop per day. According to rabies license records, there are about **300+** dogs in the City of Evansdale. Altogether, they generate about 150 pounds of poop each day. BOW WOW! That is pile of problems!

**3. How does dog poop affect human health?** Ingesting or coming into contact with water contaminated with certain bacteria from animal wastes can make people ill, causing some diseases. The feces also can contain hookworms, roundworms and other parasites that can be spread to adults and children walking barefoot or playing in the grass near dog waste.

**4. Why is dog waste more of a pollution problem than other animal waste?** An average-size dog dropping contains 3 billion fecal coliform bacteria, much higher than most other animals.

**5. Can't I just put it down the storm drain?** No! It's not as simple as out of sight, out of mind. Storm drains in our community are directly connected to local lakes and streams with no treatment in between.

Plan ahead for pet accidents during walks by bringing a plastic bag with you.

[www.lowaStormwater.org](http://www.lowaStormwater.org)



### Awareness & Responsibility

Daily activities can impact water quality. Most rainfall enters streams and lakes through storm drains in neighborhoods without being treated. There are many ways you can prevent stormwater pollution:

- ✓ Wash your car at a carwash or on the lawn, not the driveway
- ✓ Redirect roof drains to gardens or other vegetated areas
- ✓ Properly dispose of all household hazardous waste
- ✓ Bag and compost leaves and lawn clippings to significantly reduce nutrient levels from yard runoff
- ✓ If you have a drainage-way that runs through your property, avoid piling grass clippings, sticks or branches as it will choke out vegetation that prevents stream-bank erosion
- ✓ Fertilize and apply pesticides according to manufacturers' instructions. Sweep any spills away from or off of driveways, sidewalks, or streets  
Look for phosphorus-free fertilizer when purchasing fertilizer. Phosphorus is the middle number displayed on fertilizer bags, e.g. 20-0-20. Phosphorus-free fertilizer can help reduce algae blooms and is an unneeded nutrient on most central Iowa lawns
- ✓ Clean up pet waste to not only prevent excess nutrients from entering waterbodies, but to keep harmful bacteria out as well
- ✓ Never dump anything other than unpolluted stormwater or groundwater into the street or storm sewer

*We invite you, our residents, to participate in storm water management by alerting City personnel with any storm water pollution practices that could be impacting your neighborhood. Please call 232-0020.*