

## Cleaning up the hydrant



*Matt Stone, painter, scrapes a fire hydrant on Aug. 2 at Hoyt and Snelling Ave. to prep it for a fresh coat of paint in time for the Minnesota State Fair, which starts August 22.*

*Many have more than 120 hours on the books*

## Use vacation hours over 120 or risk losing them

The State Fair is just around the corner and though it may be hard to believe, there are only a few months left in the year.

If you have quite a few vacation hours still on the books, you might want to start planning when you are going to use those hours before it gets too late in the year. Don't wait until the last minute to try to use your vacation hours.

You can carry over 120 hours of vacation into the next year, but anything over that amount will go back to the city. You will effectively lose that time off.

Any hours left above 120 will be lost on January 1, 2020, if they aren't used by December 31, 2019.

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## Managers' Corner

### Improvements at treatment plant continue

*By Jim Bode*

The electrical improvements project for our campus is nearing completion. All the new equipment is in place and wiring is complete. A large concrete protective wall for the outdoor substations will be erected in the next few weeks, along with final street and curb repairs. Testing of the new equipment will take place over the next month, so you can expect some announcements and perhaps a few brief power outages as we return the power distribution for the campus back to its normal state. Total project cost to date is \$7.275 million, which includes construction and engineering. The new equipment was sorely needed as the old equipment was past its life expectancy.

As the electrical project wraps up, we have moved on to the even bigger project of replacing a large portion of our water treatment plant. This project is in the early stages, which includes having the engineering firm of Brown and Caldwell under contract to help us define the project more clearly and provide contract documents for the construction of the new facilities. The goal of the project is to replace our existing rapid mix, flocculators, clarifiers, and re-carbonation chamber. There is a strong possibility that we will add a new oxidation stage to our treatment, using ozone or other technologies, to guard against future contaminants as well as guarantee great tasting water for the future. Our existing filters, clear-wells, finished water reservoir, and pumping area will remain as is for now. This project will be the largest undertaking at our plant since the 1950s. Our current cost estimate for the project is \$130 million. You can look forward to updates on this project in the future.

## Have you earned your \$900 HRA contribution?

Have you earned your \$900 in HRA contributions for 2020?

The city will put up to \$900 into an HRA account for you in 2020 if you earn 300 points in the Healthy Saint Paul Well-Being program this year.

You earn \$300 for completing the first 200 points, and another \$600 for earning the last 100 points.

The HRA money can be used for medical expenses and can be carried over from year to year.

In addition, for every 100 points you earn, you get a \$20 gift card from Medica (up to five gift cards worth \$100 when you earn 500 points, total). These gift cards can be used at a variety of stores, restaurants, and movie theatres.

The deadline to complete the program is Sept. 30, so for some activities, time is running out.

Most of the activities you can participate in to complete the program must be done online.

More information on how the Healthy Saint Paul program works can be found at [healthy.stpaul.gov](http://healthy.stpaul.gov).

## Don't forget: Free food and fun on Tuesday City cookout is Aug. 20

Free food, free entertainment, and free adult beverages await city employees and their guests at the annual employee cookout set for August 20.

There will be a jump castle, face painting, climbing wall, chair massages, Bingo (with prizes), and entertainment by Brodini the Magician.

Saint Paul police and fire will have staff doing demonstrations. Police will have SWAT teams and the bomb squad while fire will have fire trucks.

You can get more information from agencies such as Medica, Healthy Saint Paul, Voya, ERN, and other various city departments who will have tables onsite.

The annual employee cookout will take place from 4:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 20 in the East Pavilions at Como Park. Registration begins at 4 p.m. Please register yourself and any guests and get a bracelet prior to taking part in the free food and activities. This helps staff know who should be there, as well as tally participants for future planning.

Adults must provide ID and register for an armband to take part in adult beverages.

## Use vacation hours over 120 or risk losing it

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You still have a few months to get those vacation hours down to 120.

In emergency situations, it might be possible to carry over hours into the next calendar year. This must be approved by the department director and the human resources director. Requests for such carry over can be made to Racquel Vaske by October 31. The carry over must be used by March 31, 2020, if granted. The carry-over does not have to be allowed, so please take that into account when applying.

Take a look at your remaining vacation days in TASS to see if you will have more than 120 hours left to use at the end of this year.

You can look at your future vacation hours in TASS by clicking on the magnifying glass image under the heading "available leave balances" on the time card main screen. After clicking on the magnifying glass, a screen will pop up that says balance. Choose vacation on the drop down menu and click on the show future box in the right hand corner. Scroll to December 21 and check to see how many hours you have remaining for the year. If you have more than 120 hours showing, you have several months to make plans now to use those hours in excess of the 120 you are allowed to carry over.

Though your vacation hours can be used up to and including December 31, 2019, that number for December 21 in TASS will give you a very good idea of how many hours you have remaining.

If you aren't TASS savvy, see Racquel Vaske for a report on how many hours you currently have remaining.

Make plans now to use those hours before the end of the year rather than risk losing them.

## Plant picnic set for Aug. 29

The annual plant picnic will take place at noon on Thursday, August 29 on the plant patio outside of the plant entrance to the break room. In case of inclement weather, it will move into the breakroom.

Retirees who worked in the treatment plant are invited to attend this event. Hamburgers and fixings will be provided. Retirees should enter through the lobby at the west end of the administration building to check in.