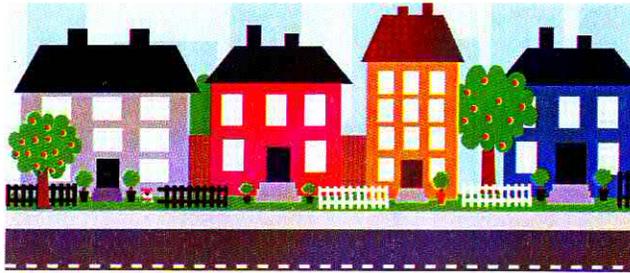


# TALK OF THE TOWN

October 2017

A publication of the City of Gering



436-5096 \* www.gering.org



## A message from the Mayor

First I want to take this opportunity to thank you for providing me the opportunity to serve our great City. Now

with almost three years complete it has been busy but I'm happy to report that the City of Gering is positioning for the future. You can rest assured that the Mayor, Council and staff have only the best in mind for our community. We have a great Council that truly cares about Gering and its future. You also have an experienced City staff that has the knowledge and skills to guide our City forward. So, what have we been doing?

Gering continues to work to create a community where both businesses and people want to be and visit. Today cities and communities have to be competitive on multiple fronts and all at the same time.

Communities need to have a trained work force which is why continued investment in our local schools and community college system are vital. Communities need to have a readily available inventory of affordable housing for an emerging workforce to purchase. Communities need to have opportunities for businesses to grow and expand; which is why Gering has invested in a business and industrial park to help create those opportunities. Communities need to have reliable infrastructure to handle both the current and future needs of the people which we heavily invest in each year. Communities need to have unique experiences for people to enjoy which is why we invest in venues to help provide recreational and tourism opportunities for our citizens and visitors. So, here's an update on some of the recent activity in Gering.

One of the most visible projects is the City's downtown revitalization efforts. We have seen quite a transformation in the summer of 2017. The addition of a new hotel has been welcome. The construction of phase 1 of the new civic plaza is almost

complete along with new facades on several downtown businesses. We have also seen the completion of the new public/private parking lot west of the court house. Another exciting project is the construction of phase 1 of our Oregon Trail Park renovation which includes a baseball park which will be home to a new collegiate summer league team. Go Pioneers! 2017 has also seen the addition of several new businesses to our community which continue to help Gering grow and create more opportunities for our future. Gering has also enjoyed the completion and expansion of the Wild Cat Hills Nature Center and greater utilization of the Five Rocks Amphitheater which has provided numerous opportunities for people to enjoy our community.

We all continue to want a better community in which to live and work; so let's continue to work together and make Gering the place we all want to be.

Sincerely,

Tony Kaufman, Mayor, City of Gering

## JUST A LITTLE *Reminder*

Disconnect garden hoses from faucets!

Change batteries in smoke detectors with the end of Daylight Savings Time!

Winterize sprinkler system and backflow preventers!



With Halloween just around the corner, a reminder to accompany children when trick-or-treating, stay in well-lit areas and inspect candy before allowing children to eat it. The Gering Police Department encourages parents and kids to stop by the Police Department to pick up a reflective safety treat bag, while supplies last.

## IMPORTANT STORMWATER INFORMATION INSIDE!

And information about a stormwater surcharge being assessed to Gering residents beginning in October, 2017.





Gering Fire Department

# Halloween Safety Tips



**Did you know?**

Halloween is a fun and spooky time of year for kids. Make trick-or-treating safe for your little monsters with a few safety tips.

Decorations are the first thing to ignite in 900 reported home fires each year. Two of every five were started by a candle.

When choosing a costume, stay away from long trailing fabric. If your child is wearing a mask, make sure the eye holes are large enough so he or she can see out.

lighting candles inside a jack-o-lantern use long, fireplace-style matches or a utility lighter. Be sure to place lit pumpkins well away from anything that can burn and far enough out of the way of trick-or-treaters, doorsteps, walkways and yards.

Provide children with flashlights to carry for lighting or glow sticks as part of their costume.



Dried flowers, cornstalks and crepe paper catch fire easily. Keep all decorations away from open flames and other heat sources like light bulbs and heaters.

Remember to keep exits clear of decorations so nothing blocks escape routes.

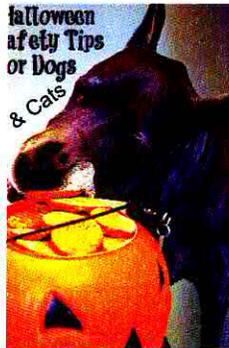
Make sure all smoke alarms in the home are working.

Use a battery-operated candle or glow stick in jack-o-lanterns. If you use a real candle, use extreme caution. Make sure children are watched at all times when candles are lit. When

Tell children to stay away from open flames including lit jack-o-lanterns. Be sure they know to stop, drop and roll if their clothing catches on fire. (Have them practice, stopping immediately, dropping to the ground, covering their face with their hands, and rolling over and over to put the flames out.

**If your children are going to Halloween parties at other homes, have them look for ways out of the home and plan how they would get out in an emergency.**

## Keep Critters Safe Too!



www.petmd.com



### 1. Trick-or-treat candies are not for pets.

All forms of chocolate -- especially baking or dark chocolate -- can be dangerous, even lethal, for dogs and cats. Symptoms of chocolate poisoning may include vomiting, diarrhea, rapid breathing, increased heart rate, and seizures. Halloween candies containing the artificial sweetener xylitol can also be poisonous to dogs. Even small amounts of xylitol can cause a sudden drop in blood sugar and subsequent loss of coordination and seizures. And while xylitol toxicity in cats has yet to be established, it's better to be safe than sorry.

### 2. Don't leave pets out in the yard on Halloween.

Surprisingly, vicious pranksters have been known to tease, injure or steal pets on Halloween night. This is preventable by pet owners.

### 3. Keep pets confined and away from the door.

Not only will your door be constantly opening and closing on Halloween, but strangers will be dressed in unusual costumes. This, of course, can be scary for our furry friends. Dogs are especially territorial and may become anxious and growl at innocent trick-or-treaters.

### 4. Keep your outdoor cats inside several days before and several days after Halloween.

Black cats are especially susceptible to pranks and taunting, but all cats should be inside where it's safe.

### 5. Keep Halloween plants such as pumpkins and corn out of reach.

Although they are relatively nontoxic, such plants can induce gastrointestinal upset should your pets ingest them in large quantities. Intestinal blockage can even occur if large pieces are swallowed.

### 6. Don't keep lit pumpkins around pets.

Should they get too close, they run the risk of burning themselves or knocking it over and causing a fire.

### 7. Keep wires and electric light cords out of reach.

If chewed, your pet could cut himself or herself on shards of glass or plastic, or receive a possibly life-threatening electrical shock.

### 8. Don't dress your pet in a costume unless you know they'll love it.

If you do decide that Fido or Kitty needs a costume, make sure it isn't annoying or unsafe. It should not constrict movement, hearing, or the ability to breathe or bark and meow.

### 9. Try on pet costumes before the big night.

If they seem distressed, allergic, or show abnormal behavior, consider letting them go in their "birthday suit". Festive bandanas usually work for party poopers, too.

### 10. IDs, please!

If your dog or cat should escape and become lost, having the proper identification will increase the chances that they will be returned. Just make sure the information is up-to-date, even if your pet does have one of those embedded microchips.

# LEAP Into Fun at the Gering Library!

Fantastic things are happening this fall at the Gering Library. The LEAP (Learn. Explore. Achieve. Play) program received a boost from a \$2000 grant from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation and a \$300 donation from a fundraiser by Matt Palomo and the Gering Tennis Club. This early childhood math, literacy, and school readiness program was created and piloted last spring and will continue this year with two 12-week sessions focusing on children three to five years old and their parents/caregivers. This program is free but registration is required. There are still spots available for the fall session which will end in December. The dates for the spring registration will be announced later.



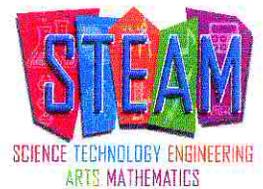
Storytime is also in full swing with the addition of a new evening session called Read It Again! This storytime is based on the principle of repetition for increased comprehension and other literacy skills. Read It Again! evening storytime is held on Thursdays at 6 p.m. There is now an expanded version of toddler storytime. It is called Read & Romp Toddler Story & Playtime. Educational toys and materials exclusively for toddlers was purchased with Keno funds to provide an extended toddler storytime to include play, social, and educational skills. This storytime is held every Wednesday at 10 a.m. And of course we are continuing our Move & Groove Preschool Storytime. This hour long program is for children 3-5 years old and includes stories, songs, dancing, rhymes, felt board stories, a short video, and a craft/educational activity.



There's fun for school age children at the library as well. The Lego and Craft Clubs meet at 3:45 on alternating Tuesdays for an hour. Coder Dojo, the computer coding program presented by the AIM Institute meets once a month on Wednesdays in the library community room using our laptops to explore technology in a creative environment. And the newly created TAB (Teen Advisory Board) will continue to meet once a month to explore ways to reach out to teens in our community.



To access the kids' events calendar and other library information go to our website at [www.gering.org/library](http://www.gering.org/library). There are two new resources for parents of young children on our website under the Youth Services tab. The first one is called Playing is Learning: A Parent's Pathfinder to Information on the Importance of Young Children Learning Through Play. This resource lists articles, books, videos, and websites with information on this topic. You can find the link listed under files as Playing is Learning Reference Guide. The second resource is a website called Let Off Some STEAM! Click on the icon to go to a website specifically for parents of preschoolers and toddlers with information and activities relating to STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math).



All programs at the Gering Library are free and open to the public. To register for the LEAP program or for more information on any of library programs mentioned please call 436-7433 or email youth services librarian, Christie Clarke at [cclarke@geringlibrary.org](mailto:cclarke@geringlibrary.org).

Gering Public Library has a new smartphone trivia game, Speedquizzing. Participants download the app and use their smartphones to answer multiple choice and other questions for chances at fabulous prizes. This game goes fast and cheating is impossible! No smart phone? That's okay, we can provide you with a device or match you with a team. Be watching for trivia events in the area, it's a lot of fun.



## Library Adds Blog to Webpage

Does the library have the new Craig Johnson book? Check out our blog! We publish info on new arrivals, interesting news, book reviews and upcoming events on the blog under Library News at [gering.org/library](http://gering.org/library). Another way to keep up with the library is by liking our Facebook page.

## Humanities Nebraska Speaker scheduled for Friends of Gering Public Library Meeting



The Friends of the Gering Public Library annual meeting is scheduled for October 22 at 1:30. Humanities Nebraska Speaker, Renae Hunt will present "Overland Trails: The Children on the Trail." With over 352,000 emigrants traveling the Oregon, Mormon or California trails, one in five were under the age of 16. Many of these youths kept journals. This program discusses how these children traveled and relates some of the stories from their jour-

nals. This program is appropriate for all ages. This meeting is open to the public, and is sure to be interesting!

## Love the Library? Join the Friends!

Friends of Gering Public Library are enthusiastic supporters, whose mission is to help provide library services of the highest quality to our community. Friends advocate for the library as well as promote and assist with library programs - and they get first dibs on the library book sale!



## DOG PARK DEDICATION CEREMONY

Common Grounds Dog Park Committee (CGDPC) held a dedication ceremony at Monument Dog Park on Tuesday September 19. Construction of the new five-acre dog park began at the end of September. Common Grounds Dog Park Committee, a citizen driven non-profit organization, has been working in partnership with the City of Gering since last fall to create a new, fenced off-leash dog park in the community. The new dog park will be built on the southwest corner of Five Rocks Road and U Street, enhancing what was once a landfill area.

"We are thrilled to be finally breaking ground on the new dog park. It will be a great place for the community and traveling tourists to get outside, exercise their dogs and enjoy another beautiful Gering park," said Amber Schiltz, CGDPC secretary.

The first phase of the dog park will include a large section for free play, and two smaller sections for both small dogs and timid dogs. Also included are several shelters, picnic tables, trees, hydrants and a gravel parking lot. The cost of the

first phase is estimated at around \$40,000. Common Grounds Dog Park Committee has raised over \$27,000 so far through events, donations and grants. The Oregon Trail Community Foundation generously granted the organization \$10,000 towards the effort, and the Gering Keno Committee approved \$14,000 to be used towards the fencing.

"We are so grateful to have the support of the community behind this project. We are close to our goal of \$40,000, and are hoping that through business sponsorships and fundraising we can reach our goal for the first phase," said Stacey Fisher, CGDPC president.

The community and local media were invited to the grounds for the dedication ceremony. The brief ceremony highlighted the partnership between the Common Grounds Dog Park Committee and the City of Gering, and recognized community partners for project support. During the ceremony members of the committee detailed more of the park's plans and construction timeline.

For more information on the project or the committee, you can find Common Grounds Dog Park Committee on facebook, or email them at [scottsbuffdogpark@gmail.com](mailto:scottsbuffdogpark@gmail.com).



## PANHANDLE AREA DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

By: Daniel Bennett, PADD Community Planner

There's a lot of talk about 'regionalism' in economic development these days, but it's not always clear what that means and what the benefit is to the communities which participate. The City of Gering has been a strong, long-time leader in regional collaboration, proof of which can be seen through Panhandle Area Development District (PADD). PADD was formed in the mid-1970s under the premise that regionally aligned priorities and a regional professional staff in planning, grant writing, and economic development would help communities accomplish more than they could with their fragmented efforts. Today, the City of Gering and 32 other Panhandle cities, villages, and counties continue to come together to guide regional development and work together for economic development.

PADD's areas of focus are economic development, community planning and improvement, and business assistance. In the past fiscal year alone, regional collaboration through PADD led to the training of over 100 people in community planning and economic development, brought over \$1 million in grant funds towards Panhandle community projects, and made two new loans of a total \$200,000 for the creation of seven new jobs. Gering's support also has helped PADD staff to complete seven new plans and studies and two community surveys for smaller communities like Gordon, Bayard, Hay Springs, and Sidney.

Within the realm of economic development, Gering has been a constant leader in bringing about the development of the Heartland Expressway, for which PADD staff provides promotional and

technical assistance and when completed will provide Gering with 4-lane divided highway access from Rapid City to Denver by way of Chadron, Alliance, Kimball, and Brush, CO. One new segment south of Alliance is under construction and another is scheduled for construction by 2024. These gains could not have been achieved by any one community acting alone but are the result of aligned priorities and joint leadership.

Regional success can also be seen in PADD's growing contaminated property redevelopment program. Momentum created from the City of Gering and Twin Cities Development (TCD) success in contaminated property redevelopment has carried into the region and led to the development of a regional dilapidated site inventory and an award of over \$445,000 for environmental site assessments to begin the process of redevelopment of dilapidated sites in Panhandle communities. This is a competitive national grant which no one Panhandle community would be likely to obtain or manage on its own, but collaboration put the region in the running with cities like Austin, TX, Oklahoma City, and Baltimore, MD to receive funding. The story has been the same from the 1990s when members of the tourism industry in Western Nebraska collaborated within PADD form the Western Nebraska Tourism Coalition to today, with the Panhandle's new Social Enterprise fund which began this year with \$200,000 available in start-up grants to businesses with a social mission, aiming to simultaneously decrease long-term grant dependency for non-profits while creating economic opportunities.

Gering has long understood that the opportunities brought by regional collaboration are only as great as the leadership of its members. PADD would like to say thank you to the city of Gering for its continued leadership in the region as we look to ratchet up our collective efforts another notch in service to the prosperity of the Panhandle.

# It's that time of year again...

THANK YOU for your cooperation!

## EMERGENCY



The following is, in part, the Emergency Snow Route ordinance: **Gering City Code Title VII: Traffic Code, Sections 76.03 through 76.06: EMERGENCY SNOW REMOVAL**

### § 76.03 SNOW EMERGENCY ROUTES.

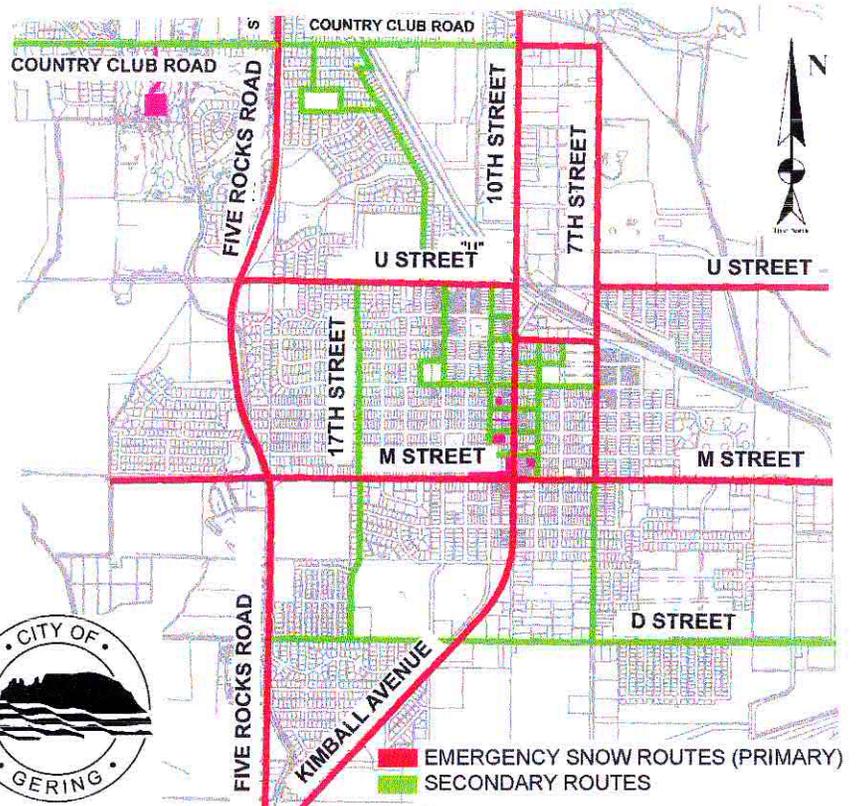
(A) A system of marked snow emergency routes has been established to maintain the flow of traffic, goods and services to the City of Gering on thoroughfare streets. Shown left are designated snow routes. B) Modifications to Ban. The foregoing prohibition shall be modified within the area of the Downtown Business District designed for parking and more particularly described as follows: (1) 10th Street from "K" Street to "S" Street; (2) "M" Street from 9th Street to 14th Street. (C) The foregoing prohibition shall not apply to the above described area during the business hours of six o'clock a.m. to seven o'clock p.m.

### § 76.04 DRIVEWAYS AND SNOW REMOVAL FROM PRIVATE PROPERTY.

(A) City snowplows will not clear private driveways. The snow placed in driveways by City plows is a natural result of clearing the streets and is the responsibility of the property owner to remove. (B) Only on emergency snow routes, when plowed windrows exceed 24 inches, if time and conditions allow, the City will attempt to plow open private driveways at the curb line. (C) Snow from a private driveway, private sidewalk, business driveway, or parking lot may not be placed on a City street. (D) City equipment will not be used to remove piled snow or push snow away from private property or businesses. Snow will only be removed from City facilities. Using City equipment to clear snow from private property is a violation of this code unless it is necessary to allow emergency vehicles access to the private property for ambulance, fire or police calls.

**§ 76.06 VIOLATION OF VEHICLES PARKING ON EMERGENCY SNOW ROUTES.** A violation of this ordinance shall be punishable by a fifty dollar (\$50.00) fine.

If you have any questions, please call Casey Dahlgrin, Transportation Superintendent, Street Department at (308) 436-6835.



### EMERGENCY SNOW ROUTES

- 10th Street from "J" Street to "U" Street
- 10th Street (Scottsbluff/Gering Highway) from "U" Street to the river bridge
- "M" Street/Old Oregon Trail from the cemetery road east to Hwy. 71 bypass
- Kimball Avenue from Five Rocks Road to "J" Street
- Five Rocks Road from Robidoux Road to Country Club Road
- "U" Street from Five Rocks Road to 10th Street
- "U" Street from 7th Street east to city limits
- "S" Street from 10th Street to 7th Street
- 7th Street from "M" St. to Country Club Rd.
- Country Club Rd. from 10th St. to 7th St.





**What is Stormwater?** Stormwater runoff is water from rain, melting snow or irrigation water that “runs off” or across impervious surfaces instead of seeping into the ground. This untreated runoff flows in ditches, curbs, gutters, storm inlets and is then carried to the nearest waterway such as a pond, lake,

creek or river. Stormwater pipelines are separate from wastewater pipelines, stormwater is not treated and does not flow through wastewater treatment plants.

**How does Stormwater Runoff Become Polluted?** Stormwater runoff can become polluted anywhere people are using or altering the land. People going about their daily lives are the main source of stormwater pollutants, and they are unaware of it. Common examples of people contributing to stormwater pollution include: over fertilizing, excessive pesticide usage, not picking up pet waste, using salt or sand to de-ice driveways, allowing oil to drip out of their vehicles and, of course, littering. If these pollutants are not properly used or picked up, then rainfall or snow melt will wash these pollutants into the storm inlets where they discharge into nearby waterways.

**What Can I do to Prevent Stormwater pollution?** If you own a car, maintain it, so it does not leak oil or other fluids and if you wash your car at home, be sure to wash it on the grass or at a car

wash, so the dirt and soap do not flow down the driveway and into the nearest storm drain.

Do not over fertilize your grass and never apply fertilizers or pesticides before a heavy rain. If fertilizer falls onto the driveway or sidewalks, sweep it up and throw it away or place back onto the grass. Make sure mulch, leaves, and grass clippings are not blown into or left in the street. Be sure to pick up all yard waste and place into a yard waste container or use it as compost to prevent yard waste from entering into the nearest storm drain.

Other things you can do to prevent runoff on your property is to turn your gutter downspouts away from hard surfaces – instead point them into flower beds, grassy areas, or consider building a rain garden to contain the water. To avoid erosion, seed or place sod down on bare spots in your yard.

Pet owners should pick up after their pets and dispose of pet waste in the garbage. Pet waste can be a major source of bacteria and excess nutrients in local waters. When it rains, any pet waste on lawns, parks or streets washes into the storm drain system and ends up in local waterways, resulting in high E.coli bacteria levels and making waterways unusable for swimming, boating or other activities.

Keep lawn and household chemicals tightly sealed and covered in a place where they will not get rained on. Never put anything down a storm inlet! Including paint and motor oil. **And of course, do not litter!**

## A Journey to Better Water Quality - *The Stormwater Permit*

Gering and Terrytown begin a journey to maintain or reduce the amount of pollutants carried in stormwater runoff. Runoff is the rain or snowmelt that flows off roofs, across sidewalks and into the streets. As it flows, it picks up pollutants that sit on the surface– most commonly sediment, litter, yardwaste, animal waste, vehicle fluids and fertilizers/pesticides. What goes in stormwater stays in stormwater. Unlike the sanitary sewer, water in the MS4, or storm sewer, empties into the North Platte River untreated. The NPDES permit requires the city to reduce the amount of pollutants picked up by runoff that flows through the city.

In January 2018 Gering and Terrytown become the newest communities under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (“Small MS4” or “sMS4”) Permit. (Yes, the title is a mouthful.) The NPDES, a division of the EPA, sets the requirements and the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) issues the permit to communities in Nebraska. The permit includes any city with population of 10,000 people or more. Or, in the case of Gering and Terrytown, a community that is part of a designated urban area. In other words, the combined area of Gering, Terrytown and Scottsbluff effects the environment more like a city of about 24,000.

**The City of Gering will assess a \$1.25 per customer per month surcharge for this program.**

### The permit includes six major components:

- **Public Education and Outreach** - Public Education and Outreach requires municipalities to inform and educate the public about stormwater pollution, its effects and ways to prevent it.
- **Public Involvement** - Public involvement encourages the public to participate in the shaping of policies or programs that determine how their city will manage stormwater.
- **Illicit Discharge, Detection and Elimination (IDDE)** - IDDE creates a process for a city to receive reports, investigate and remove substances that enter the storm sewer system.
- **Construction Stormwater** - Construction stormwater works with all construction or developments one acre or larger to control sediment and erosion, waste, and material storage during the building process.
- **Post-construction stormwater management** - Post-construction actually begins long before the construction begins by planning and designing ways to manage a site’s runoff after the construction is complete.
- **Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping** - Good Housekeeping requires municipalities to assess both their facilities and activities to reduce risks of polluting water or the environment.

### What the new stormwater fees do:

Although the federal government requires a stormwater program, in Nebraska the cost to build and operate the program falls on the permitted city. The stormwater surcharge works similarly to a utility fee for water or sewer. The surcharge pays for the cost to maintain the MS4 infrastructure and meet the permit requirements – these include costs like tracking and identifying illicit discharges, replacing storm drain covers, outfall maintenance, education materials, and stormwater inspections. Stormwater permit fees issued during the building permit process offset the cost of stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) review and inspections by certified personnel, construction education costs, and personnel certification requirements.

The proposed impact fees for new and re-development tie into the permit’s post-construction requirement. The impact fee functions like a tap fee for water or sewer, providing the city a way to connect a new or redeveloped site to the city’s MS4 and accommodate the new level of runoff from the site into the MS4 system. While it is an additional investment in the beginning of a project, the overall cost is cheaper to the developer or builder who is also absolved from perpetual maintenance and inspections.



## 24th Annual Gering Civic Center Holiday Craft Show

Crafters from five states and regional specialty foods vendors will be showcased at the 2017 Gering Civic Center Holiday Craft Show & Specialty Foods Expo on Friday, November 3 and Saturday, November 4, 2017. Western Nebraska's premier craft event will celebrate its 24th year featuring the most unique "handmade crafts" and specialty foods for customers to taste and buy. The show is a juried show with many new and returning customer favorite crafters

that will feature a variety of crafts; home décor, clothing, jewelry, furniture, wood art, soaps, candles, yard art and Americana. Specialty Food vendors offer the opportunity to "sample and buy" artisan breads, jams and jellies, ethnic foods, gourmet caramel apples and more. The 2017 Gering Civic Center Craft Show hours are 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Friday, November 3rd and 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 4th. Start your holiday shopping and decorating by attending the 2017 Gering Civic Center Holiday Craft Show!

### Beginning December 1, City of Gering customers will be assessed a credit/debit card transaction fee...



City of Gering customers will be assessed a credit and debit card transaction fee where ever credit and debit cards are accepted at City sites including utilities/administration, golf course, landfill, RV park and the civic center. The City incurred costs of over \$83,500 in the last fiscal year for debit and credit card transactions. The City encourages customers to consider auto pay for utility bills in order to avoid being assessed a fee.



The Gering Fire Department participated with National Fire Prevention month by conducting education programs at local schools. Students learned Stop, Drop and Roll, how to escape from a house fire, the importance of **working** smoke detectors and also got to explore the new fire truck. Shown left, Chaplin Dick Cochrane.

## Responsible Pet Ownership begins with **YOU!**

and, it's the law...



Please remember to keep your pet's vaccinations current, protect pets from harsh weather conditions, make sure they have plenty of clean drinking water, obtain a license annually and don't allow pets to run at large.

With fall and winter approaching, please keep in mind that your pet can succumb to frostbite and hypothermia. It's important to provide a warm, dry shelter for your pet to get out of the elements (by law a domestic animal must be provided with shelter). Remove snow between your pet's toes to prevent frostbite and make sure they have plenty of fresh drinking water at all times. Keep pets away from hazards such as antifreeze and candles!

## Cold Weather Pet Care Tips

friendly ice melts whenever possible.

- Thoroughly wipe off your pet's legs and stomach when he comes in out of the sleet, snow or ice. He can ingest salt, antifreeze or other potentially dangerous chemicals while licking his paws and fur.

- Massaging petroleum jelly or other paw protectants into paw pads before going outside can help protect from salt and chemical agents. Booties provide even more coverage and can also prevent sand and salt from getting lodged between bare toes and causing irritation. Use pet-

- Remember, if it's too cold for you, it's probably too cold for your pet, so keep your animals inside. If left outdoors, pets can become disoriented, lost or injured. In addition, don't leave pets alone in a car during cold weather, as cars can act as refrigerators that hold in the cold and cause hypothermia.

- Certain plants can be toxic to your pet such as poinsettias, ferns, lilies and more. Foods such as dark chocolate, nuts, raisins and others can also be dangerous for your pet if ingested.

- ASPCA