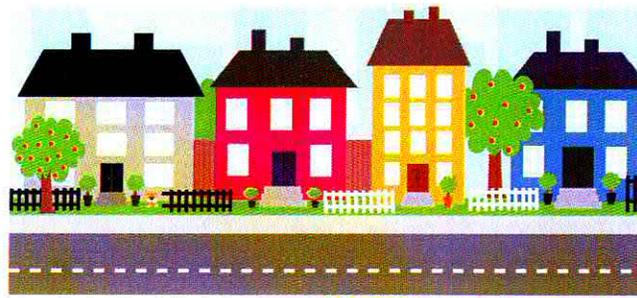


TALK OF THE TOWN

June 2017

A publication of the City of Gering



436-5096 * www.gering.org



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. My how time flies by, the first two years have been busy but I'm happy to report that the City of Gering is quite well. While not everyone can be happy with every decision the City makes you can rest assure 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 staff that has the knowledge and skills to guide our city forward. So, what have we been doing?

The City has worked hard over the past few years 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. We have to have great infrastructure, we have to have opportunities for businesses to grow and expand, we have to have affordable housing, we

have to have a trained work force, we have to have great schools, and we need to have experiences for people to enjoy. So, here's what we have been doing to invest in that special place we call home.

The City has a full schedule of projects well underway for 2017 and beyond. Many of you have seen that the hotel project in downtown Gering is well underway and is projected to be open for business by the end of 2017. We have welcomed Domino's Pizza to our community and are looking forward to Minge Construction to be based out of Gering. To help initiate more opportunities in our community the City of Gering is creating a business and industrial park that will benefit not just Gering but the entire region by providing sites that are ready for economic development.

The City is also working on Phase 1 of the Oregon Trail Park project that will include new baseball and softball facilities. This has led to the opportunity for the City of Gering to be home to a new summer collegiate baseball team. Going forward Gering will have one of the premier baseball and softball facilities in the region. In addition the City, along with its partners, held a groundbreaking ceremony for the new Downtown Civic Plaza which

will help to redevelop an existing parking lot and transform it into an outdoor community space for everyone to enjoy. The city is also working toward the expansion of our pathway system, installing a new slide at the pool, building a new public/private parking lot west of the Courthouse, and not to mention all the street, sewer and water improvement projects that will maintain and improve delivery of services to you, our customers.

Gering also has a full schedule of special events for the summer of 2017 that you won't want to miss. Five Rocks Amphitheatre will be busy with concerts and community events. We are going to be celebrating the 96th Oregon Trail Days. We also have the total Solar Eclipse of 2017 which will be a once in a lifetime experience. Not to mention we are home to the Scotts Bluff National Monument, the Legacy of the Plains Museum, the Robidoux Trading Post and the Wild Cat Hills Nature Center.

We all want a great community in which to live and work; so lets continue to work together and make Gering the place we all want it to be.

Sincerely,

Tony Kaufman
Mayor, City of Gering



Shown left to right: Matt Janecek, Darrell Bentley, Donna Engleman, Brenda Bruntz, Helen McDonald, Don Kugler, Julie Morrison and Mayor Kaufman pose for a photo after the Gering CVB Community Volunteer Buddy Award was presented to the City of Gering Keno Committee at the May 22 City Council meeting. Article inside.

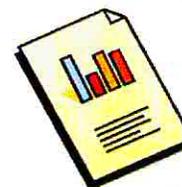
**GERING
PUBLIC
LIBRARY
SUMMER
READING
PROGRAM
INFORMATION
INSIDE!**



2016 CITY OF GERING WATER QUALITY REPORT

The City of Gering will not be mailing the 2016 Annual Water-Quality Report to each water system customer. A copy of this report was inserted in the May 31, 2017 Star-Herald. It can also be obtained at the Gering City Offices at 1025 P

Street, Gering, NE. You may call (308) 436-5096 to request a copy or visit the City's website to view it at www.gering.org





Water Conservation

Brought to you by the City of Gering Public Works Department

While nature's capacity to produce water seems limitless, the Gering Water System's ability to deliver water to your home is not. In fact, the water you use is pumped and piped directly to your home through an elaborate delivery system. During the summer when temperatures and water use increase, the City's ability

to produce water can reach its capacity. During drought years the system's capacity is reduced due to lower groundwater levels and individual water conservation becomes an important decision.

Water conservation in the summer is essential, however, water conservation needs to be a year-round effort. The more you conserve water the more you save on your electric, gas, and water services.

To conserve water, examine activities that use the most water. During the winter, the City of Gering pumps about 1.5 million gallons of water each day compared to over 8 million gallons on some very hot and dry days during the summer. Keeping the grass green uses the most water. Next in line, is water used in the bathroom. Flushing the toilet and taking a bath or a shower account for over 70 percent of the water used indoors.



Water Usage by Device

Device	Type of Device	Water Used
Toilet	Ultra-low-flow	1.6 gal./flush
Toilet	Conventional	3 to 7 gal./flush
Washing Machine	Standard	20 to 45 gallons per load
Bath	1/4 to 1/3 Full	9 to 12 gallons
Bath	Completely Full	30 to 45 gallons
Shower	Low-flow Shower Head	2.5 gal./minute
Shower	Conventional	4 gal./minute
Dishwasher	Standard	8 to 15 gal./load

Bathroom

Check toilets for hidden leaks. Place a few drops of food coloring in the tank. Wait 15 minutes. If the color appears in the bowl, you have a leak. Make neces-

sary repairs. Tank shut-off floats not in proper adjustment can waste up to 40,000 gallons per month. If you have a toilet that uses 5 to 6 gallons of water per flush, fill one or two plastic bottles

with water and weight them with a few stones. Place them inside the tank where they won't interfere with the operation of any moving parts. Each time you flush, you will save as much

water as is displaced by the bottles. Avoid using your toilet as a wastebasket. Extra flushes cost money and the items can cause expensive

continued on back cover...

Water Usage *Outdoors...*

Water the lawn only when it needs it. Observe the grass - if it looks a dull, grey-green color and footprints remain when you walk across it, then it's time to water. Following a heavy rain, skip watering until the grass dries out again.

Learn how to control and change the settings on your automatic sprinkler system. Measure your sprinkler output by placing three or more cans in various locations throughout the sprinkler pattern. Turn your sprinkler for 15 minutes. The average depth of water in the cans will tell you how much water the sprinkler has applied.

Always water your lawn during the cool part of the day to reduce evaporation. The best time is early morning, and a second choice is late evening. When you water in the middle of the afternoon on a hot day, 50% to 75% of the water is evaporating and not reaching the roots of the turf grass. If you water when it's windy, you will find the water going everywhere except where you want it to go. Wind also causes water to evaporate quickly.

Different plants and turf grasses require varying amounts of water. A healthy, growing bluegrass lawn will require about one-half inch of water per week in early May and one to two inches per week during the summer months.

Aerate your lawn. This loosens the soil and reduces compaction. After aeration, more water will reach the roots, resulting in less run-off. Aerate your lawn every year or two.

Water on sidewalks, driveways and streets is a waste. Avoid run-off by adjusting sprinkler spray patterns and reduce the volume from sprinkler heads close to paved areas. Water your lawn every 3rd day, allowing time for the moisture to soak down to the roots (six to eight inches). Frequent light watering encourages shallow root growth. Shallow root growth turf grasses are



not drought-tolerant.

Use a broom to clean your sidewalks and driveways. Using water can waste up to 25 gallons of water every five minutes.

When considering landscaping use plants that are suited for our dry climate. Try to reduce the size of your turf grass areas and increase the size of mulched areas. Less turf grass means less water. Avoid using rock and gravel for landscaping; these can increase soil temperatures and evaporation. Mulch around trees and shrubs, use a drip system in landscaped areas rather than sprinklers. Drip systems are designed to get water slowly and directly to the roots of plants where they need it most. They deliver water in terms of quarts or gallons per hour instead of per minute.

Mow the lawn often, at least once a week. Try to cut no more than one third of the grass blade, removing about one half to three quarters of an inch at a time. If you mow the grass shorter than this, excessive shock occurs that causes grass to turn yellow despite your best irrigation efforts.



Protecting the quality of our water

by Cassidy Baum
Keep Scottsbluff/Gering Beautiful

Many things can impact the quality of our water. The EPA has identified stormwater runoff as the nation's main cause for surface water quality problems. Stormwater runoff consists of precipitation from rain and snowmelt. Stormwater that enters the storm drains and bodies of water is left untreated. It is contaminated by debris, chemicals, dirt, pet waste, and other pollutants that are left on impervious sur-

faces like driveways, sidewalks, and streets.

These contaminants can harm fish and wildlife, kill native vegetation, make recreation areas unsafe and unpleasant and lower the quality of our drinking water. It only takes one gallon of oil to



contaminate one million gallons of drinking water, according to the EPA. Please protect our water quality and dispose of these pollutants at a designated collection location.

Keep each fluid separate and in a dedicated, sealed container until it can be disposed of. You can properly dispose of used oil and antifreeze at the City of Gering Landfill during normal business hours.

Pharmaceuticals are another major contaminate of our water supply. For many years it was suggested that people flush unused medications. We now know that this is an unsafe practice. Many wastewater treatment plants are not able to remove pharmaceutical compounds. Keep Scottsbluff/Gering Beautiful hosted the annual Pharmaceutical Take-Back on May 6th. We collected and properly disposed of four 55-gal-

lon drums full of unused and expired medications and vitamins. We plan to host a second collection event in the fall. Please hold on to your unused and expired prescriptions and over-the-counter medications and vitamins until you are able to properly dispose of them at one of our collection events.

For more information contact Cassidy Baum with Keep Scottsbluff Gering Beautiful at 308-632-4649.



City of Gering Environmental Services

(308) 436-7568



PLEASE RECYCLE!

The Environmental Services Department would like more people to participate with recycling in the City of Gering. We have gained landfill space because of the people who are currently recycling in Gering and we appreciate and applaud their effort and participation! If interested please call 436-7568 for information on recycling carts.



BLUE CONTAINERS

The Single Stream Recycling Program continues...

- The City has residential carts available
- North of "Q" Street is picked up on one week and South of Q Street is picked up on the other week.

Commercial size containers are also available!

Drop boxes at Northfield Church and at the corner of 9th & N are available for Recyclables!

NO GLASS OF ANY KIND

NO PLASTIC BAGS OF ANY KIND

DO NOT PLACE RECYCLABLES IN PLASTIC BAGS

GREEN CONTAINERS - Yard Waste

- Residential alley containers are for grass and leaves only
- If you have larger yard waste debris take it directly to the landfill
- Yard waste is collected through the summer/fall

LANDFILL

located at 200531 West 'U' Street, (308) 436-7568

Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday, 6:30 am to 2:30 pm

- No hazardous or liquid wastes accepted

BROWN CONTAINERS - Residential Waste

Residential alley containers are for residential waste only, NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION DEBRIS.

If you have construction debris take it directly to the landfill.

REMINDER!

PLEASE do not put plastic bags and glass in the recyclable containers at 9th & N Street and Northfield Church. THANK YOU!

REMINDER

Free dump pass!

All residents have a free monthly dump pass for excess trash they need brought to the landfill. We would also like residents to consider recycling. Recycling keeps trash out of the landfill and numerous products get recycled and reused.



Commonly asked Questions

When does the City's annual budget process take place?

The City's annual budget schedule begins in May when the City Clerk publishes a notice regarding the deadline for outside agencies to submit letters requesting financial assistance from the City of Gering. Department Heads also begin looking at what, if any, staff changes may need to be added for the next fiscal year. A series of other deadlines are set between May and July including CIP requests from Senior Management to the City Treasurer regarding capital improvement projects. After numerous meetings with the Council and staff the City will hold a "Budget Work Session" that is open to the public. Each area of the budget is covered with City Council Members in attendance. No formal action is taken, but thorough discussion takes place.

When will the Budget Work Session take place? The



Budget Work Session for FY 17/18 will take place on August 8, 2017 beginning at 8:00 a.m. in the City Council Chambers, 1025 P Street, Gering. The session is open to the public.

When will the Public Hearing regarding the City's budget take place?

On September 12, 2017 the City Council will hold a public hearing regarding the budget and will consider approving the budget. Members of the community are welcome to attend and speak at the public hearing. The City must submit the approved budget to the State and County by September 20.



courtesy photo

How do I contact the Council Members for my Ward?

Council Member email addresses are available on the City's website, they are also show below:

Dan Smith: dsmith@gering.org - Ward I
 Michael Gillen: mgillen@gering.org - Ward II
 Ben Backus: bbackus@gering.org - Ward III
 Phil Holliday: pholliday@gering.org - Ward IV
 Susan Wiedeman: swiedeman@gering.org - Ward I
 Pam O'Neal: poneal@gering.org - Ward II
 Julie Morrison: jmorrison@gering.org - Ward III
 Troy Cowan: tcowan@gering.org - Ward IV
 Mayor Tony Kaufman: mayorkaufman@gering.org

Phone numbers for Council Members are also available on the City's website: www.gering.org

GERING CIVIC PLAZA COMING SOON!

The Gering Civic Plaza will serve as a gathering place for events and activities year-round; where residents and visitors can interact with one another on a regular basis to foster a sense of place in downtown Gering.

Construction of the Gering Civic Plaza started with the official Ground Breaking Ceremony on May 22, 2017 at the Plaza Site. Mayor Tony Kaufman, elected officials, and members of Gering's Downtown Revitalization Committee joined the financial contributors of the project as well as the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, Scottsbluff-Gering Rotary Club and Next Young Professionals to break ground for Phase I of the Civic Plaza.

Phase I of the Civic Plaza Development will commence this summer and be completed in the fall of this year. The City of Gering will begin selective demolition of the site in June and competitive bids from contractors will be solicited for the paving and utility work. Major demolition work and paving work will start

immediately after Oregon Trail Days weekend on July 17th to minimize the impact to activities during this time. Phase I will include construction of new parking lots on the south and north end of the Plaza; construction of a new Farmer's Market area with covered awnings on the north side of the Plaza and construction of a large plaza lawn/recreation area in the center.

Questions regarding the construction of Phase I of the Gering Civic Plaza can be directed to: Karla Niedan-Streeks, Director of Tourism for the City of Gering and Director of the Gering CVB at 308.436.6886.



Gering Municipal Pool



SUMMER HOURS:

Swimming Lessons - Daily	9:00 & 10:00 a.m.
Adult Swimming	12:00 to 1:00 p.m.
Open Swimming - Daily	1:00 to 5:00 p.m.
Family Hour - Daily	5:00 to 6:00 p.m.
(Children must be accompanied by a parent.)	
Open Swimming - Daily	6:00 to 8:00 p.m.
Private Group Reservations - week days	8:00 to 10:00 p.m.
	Saturday & Sunday 11:00 a.m. to 1 p.m.

ADMISSIONS (Includes water slide)

Adult (16 & up)	
Youth (5 to 15)	
Children (4 & under with Adult)	

DAILY RATES

\$4.00
\$3.50
FREE



MEMBERSHIPS (Includes use of water slide)

Family	\$120.00 (Gering Pool only)
Single	\$65.00 (Gering Pool only)

SWIMMING LESSONS

June 5-16 and June 19-30
 With season pass \$20.00
 Without season pass \$30.00

PRIVATE GROUP RATES

\$175.00 minimum
 or \$3.50 per person over 50 people.
 Price includes water slide.



Bike & Walking Path



Enjoy the Monument Pathway but please keep in mind that use of the pathway is prohibited after sunset for your safety.

Power Line Safety

City of Gering Electric Department

Spring is upon us and that means it's time to start working on and maintaining the outside of your property. There are many projects to do before summer gets here. Projects like trimming and planting trees and plants, painting your house and getting your garden ready just to name a few. But while you're out doing all of your projects take a second to look around and check for power lines. There are power lines in the air and in the ground that need to be given a second thought before performing your work.

Let's start with tree trimming or planting. If you are going to be pruning your trees this spring you need to look the tree over before you ever touch it. Take a look and make sure there are no power lines running through it or touching it. If the tree is in contact with the power line the tree could have hazardous voltage running through it and may present a risk to your safety. If you see this you need to contact a professional tree pruning service or your local utility and they will assess the situation and take the appropriate action. If you are planting new trees you need to call dig-

Power Line Safety (cont...)

gers hotline first so all utilities can mark their lines so you don't dig into a line, such as electric, water, gas, and communications. Any time you are going to dig, whether it is to plant trees or install a fence, you need to call diggers hotline first.

For other projects such as painting or installing new siding take a look at where your electrical service attaches to your home. If your service is overhead make sure you keep a safe distance from it to prevent electrical shock. Also make sure if you are using a ladder that you keep it away from the service especially if your ladder is made of metal. Even if your ladder is fiberglass, keep it away from the electrical service for your safety. If you need to get close to the electrical service contact your local utility and they can shut it off if need be.



The last topic to be discussed is spring and summer storms. During these storms damaging winds and hail may occur and can break power poles or knock lines down. If you should ever see



a downed power line or a broken pole stay away from it as it could still have power running through it. Contact your local utility or emergency services immediately if you see a broken pole or a line on the ground. Serious injury can occur if you come in contact with a power line.

After reading this article we hope we, as a utility, have given you some things to look for while you're out working around your home. Please check for these things and stay safe this summer. If you have any questions or concerns just contact your local utility and they will be happy to help. (308) 436-6800

SUMMER READING AT THE LIBRARY



The Gering Public Library is gearing up for their Annual Summer Reading Program. GPL knows that books are the nuts and bolts of learning and what better way to celebrate the Build a Better World theme than to build readers! This program is for everyone from infants to grandparents. There are prizes and programs for all

ages! Some highlights of the program this summer are a family pool party and Animal Gross-Out at the Zoo (learn gross and interesting facts about animals). You can also participate in hands-on activities, learn to build furniture, sturdy walls, appliances and other things from Curtis Monk, The Lego Guy, at the Brick

and Mortar Lego Program, and build a castle with a working drawbridge at Family STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math) Night.

Come visit the Gering Library and get your blueprints for building because whether it's Legos, character, or friendship, summer is for building!

Don't let the kids have all the fun

Join our adult summer reading program and Build a Better World! Earn chances for prizes based on the number of books you read - take part in community activities to earn chances at even more prizes. Step up and help Build a Better World!

This year's adult summer reading program will include two trivia nights at The Monument Grill. Bring your smartest friends and test your wits or come and let us find a team for you. Call the library (436-7433) for registration.



2017 is the 100th anniversary of Buffalo Bill's death. Humanities Nebraska Speaker, Jeff Barnes, will be speaking on "The Great Plains Guide to Buffalo Bill." "Jeff Barnes is one of the most popular speakers in the Humanities Nebraska Speakers' Bureau," says Gering Library Director Diane Downer.

Adult programming highlights:

- June 12, 6:00 pm - Trivia Night at The Monument Grill
- June 22, 1:30 pm - Food for Thought book discussion group "A Man Called Ove"
- July 7, 9:00-4:00 - Planetarium at Lincoln Elementary
- July 10, 6:00 pm - Trivia Night at The Monument Grill
- July 19, 6:30 pm - Jeff Barnes "Buffalo Bill" Humanities Nebraska Speaker
- July 27, 1:30 pm - Food for Thought book discussion group "Black Elk Speaks"



A Planetarium is Coming to Gering this Summer



The Edgerton Explorit Center in Aurora, Nebraska is coming to Gering with a traveling planetarium show July 7 from 9-4 at the Lincoln Elementary School. The library will have a sign-up sheet available to reduce waiting time. We strongly suggest you make a reservation at 436-7433 to see the planetarium show.

The planetarium is capable not only of showing the daytime and nighttime sky but also prerecorded full dome planetarium shows. From a computer, images are projected using a video sys-

tem equipped with a fish-eye lens. With a diameter of five meters, the inflatable dome will have enough room to seat 25 people. Visitors enter the dome by walking in, and it is wheelchair accessible.

"Many people may remember a portable planetarium from back in grade school days, crawling through a tunnel to see dim dots for stars," says Edgerton educator and "mad scientist" Dan Glomski. "They've come a long way in the last few years."

The planetarium will be part of a series of educational activities and events centered around the August 21, 2017 total solar eclipse, the path of which crosses Nebraska. "Interest in the eclipse will be incredibly high, and we want to make sure people are ready for it," Glomski says. "The portable planetarium will definitely help us do that."

Continued from front page...

Keno Committee Receives Award

By Karla Niedan-Streeks

The 2017 Gering CVB Community Volunteer Buddy Award was presented to the City of Gering Keno Committee at a City Council meeting on May 22. The Gering CVB "Community Volunteer Buddy Award" began in 2007; past winners are people who see the big picture of tourism and whose efforts make a real difference in our community. This year's recipient is the epitome of volunteer

dedication to Gering with a long history of active involvement in our community; and although many times behind the scenes they are definitely a driver of growth in Gering and strengthening our tourism industry. This year's winner sees our community as a whole package from supporting the education of our youth; to enhancing sports and supporting special events - all to strengthen Gering for us as residents and for our visitors. They are committed to the betterment of Gering.

Congratulations to the City of Gering Keno Committee!

Gering and Scotts Bluff County's wide open spaces and historical weather patterns of clear blue skies makes our city one of the best locations in America to view the summer's total Solar Eclipse on Monday, August 21, 2017.

This will be the first total Solar Eclipse in the continental U.S. in 38 years; Gering is in the path of totality meaning residents and visitors will experience total darkness on Monday morning, August 21st at 11:48 a.m. for one minute and 28 seconds. Daylight will be replaced by a mysterious dusk, and bright planets and stars will become visible during the day. There will be a chill in the air because the temperature will drop a

dozen degrees or more. The brilliant sun will be replaced by a dark orb surrounded by a ghostly halo at the totally eclipsed sun.

Where will you be for the greatest phenomenon of your lifetime? This could be the only "TOTAL" Solar Eclipse you will ever witness.....and the place to be is home in Gering with friends, relatives and thousands of national and international visitors.

There will be three official viewing locations for the Eclipse; Five Rocks Amphitheater, Legacy of the Plains Museum and Landers Soccer Field. Residents and visitors viewing at the locations will receive FREE Eclipse glasses. Expecting 5,000 to 8,000 visitors for the Eclipse, the Gering

Visitors Bureau and our tourism partners are planning a weekend of exciting

activities leading up to the Monday morning total solar Eclipse. Be prepared for one of the greatest events of the century on August 21, 2017; for more information on how to get your Eclipse glasses and details on planned events contact the Gering Visitors Bureau at 308.436.6886.



Join 400,000 of your peers to learn how to maximize your influence and leadership with two days of World-Class Leadership Training.

- Get a unique blend of vision, inspiration and practical skills you can immediately apply
- Leverage the Summit as a resource to transform yourself and your community
- Join with people from 128 countries and 60 languages who attend the Summit around the world

Register at: www.willowcreek.com

continued... Bathroom, cont...



damage or clog your plumbing.

How many times a day is the toilet flushed in your house? If U.S. citizens averaged only four or five flushes per day, it would amount to more than 5 billion gallons of water down the drain. That's enough to supply drinking water to the entire population of Chicago for more than six years.

Take shorter showers or take

a bath. A partially filled bathtub uses less water than all but the shortest showers. Install low-flow showerheads and faucet aerators. They are inexpensive and easy to install.

Turn off the water while brushing your teeth or shaving. Wet your toothbrush, and draw a glass of water for rinsing. Before shaving, partially fill the sink with warm water for rinsing the razor blade.

Other

Fix dripping faucets; they usually only take inexpensive

washers.

Clothes washers are more water efficient if run only when they are full. If your washer has a variable load control, select water levels to fit the size of the load.

When washing clothes by hand, don't let the water run. Instead, plug the laundry tub and reuse wash and rinse water.

Keep a bottle of drinking water in the refrigerator. It is money down the drain if you let the water run to get cold water.

Run the dishwasher only with a full load. Automatic dishwashers use about 15 gallons of water regardless of the number of dishes in the load.

When washing dishes by hand don't let the faucet run freely to rinse. Plug and fill the second side of your sink to rinse your dishes and change rinse water as needed.

When washing fruits and vegetables, fill the sink with water instead of running the faucet.



Pets in Vehicles

Every year, hundreds of pets die from heat exhaustion because they are left in parked vehicles. The temperature inside your vehicle can rise almost 20° F in just 10 minutes. In 20 minutes, it can rise almost 30° F...and the longer you wait, the higher it goes. At 60 minutes, the temperature in your vehicle can be more than 40 degrees higher than the outside temperature. Even on a 70-degree day, that's 110 degrees inside your vehicle!

Your vehicle can quickly reach a temperature that puts your pet at risk of serious illness and even death, even on a day that doesn't seem hot to you. And cracking the windows makes virtually no difference.

PLEASE think twice before leaving your pet in a parked vehicle - even for just a few minutes! Source: American Veterinary Medical Association



Responsible Pet Ownership begins with YOU! and, it's the law...

Please remember to keep your pet's Rabies and other 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.