

TALK OF THE TOWN

September 2018

A publication of the City of Gering



436-5096 * www.gering.org

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A message from the Mayor

If you're looking for ideas for a short trip with the family, why head out of town when you can have an enjoyable vaca-

tion by staying close to home in Gering. Exploring what's in your own backyard with a "staycation" is a relaxing break and affordable option. After all, can you really say you've seen and done everything Gering and the surrounding area have to offer?

Just like a traveling vacation, a staycation is about relaxation and enjoyment with the family; minus the stress of packing, waiting in lines at the airport and driving in big city traffic. Gering and our surrounding area offers an abundance of activities, new experiences and opportunities to treat yourself to some good times close to home.

Scotts Bluff National Monument grounds are lush and green with all the trails open for walking, hiking and biking. Grounds and trails are open sunrise to sunset; the views from



the Summit are breathtaking each and every time you experience it. The museum at the Monument offers a wealth of information about the Monument and the Oregon Trail.

Legacy of the Plains Museum and the Riverside Discovery Center have teamed up on an attraction pass admitting you and your family to both attractions for one low price. Enjoy Legacy's indoor interactive exhibits in the Museum and on-campus outdoor agricultural activities on the campus grounds.

Riverside Discovery Center exhibits numerous species of animals and offers fun events throughout the summer and fall. Kids will love the dino dig, splash pad and petting zoo. Make each visit to the zoo a unique and memorable experience.

The Expedition League season is over but make sure to catch some games next year. The best collegiate baseball players make up our hometown team, the Western Nebraska Pioneers. If you've been to games already, you've experienced baseball at its best under the lights. The owners, players, coaches and sponsors represent everything that is great about America's favorite pastime and there is nothing better than being up close at a baseball game served up with great food and beverages in a first-class stadium all within walking distance from your home anywhere in Gering.

The bottom line is there's definitely something to be said for vacationing and experiencing good times here at home. When looking for ideas for your staycation, your Gering Visitors Bureau is a gold mine for suggestions, the latest happenings, discounts and everything you need to know about upcoming events.

It's important to have some semblance of an itinerary, as with any vacation, but don't over plan for your staycation in Gering and the area. Leave room for spontaneous discoveries; select an area of town that's unfamiliar to you and take your evening walk in a new neighborhood, enjoy a restaurant and ethnic cuisine that's new to your family or take a self-guided walking tour of downtown architecture and stop in at the shops, the Civic Plaza and nightlife opportunities.

Gering joined an elite list of "small towns" across the country named as one of the "20 Best Small Towns to Visit in 2018". As Mayor, I encourage you to take a vacation with family enjoying your hometown, its attractions and all the special events that comprise one of the best places to visit this year.

Tony Kaufman
Mayor
City of Gering



So you're running for office... what you should know about political signage in the city limits of Gering.

Ordinance 1731

(8) Temporary political signs announcing political candidates seeking public office, political parties, and or political issues contained on a ballot for an election may be located only on private property, not sooner than eight (8) weeks prior to a primary or general election, and shall be removed no more than five (5) days following an election.

Disconnect garden hoses from faucets!

Winterize sprinkler system and backflow preventers!

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



Working SMOKE ALARMS SAVE LIVES

Change Your Clock, Change Your Battery

The Gering Fire Department is dedicated to life safety!

Halloween Safety Tips

Gering Fire Department



Did you know?

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

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.

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.

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.

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 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.

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

Make sure all smoke alarms in the home are working.

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!



1. Candy is 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. Putting your dog or cat in a secure room away from the front door will also prevent them from darting outside into the night ... a night when no one wants to be searching for a lost loved one.

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

Black cats are especially at risk from pranks or other incidents. In fact, many shelters do not adopt out black cats during the month of October as a safety precaution.

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".

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.

Gering Public LIBRARY



Full STEAM Ahead at the Gering Library

There are a few changes coming for children at the Gering library. In anticipation of the Gering schools early release for all students every Wednesday, the Gering library's Lego Club will now meet every Wednesday from 3-4



p.m. The Gering library also has plans in the coming year to expand Lego Club to become a STEAM club focusing on science, technology, engineering, art, and math activities.



Storytime began the first full week in September. Preschool Read & Romp storytime will be held on Thursdays at 10 a.m. Toddler Story & Playtime will be held on Wednesdays at 10 a.m. There are plans to add more dramatic play toys and activities to this program in the near future and we are so fortunate to have a Melissa & Doug play kitchen donated by one of our patrons. Many thanks to Julie Brock for this fantastic donation.



The first session of LEAP (Learn. Explore. Achieve. Play), an early childhood math, literacy, and school readiness program for children ages 3-5 will begin October 16th. Registration for this free program will begin September 17th. Call, email, or Facebook



message the Gering library to register. The program will run eight weeks with each session held every Tuesday evening from 6-7 p.m. There are plans to add a STEAM cart to this program also with new activities focusing on science, technology, engineering, art, and math, including sand and water activities.

There is a calendar of all of these events that can be accessed at www.gering.org/library. 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 the library programs mentioned please call 436-7433 or email youth services librarian, Christie Clarke at cclarke@geringlibrary.org.

LIBRARIES ADAPT TO SERVE THE PUBLIC

Libraries play an important role in the education and development of children. Studies show that children who are read to in the home and who use the library perform better in school and are more likely to continue to use the library as a source of lifetime learning.

Librarians are literacy experts. Libraries offer a variety of programs to stimulate an interest in reading and learning. Preschool story hours expose young children to the joy of reading, while homework centers provide computers and assistance to older children after school. Summer reading clubs keep children reading during school vacation and have been shown to be the most important factor in avoiding the decrease in reading skills that educators refer to as "summer learning loss."

Society is changing in the way it consumes information. Libraries are evolving with these changes to serve the public and to continue to fulfill their role in leveling the playing field for all who seek information and access to technologies.

Today's public libraries are thriving technology hubs that millions rely on as their first or only choice for Internet access and digital content. In addition to books, magazines, DVDs, computers, games, software and other multimedia materials, libraries provide access to downloadable e-books and audiobooks.

Often the library is the first point of contact in helping community members. From providing assistance to small business owners to assisting with access to e-government resources, as well as providing free wifi, affordable faxing, copying and printing, libraries are changing lives.

Libraries are America's great information equalizers – the only place people of all ages and backgrounds can find and freely use such a diversity of resources, along with the expert guidance of librarians. - Taken from ALA website



SPICE IS THE VARIETY OF LIFE

If you think that spice is the variety of life and love international cuisine, A to Z World Food has you covered. A to Z World Food is the only food database that contains traditional recipes for 174 countries of the world in all course categories: appetizers, soups, salads, breads, main courses, side dishes, desserts, and beverages. With your library card, you can access this database from home at www.gering.org/library then go to useful links and look for "A to Z World Food."

FEATURES

- 174 Countries
- 9,000+ Food Photos
- 1,700+ Food Quotes
- 6,000+ Recipes
- 540+ Ingredient Articles
- 750+ World Beer Reviews
- 850+ Food Culture Articles
- 800+ Food Glossary Terms
- Personal Recipe Book

AtoZ World Food is mobile friendly, automatically adapting to the screen size of any desktop, laptop, tablet, or smartphone.



SEPTEMBER IS LIBRARY CARD MONTH

If you don't already have one, stop in and get a library card in September. With your new card you can have a choice of a library card holder for your cards or a snazzy magnet book mark, while supplies last. Your library card will allow you access to some great data bases on our website as well as downloadable e-books and audiobooks along with our regular collection of books, movies, magazines and cake pans. "When I was young, we couldn't afford much. But, my library card was my key to the world." John Goodman

Save the Date!

Gering Library's Mingle and Jingle Open House is scheduled for December 14, 2018



National Monument to Celebrate Centennial in 2019

By: Kayla J. Gasker,
Scotts Bluff National Monument Centennial Coordinator



When President Woodrow Wilson signed the Presidential Proclamation on December 12, 1919 officially establishing Scotts Bluff National Monument, he set aside a vast expanse of tall bluffs, rugged badlands, portions of historic overland trails, and rare prairie landscapes. Encompassing over 3,000 acres, Scotts Bluff preserves both cultural and natural resources for future generations. Despite being founded by Presidential Proclamation, it was the Gering and Scottsbluff community that initiated the request that the area be set aside as a unit of the National Park Service. In fact, an inquiry was made to the Department of the Interior in 1914, two years before the National Park Service was even established.

Since its establishment, Scotts Bluff has seen numerous changes including construction of the Summit Road, Oregon Trail Museum, Saddle Rock hiking trail and William Henry Jackson Wing to name a few. 2019 will mark the 100th anniversary of the Monument's creation and park staff and community partners are already making plans to commemorate the occasion with a year-long calendar of

activities.

As the Centennial Coordinator, I am eager to engage the community, schools, businesses and civic groups. One hundred years ago, the creation of the Monument was a community effort and we want the Centennial celebration to be as well. Scotts Bluff served as a towering beacon along the historic Oregon, California and Mormon trails but it has also been a constant backdrop in the fabric of the local community.

For more information on Centennial events, please like "Scotts Bluff National Monument" on Facebook or visit www.nps.gov/scbl. If you have historic photos, personal accounts or other historic memorabilia of Scotts Bluff National Monument, please email scottsbluff_nationalmonument@nps.gov.



What's Happening at Five Rocks and U Street?

This spring, during one of our unusually heavy rain events, the bank along U Street just west of Five Rocks Road started to erode heavily. So much soil eroded that it was threatening to expose the City's water line. The City had to act fast to keep the water line from being exposed and collapsing, which would have contaminated the City's drinking water supply. So City staff moved dirt from the adjacent canyon area to replace the soil that had eroded. This ensured uninterrupted water service to the whole community. Now that the area has finally dried out, the City is doing the final grading on the project and is working with the North Platte NRD to reseed it to native grasses and perennials.





Water Leaks

Watch for Water Leaks - The City of Gering has over 70 miles of water mains buried under streets and alleys and in utility easements. Water leaks can and will happen anytime of the year. Over the last couple of years, the City has experienced water leaks where the street, sidewalk and yard has settled

causing tens of thousands of dollars in damages and repairs. The City is asking customers to help prevent these expensive repairs. If you see any settlement in

your lawn, driveway or a street call the Utility Office to report a possible leak. The City does not charge to check for leaks, even after hours. (308) 436-6800.

What to look for to determine if there is a water leak

Outside the home;

- Check for garden hoses left running
- If an area of your grass is greener and growing substantially faster than the rest of the lawn, there could be a leak
- Look for grass that is soft and spongy in one area of the lawn
- Water bubbling up from underground in the lawn, sidewalk or street
- Sudden settlement of curb, sidewalk, driveway, street or lawn
- Slow settlement of curb, sidewalk, driveway, street or lawn
- A sound inside the home of water always running but the water meter is not turning



If you know or suspect you have a water leak please call the City of Gering Utility Office at 436-6800.

Water leaks may begin leaking days, weeks or months before the leak will surface. Water leaks should be immediately repaired to prevent damage to structures, lawns and pavement. Water can travel along the pipe and under the home and cause costly repairs to the home that your insurance company may not cover.



Water leaks can be very expensive to repair. The City recommends you check with your insurance company to verify if you have or can get coverage for the cost of damages and repairs from water leaks.

Inside the home;

Look for your water meter, once you've located your water meter check the low flow indicator to see if it is moving, (low flow indicators are a red triangle, black triangle, red needle or on digital meters it is a small circle with + flashing inside the circle to indicate flow). If the triangle or needle

are moving or the + is flashing in the circle you have water flowing through the meter. Make sure all faucets and appliances that use water are turned off. Again check the low flow indicator on the water meter, if the indicator is moving then water is still running through the water meter and you may have a leak.

Common water losses in the home;

- Leaking toilet (most common)
- Garden hose left running (set the oven timer to remind you to move the sprinkler or shut off the garden hose)
- Underground sprinkler system valves or pipe leaking
- Leaking faucets
- Leak under a concrete floor



**Responsible
Pet
Ownership
begins with
YOU!**

**and, it's the
law...**



Cold Weather Pet Care Tips

- 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 causing irritation. Use pet-friendly ice melts when possible.
- Remember, if it's too cold for

you, it's probably too cold for your pet; keep them 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. - ASPCA

Antifreeze is deadly to pets. The sweet taste is irresistible to animals kept in the garage in colder months. Look for "safe" non-toxic antifreeze and make sure all spills are cleaned immediately and thoroughly. Contact your veterinarian immediately if you suspect your pet may have ingested any antifreeze. - American Humane

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, candles and dark chocolate!

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.

City of Gering Environmental Services



(308) 436-7568

BLUE CONTAINERS

Single Stream Recycling 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.

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

NO GLASS OF ANY KIND
NO PLASTIC BAGS OF ANY KIND
DO NOT PLACE RECYCLABLES IN PLASTIC BAGS

Commercial size containers are also available!

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 first of November



IMPORTANT NOTICE!

PLEASE DO NOT put grass in garbage dumpsters - Green dumpsters are *specifically* for that use. If grass is placed in garbage dumpsters it will *not* be dumped until the resident cleans it out. This is also true for green dumpsters - there cannot be garbage in the green containers.

Residents are also responsible for cleaning up alley-ways so vehicles can drive through them safely.

We would also like to add that Free Dump Passes for Gering are for residential use only and are good once per month. Landlords can not use them for their rentals, as rental properties are commercial businesses.

Thank you for your cooperation!

LANDFILL

Located at 200531 West 'U' Street, 436-7568
Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday
6:30 am to 2:30 pm. No hazardous or liquid wastes accepted.

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

THANK YOU!



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.



Clearing Public Walks

City Ordinance allows 12 hours after the cessation of a storm to clear public walks. Thank you for your cooperation!

ORDINANCE 2059

PUBLIC WALKS; SNOW, ICE AND MUD REMOVAL FROM SIDE-WALKS

SECTION 1. SNOW, ICE AND MUD.

It shall be unlawful for the occupant of any lot or lots, or the owner of any vacant lot or lots within the corporate limits of the City of Gering, Nebraska, to allow snow, sleet, mud, ice or other substance to accumulate on the sidewalk contiguous thereto, or to permit any hard trodden snow, sleet, ice, mud or other substances to remain upon said sidewalk; but such sidewalk shall be cleaned within twelve (12) hours after the cessation of a storm. In addition, any snow, sleet, ice, mud or other substance which remains on a sidewalk contrary to the provisions of this section is hereby declared to be a public nuisance, in the discretion of Gering Transportation Su-

perintendent or other agent of the City.

SECTION 2. NOTICE TO REMOVE AND PENALTY.

Notice to remove such substance shall be made upon the owner or occupant of the premises, or their agent. If the person owning or occupying such premises be unknown or cannot be found, or if any reasonable service cannot be had upon any such owner, agent or occupant within this City, then such service of said notice shall be made by posting a notice in a conspicuous place on the premises; and any owner or occupant who fails to clean off and remove ice, snow, mud, sleet or other substance which constitutes a nuisance as required herein, and upon conviction thereof shall be deemed guilty of an infraction and shall be fined \$100.00.

SECTION 3. EMERGENCY.

If the Transportation Superintendent or another agent of the City shall determine that an accumulation of snow, sleet, ice or mud is so unsafe, or is unsafe in a respect such that a delay in removal thereof would result in undue danger or other hazard to the public, he or she may declare in writing that there exists an emergency requiring that the snow, sleet, ice or mud be removed immediately and order the owner or occupant to remove the snow, sleet, ice or mud from public walkways and sidewalks.

Emergency Snow Routes

THANK YOU for your cooperation!

ORDINANCE AMENDED DEC. 11, 2017

Section 1. That Title VII: Traffic Code be amended by adding the following:

§ 76.02 SNOW EMERGENCY DECLARATION

(A) A snow emergency is defined as a special condition of a snowfall event requiring residents to move their vehicles off the snow emergency routes to accommodate emergency snow removal.

(B) A snow emergency declaration allows for the towing of vehicles from the emergency snow routes. A snow emergency is normally declared after a measurable snowfall of two (2) inches or more; however, any amount of snow combined with ice, rain, and/or wind can also require a snow emergency to be declared.

(C) The City Administrator or Public Works Director may declare a snow emergency. A snow emergency may be declared in advance of an anticipated storm, to start at a specific time; or a snow emergency may be declared anytime during or after a storm. A snow emergency will normally not last more than 72 hours past the end of the last snowfall.

(D) That a snow emergency has been declared will be communicated to the public through mass media outlets as deemed appropriate by the City Administrator, Transportation Superintendent or Public Works Director.

§ 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.

EMERGENCY SNOW ROUTES SHOWN RIGHT →

(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 (6:00) a.m. to seven o'clock (7:00) 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. Penalty see § 10.99.

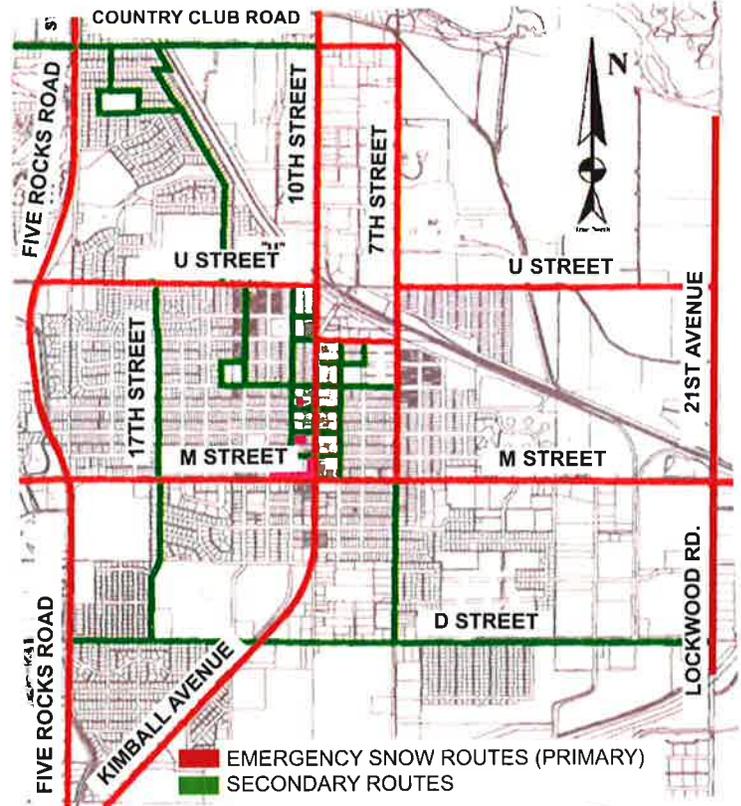
(D) City equipment will not be used to remove piled snow or push snow away from private property or businesses. Snow will only be removed from City facilities. Using City equipment to clear snow from private property is a violation of this code unless it is necessary to allow emergency vehicles access to the private property for ambulance, fire or police calls.

§ 76.05 VEHICLE TOWING DURING DECLARED SNOW EMERGENCIES.

Vehicles parked on a designated Snow Emergency Route street during a declared Snow Emergency are subject to tow without notice to the owners, and at the owners' expense. In addition, if a vehicle is left on a public street or alley on a designated snow route in such a fashion as to hinder snow removal, that vehicle may be towed at the expense of the owner of the vehicle, provided that an attempt was made to contact the owner to have the vehicle moved; and that either the owner could not be located, or the owner was contacted, that the owner of the vehicle failed to move the vehicle within fifteen (15) minutes after being contacted.

§ 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.



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" Street to Country Club Rd.
- Country Club Rd. from 10th Street to 7th Street
- Lockwood Road from Hwy 71 to M Street
- 21st Avenue from M Street to the North Platte River bridge

An Introduction to Cross-Connection Control

Nebraska's Safe Drinking Water Act requires water systems to implement an on-going cross connection control program. An important part of this program is public education. It is believed that a well-informed public will be more aware of the possibility of cross connections within their property and will take reasonable and sensible precautions to avoid creating cross connections on their property. This article is intended to explain what a cross connection is, what causes it, what some of the consequences can be and how they can be prevented.

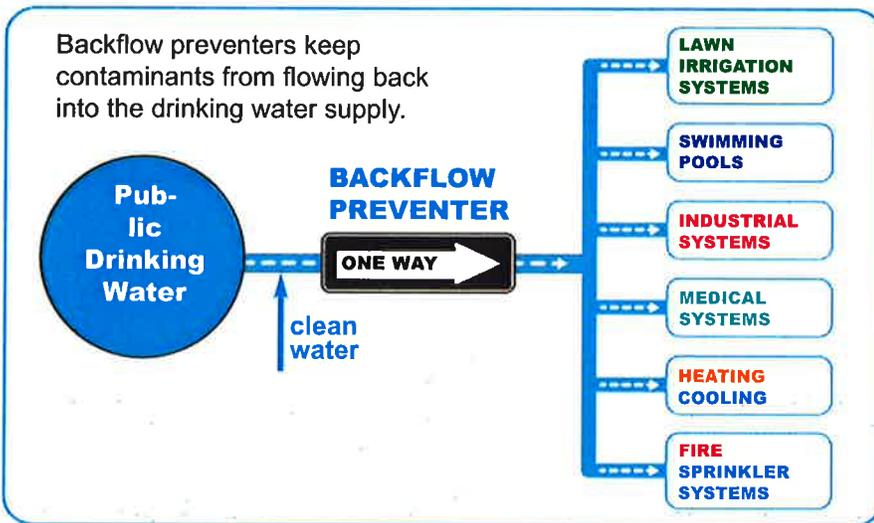
What is a cross connection? A cross connection occurs whenever there is an actual or potential physical connection between the public drinking water system and any possible source of contamination. Contamination can cause illness or death. Low or non-hazardous materials which are mainly just a nuisance can cause the water to look, taste or smell unpleasant. Although the high hazards are the primary concern in a cross connection control program, your water utility strives to provide both safe and good quality water to its customers. Whenever there is a loss of pressure in the public water supply, these cross connections can allow unsafe substances to enter the public water supply.



What causes cross connections? Cross connections can be caused by both permanent and temporary "piping". An example of a cross connection being permanently piped in is the drain on a water softener. Many times these discharge lines are connected directly to the sewer line without any type of protection. Hot tub and whirlpool fill pipes and swimming pool and boiler make-up lines are other examples of permanently piped cross connections.

The most common example of a temporary piped cross connection is the common garden hose. It is estimated that 90% of all cross connections are caused by the inappropriate use of garden hoses. Garden hoses are frequently used to apply fertilizer and pesticides to lawns and gardens. They are also used to fill swimming pools, wash cars, and in rural areas they are often used to fill stock tanks for watering livestock. Other temporary piping cross connections occur when hoses are used to fill waterbeds or are connected to utility sinks to fill wash tubs or mop buckets.

What are the consequences of cross connection? The consequences of cross connections can range from something as simple as "dirty water" to something as severe as serious illness or even death. There are many recorded instances of non-hazardous contamination of public water supplies caused by cross connections. Instances were also recorded where people have been made seriously ill or even died due to cross connections. There have been cases where dysentery, diarrhea, hepatitis and other diseases have been contracted as a direct result of cross connection.



as "dirty water" to something as severe as serious illness or even death. There are many recorded instances of non-hazardous contamination of public water supplies caused by cross connections. Instances were also recorded where people have been made seriously ill or even died due to cross connections. There have been cases where dysentery, diarrhea, hepatitis and other diseases have been contracted as a direct result of cross connection.

How can cross connections be prevented? The best way to prevent cross connections is for each customer to examine the plumbing on their premises and look for any permanent or temporary piped cross connections. Any time there is the possibility of a cross connection between the water supply and any hazardous or unknown substance, there should be an air gap between the faucet and the questionable use. In cases where

this is not possible, as with a garden hose, a proper backflow prevention device or assembly should be installed on the supply faucet. This will protect both the public water supply and the inhabitants of the building from contamination. In situations where extremely high hazards exist in a building or location, it is sometimes necessary to contain that entire system from the public water supply with a backflow preventer to protect the public water supply from the substances being used on that site.

What you can do to prevent cross connections and keep your drinking water safe.

1. Check your faucets to be sure that all faucet endpoints are above the flood level of the sink, tub, basin, or other apparatus they supply.
2. Protect faucet extensions by installing proper backflow prevention devices (i.e. hose bib vacuum breakers) on all faucets capable of having a hose or other extension attached.
3. Check drain lines (refrigerator drink dispensers, water softeners, heat exchangers, etc.) to be sure there is an adequate air gap between the drain line and the floor drain or sewer line into which they discharge.
4. Never use unprotected faucets to fill non-drinking water containers (i.e. water beds, wading pools, stock tanks, hot tubs, etc.)

Following these guidelines and using common sense will help to eliminate the possibility of you contaminating your drinking water.

AIR GAP

Air gaps are the most common means of protecting against backflow, and they are also the best protection. An air gap is simply a physical break between the source of the water and the container into which it is running. Air gaps are built in to most sinks found in residences. Kitchen and bathroom sinks, as well as bathtubs, showers, washing machines and dish washers are designed with an air gap to protect the water supply. Placing a hose on the end of these faucets will render the air gap useless and could allow the contents of the sink to be drawn back into the water supply. Water bed filler kits and old fashioned spray hoses that fit over the faucet are common ways of bypassing an air gap. These should be avoided at all costs.