

# DE SOTO

KANSAS

## WATER TREATMENT PLANT IMPROVEMENTS CONTINUING

Progress continues to be made on the rehabilitation project for the water treatment facility and distribution systems. As we have reported in past newsletter articles, De Soto is taking a phased approach to the overall refurbishment plans while we investigate the possibility of a water wholesale arrangement with other entities in the area (See the related article elsewhere in this newsletter.). While we continue with our efforts to seek out partners to form a wholesale water supply group utilizing De Soto's treatment facility, we are moving ahead with upgrades needed to ensure the continued delivery of safe drinking water to the City.

Phase I improvements include work on the water supply lines for treated water and electrical systems at the treatment facility. The work includes the following:

The construction of 9,400 feet of 28" high density polyethylene (HDPE) water distribution main that will replace an existing 12" main. This main currently links the treatment plant to the four white water towers on the Sunflower property and the rest of the City's distribution system.

The construction of 5,500 feet of overhead electrical line to

replace the existing electrical feed to the treatment plant building.

The purchase and installation of a 350 kW back-up generator at the treatment plant facility. If electrical power in the area is lost, water won't be.

The installation of a new electrical motor control center within the treatment plant building, including new wire and conduit to 21 separate sub-panels.

The total project costs for this phase of system improvements currently estimated at is \$1,800,000. This cost will be partly offset by a \$500,000 EPA grant. The balance of the funding comes from GO bonds issued in 2010.

All of the electrical system work--including the new main feed to the treatment plant, the motor control center inside the filter plant building and the backup generator--is complete. We placed the generator in service on May 4th and the facility is now powered from the new main electrical line.

On March 16th the City Council



▲ New 350 kW generator at the Sunflower Treatment Plant.

awarded the construction contract for the installation of the new water main to BRB Contractors of Topeka Kansas in the amount of \$1.36 Million. BRB has been on site since the beginning of June fusing sections of the HDPE pipe in preparation for its installation. It is expected that the new main will be in service by the end of the year.



▲ Sections of fused HDPE pipe await installation. Sunflower Water Treatment Plant in background.

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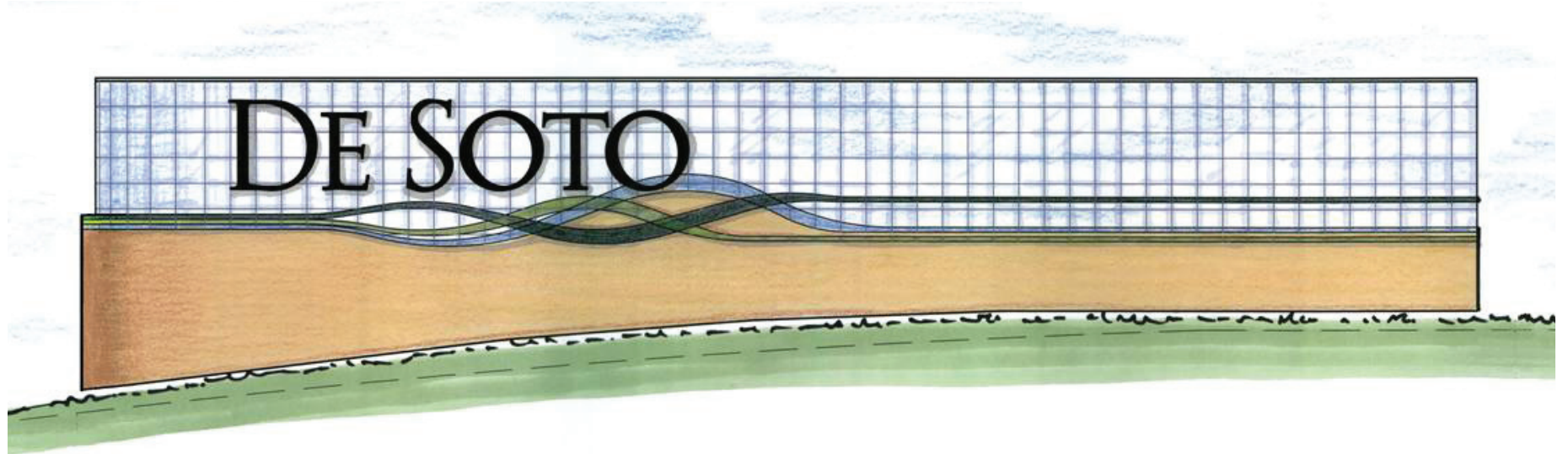


**2** Monument sign updates. City decides to forgo project for now, reallocate funds.

**4** De Soto Days. The fun begins Labor Day Weekend.

**7** The National Multiple Sclerosis Society presents the MS-150 bike event.

# MONUMENT SIGN UPDATE



Past newsletter articles reported on a project to construct a monument sign along K-10 Highway. The project budget of \$80,000 had been included in the City's Capital Improvements Program since 2007 and conceptual design of the sign was initiated on 2010. Construction bids for the initial design concept exceeded the project budget. As a result, we went back to the

drawing board and pursued an alternate design. The modified design retained the basic visual features but eliminated some of the details that proved to be the more costly aspects of the original design.

In January of 2011, Doug Pickert of Indigo Design presented a new design to the City Council. Pictured below, the new design uses construction methods and

materials that are more common and less costly than the original concept. The City Logo remains the prominent feature in the revised design which is slightly larger than the original concept. Glass masonry blocks and a wider footprint will allow the sign to be lit from the interior.

On March 28th, 2011, the City obtained five bids for the construction of the new design.

Again the bids exceeded the project budget, although this time only slightly. After careful consideration of the bids and alternative funding opportunities, the City Council made the tough decision to forgo the project at this time and to reallocate the budgeted funds toward other basic infrastructure priorities, with the final decision yet to be made.

## CITY CONTACTS & HELPFUL NUMBERS

### MAYOR

David R. Anderson  
913-583-3362 Home  
816-985-0342 Cell

### CITY ADMINISTRATOR

Pat Guilfoyle  
913-583-1182 x 120  
913-689-8740 Cell

### CITY CLERK

Lana McPherson  
913-583-1182 x 110  
913-689-8733 Cell

### CITY BUILDING OFFICIAL

Steve Chick, Sr.  
913-583-1182 x 130  
913-208-4526 Cell

### CITY CODES OFFICER

Pam Graff  
913-583-1182 x 114  
913-238-0435 Cell

### CITY ENGINEER

Mike Brungardt, P.E.  
913-583-1182 x 116  
913-689-8737 Cell

### CITY PLANNER

Linda Bohnsack  
913-583-1182 x 115

### STREET SUPERINTENDENT

Ron Creason  
913-583-1182 x 126  
913-238-0437 Cell

City Shop  
913-583-3379

### UTILITIES

Nancy Steele  
913-583-1182 x 112

### WASTEWATER SUPERINTENDENT

Doug Smith  
913-238-0434 Cell  
Wastewater Plant  
913-585-9956

### WATER SUPERINTENDENT

Clarence Brunk  
913-583-1182 x 119  
913-238-0436 Cell

Water Plant  
913-583-1749

### CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Mitra M. Templin  
913-583-3183

### CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Betty Cannon  
913-583-1500

Mike Drennon  
913-583-1389

Ron McDaniel  
913-585-1902

Rick Walker  
913-538-5655

### MUNICIPAL COURT CLERK

Boots Linden  
913-583-1182 x 122

### PARK & RECREATION DIRECTOR

Jay Garvin  
913-583-1182 x 127  
913-544-8073 Cell

### AQUATICS MANAGER

Justin Huslig  
913-583-1182 x 131  
913-620-6629 Cell

### ANIMAL CONTROL

Jo. Co. Sheriff  
913-782-0720

### CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Sara Ritter  
913-583-1585  
913-238-2206 Cell

### JOHNSON COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPT.

Dispatch  
913-782-0720

### NORTHWEST JOHNSON COUNTY CONS. FIRE DISTRICT - SERVING DE SOTO

De Soto Station  
913-583-1595

NW Jo Co Station  
913-583-3886

### WELDON-HONEY CREEK SANITATION (Trash Service)

Kevin Weldon  
785-423-8999 cell

Randy Weldon  
785-423-1809 cell

### OTHER HELPFUL NUMBERS

Cable-Time Warner  
913-451-6464

DigSafe Kansas  
1-800-344-7233

Electricity-Westar Energy  
1-800-383-1183

Fire Dept. De Soto Station  
913-583-1595

Natural Gas-Atmos Energy  
1-888-442-1313

Post Office De Soto Branch  
913-583-1543

Schools USD #232  
913-667-6200

Senior Center De Soto Branch  
913-585-1762

Johnson Co. Courthouse  
913-715-5000

Johnson Co. Election Office  
913-782-3441

Johnson Co. Environmental  
913-492-0402

Johnson Co. Hazardous Waste  
913-715-6900

Johnson Co. Library-De Soto  
913-583-3106

Johnson Co. Motor Vehicle  
913-826-1800

Johnson Co. Multi-Service Ctr  
913-583-1152

Johnson Co. Sheriff Dispatch  
913-782-0720

De Soto City Council meets the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber.

De Soto Planning Commission meets the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber.

De Soto Municipal Court is held the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber.



[www.desotoks.us](http://www.desotoks.us)  
Check us out on Facebook!



# CHECK WITH CHICK...

## A \$20,000 OR \$200 SEWER FIX?



I would like to cover a topic that most residents would probably not think about without some prompting. A De Soto resident recently had an unfortunate situation--a sanitary sewer backup that caused over \$20,000 worth of damage and clean up to his home.

Most homeowners are not aware that there is no liability on the City's part if a sewer main backs up. The only time the City is liable is if the City's negligence caused the backup or if the City did something that caused the backup. If the City is not liable, a homeowner's salvation comes in the form of coverage for sewer backups in his homeowner/rental insurance coverage. Most insurance carriers offer a rider to your homeowners or rental insurance for sewer and water damage and it is highly recommended that you carry this coverage.

As a result of the recent sewer backups your Building



▲ A back-flow valve.

Inspection Department and City Staff looked for ways to minimize the potential for the misery caused by a sewer back-up. Our research led us to determine that the easiest, most cost effective resolution involves the homeowner's installation of one of two types of back-flow devices, depending upon your specific plumbing layout.

1. A "relief valve" (a simple pop-off cap). The relief valve releases the backed up sewage to the outside of a home, thus preventing the sewage from backing up into your home. The sewage will flow up and out onto the yard, instead of backing into the residence.

2. A "back-flow valve." The back-flow valve also prevents sewage from backing up and flowing into a residence; the

valve closes off the sewer pipe when it detects sewage flowing backwards in a sewer lateral; the valve reopens when the condition no longer exists.

We have recommended to the City Council that the City amend the plumbing code to provide for the installation of the devices, which in most cases will be voluntary. We are also in the process of identifying properties that are at higher risk situations for backups; we will be communicating directly with these residents recommending that they consider installing one or the other types of valves.

The following conditions will result in the mandatory installation of one of the above devices, assuming the City Council concurs:

\*Any residence that experiences a sewer backup that is caused directly by a public main.

\* At construction of any new residence.

\*Any replacements or repairs made to an existing residential sanitary sewer lateral line.

\* Any remodeling project that exceeds 25% of the residential area or where plumbing fixtures are added to the property.

Not all devices are equally effective. The City Inspection Department will stock an effective and easily maintained relief back-low valves, making them available to residents at cost. A plumbing permit will be required to install the devices; however, the City will waive the permit fee for any retrofit on existing homes initiated on a voluntary basis. All valves do require some periodic maintenance by the homeowner. The cost for most retrofit installations is expected to run between \$50 and \$750 depending on the type of installation and from \$100 to \$300 for new construction.

Should you desire further information on these installations or on any building construction related question please, "Check with Chick", your De Soto Building Official.

**913-583-3800 e130  
or schick@desotoks.us.**

# LOW TAXES . . . HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT?

In an attempt to find a pertinent beginning to this article, I turned to my research friend Google to find a definition of an urban legend. Here is one discovery that does the trick: an urban legend is “a modern story of obscure origin and with little or no supporting evidence that spreads spontaneously in varying forms. . . .” Unfortunately, facts to the contrary often have little effect on laying urban legends to rest. It is often more entertaining to continue believing in them.

Here is one local legend that I often hear, “the City of De Soto’s property taxes are so high, higher than most!” OK, that’s the urban legend; hopefully some facts might help dispel that myth.

Every year the Kansas League of Municipalities compiles the city property tax levies for all Kansas cities. The League released its report recently on the 2011 budget levies for all of the State’s cities, counties, and school districts.

Comparatively speaking, the City of De Soto has done well over the past several years; our tax levies have actually improved in our relative

standing among other Kansas municipalities. The facts may prove surprising, but they are a pleasant surprise. Our current city tax rate for 2011 is 20.1 mills. For the average De Soto home owner (as computed by the County Appraiser at \$187,828), the City’s portion of a total property tax bill is \$434.16. Did you know?

**Of the 21 similarly sized Kansas cities (5,000 to 10,000 population), De Soto has the 2nd lowest tax rate in 2011, improving from the 6th lowest in 2007.**

**Of Kansas’ 96 second-class cities, De Soto has the 3rd lowest tax rate, improving from 8th lowest in 2007.**

**Of all 20 Johnson County cities, De Soto has the 8th lowest tax rate, improving from 16th lowest in 2007.**

**Of the 12 non-Johnson County cities within a**

**25 mile radius of De Soto, De Soto has the 2nd lowest tax rate, improving from 4th lowest in 2007.**

As impressive as De Soto’s city numbers are, Johnson County tops the “leader board” among counties. Johnson County, as calculated by the League report, has the lowest 2011 county tax rate in the State.

Of the 290 school districts throughout the State, De Soto USD 232 has the second highest mill levy as compiled by the League. Understanding that a growing school district is pressured by bond-related capital debt, it is not surprising that the school district has a higher tax rate.

The USD 232 tax bill represents about 56% of a De Soto resident’s total tax bill. The City’s tax bill is 13% of the total, and the County’s share is about 12% based on the League’s report.

So the next time you hear the complaint about the City’s taxes being so high, be aware that there are facts that prove that assumption questionable.

## DE SOTO DAYS FESTIVAL

Since 1964, a group of volunteers come together every year and produce the annual De Soto Days festival. That tradition continues this year with the 2011 event scheduled for Labor Day weekend (September 1-4) at De Soto’s Riverfest Park.

In its early years, a few volunteers came together and invited a circus to celebrate a community that was known for its watermelons. The circus disappeared and was replaced by the first carnival held downtown on 83rd Street. De Soto Days has continued through the years, sometimes challenged by seasonal heat and rain storms. But just like the wonderful people in De Soto, the festival and its volunteers have stood the test of time. But as we all do with time, the event has changed over the years; the De Soto Days Committee moved the event from its beginnings behind the old high school (now City Hall) to Miller Park and then to its new

home at Riverfest Park.

De Soto Days has always been organized by selfless people who are willing to dedicate hours of their time just because they care about this community. Through the years private sponsors have donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to keep the tradition alive. 2011 is no different; it still takes a volunteer community to make De Soto Days what it is.

The De Soto Days Festival Committee has some fantastic plans for this year. First of all, the Evans Empire Midland Carnival is coming back after a one year absence, returning with their wonderful wristband deals as usual. The fun will kick off on Thursday, September 1 at 6pm-10pm, repeating the same hours on Friday night. Saturday at Riverfest will include a car and bike show plus a few new additions. Games 2U will be present all weekend with several different entertainment

options such as Giant Hamster Balls and its unique, interactive mobile entertainment such as their mind-blowing Video Game Theater. Nightly bands, such as Classic Revolution, Lonesome Jake and the Stranger Creek Band, will be performing. Begin your Labor Day Saturday morning downtown with breakfast from Chris Cakes and the Run/Walk sponsored by De Soto Youth Ministries followed at 10am with the traditional Parade with its new parade route.

Many parade enthusiasts requested a change in the parade route, so it’s going to happen this year. The Parade will begin and end at Riverfest Park. The parade will Come up Ottawa St. from the park turning left at 83rd coming down in front of Dollar General then going north on Delaware and making a left at 82nd before it heads back down Ottawa to the Park again.

Saturday afternoon from 3-6pm

will include announcement of the Parade winners as well as stage entertainment provided by local school groups. New this year will be a special Hidden Gem Scavenger Hunt planned for bicyclists on Saturday afternoon—with a cash prize to the winning individual or team.

Along with the new the Festival Committee is keeping all of the old favorites. Food booths and area vendors will be around Thursday-Saturday. On Sunday The First United Methodist Church will be hosting the Community Church service under the big tent at the Riverfest.

You can check it all out at the Festival’s website, [www.desotodays.com](http://www.desotodays.com), or on Facebook and Twitter. The Festival Committee looks forward to seeing all of you! Bring the family and plan your Labor Day weekend around a time of community and fun!



# MORE WATER WORKS ARE IN THE WORKS

Each year De Soto makes application for the Federal government's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding managed through the Johnson County Community Development Department. Johnson County has been designated as an "Urban County", and is therefore entitled to receive an annual CDBG allotment from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The CDBG program is intended to develop viable communities by providing decent housing, a suitable living environment, and opportunities to expand economic opportunities, principally for low and moderate income persons. De Soto is one of seventeen

Johnson County communities that have ongoing cooperation agreements with the Johnson County government to apportion CDBG funding throughout the County. During the past ten years, De Soto has received CDBG grant awards in amounts ranging from \$50,000 to \$146,000 for projects such as sidewalk construction, sewer pump station replacements, parking lot improvements, and street resurfacing projects. However, in 2010 De Soto received no funding due to a HUD reduction in allocations to Johnson County and an unusually large amount of heavily competitive funding requests from other county communities.

For 2011, De Soto requested funding for a

waterline replacement project in the downtown area. The planned replacements include the following sections of water mains:

**1. Replace 6" main along the alley between 82nd Street and 83rd Street from Peoria to Shawnee with an 8" main. (770 LF)**

**2. Replace 4" main along Shawnee Street from the alley between 82nd Street and 83rd Street to the alley between 83rd Street and 84th Street with an 8" main (400LF)**

**3. Replace the 4" main along the alley between 83rd Street and 84th Street from Peoria to Shawnee with an 8" main. (770 LF)**

This project would include the installation of fire hydrants, valves and service tap connections. The line in the alley between 82nd Street and 83rd Street has been identified as a top priority because it serves as the main connection to the City's downtown water tower. The proposed new line segment in the alley between 83rd Street and 84th Street will replace a line that has been the source of numerous breaks in the recent past, and will improve flow characteristics for the surrounding areas. To minimize disturbance to the residents and businesses in the area, to save on restoration costs, and to shorten the construction timeframe, we plan

to utilize trenchless construction techniques for these line replacements. We will use directional boring to install high density polyethylene (HDPE) water main. Kansas City communities use this practice increasingly where lines must be replaced in highly developed areas.

We were recently notified that we will receive a \$94,000 award for the project. Plans and specifications are being prepared by City personnel and we hope to have the construction underway in the fall.

To minimize disturbance to the residents and businesses in the area, save on restoration costs, and shorten the construction timeframe we plan to utilize trenchless construction techniques for these line replacements. We will use directional boring to install high density polyethylene (HDPE) water main. This is a practice that has been used increasingly in the communities in the Kansas City area where lines must be replaced in highly developed areas.

Based on current cost estimates, we expect that the project represented above will make full use of the \$100,000 CDBG funding. If bids come in lower than expected, we could add to the scope by replacing more lines in the area, or performing other valve repairs in other areas of the City.

## "THE DE SOTO ADVANTAGE" - NO BUILDING PERMIT FEES!!

The City of De Soto is a great place to live; we want to encourage new homeowners to build their futures with us. We feel strongly enough about it that we will allow builders of new homes to do so FREE.

FREE?? That's correct. Here is the fine print that goes along with that. Until October 1, 2011, the City will waive 100% of the cost for a building permit for a residential structure. But hurry; that 100% waiver goes to a 50% reduction after September 30, 2011. The program will expire totally on March

21, 2012.

And 100% means "all" costs associated with a building permit. The only exceptions to that waiver include the City's Excise Tax, the City's actual out-of-pocket expenses for a new water meter, and the City's Sewer Development Fee. The chart at right provides you with the full details on a hypothetical home.

For anyone interested in discussing the De Soto advantage, please pick up the phone and call the City's Building Official, Steve Chick at 913-583-1182, ext. 130 or email him at [schick@desotoks.us](mailto:schick@desotoks.us).

SINGLE FAMILY HOUSE						
Amount of Fees Waived	Hook-up to City Water and Sewer			Hook-up to City Water		
	Current Building Fees	A	B	Current Building Fees	C	D
		Permit issued before 10-1-11	Permit issued after 9-30-11		Permit issued before 10-1-11	Permit issued after 9-30-11
	100% Discount	50% Discount		100% Discount	50% Discount	
Building Permit Fee	\$ 1,033	\$ -	\$ 517	\$ 1,033	\$ -	\$ 517
Plan Review Fee	\$ 30	\$ -	\$ 15	\$ 30	\$ -	\$ 15
Park Fee	\$ 350	\$ -	\$ 175	\$ 350	\$ -	\$ 175
** Water Meter (3/4")	\$ 1,500	\$ 880	\$ 880	\$ 1,500	\$ 880	\$ 880
Water Connection Fee	\$ 30	\$ -	\$ 15	\$ 30	\$ -	\$ 15
Water Development Fee	\$ 2,600	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,600	\$ 2,600	\$ 2,600
Sewer Development Fee	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
New Sewer Connection Permit	\$ 500	\$ -	\$ 250	\$ 500	\$ -	\$ 125
New Sewer Connection Inspection	\$ 100	\$ -	\$ 50	\$ 100	\$ -	\$ 25
<b>Total All Fees (excluding Excise Tax)</b>	<b>\$ 9,143</b>	<b>\$ 3,880</b>	<b>\$ 4,902</b>	<b>\$ 6,143</b>	<b>\$ 3,480</b>	<b>\$ 4,352</b>
<b>Net Fee Discount</b>		<b>-58%</b>	<b>-46%</b>		<b>-62%</b>	<b>-29%</b>
<b>Cost Savings to Developer</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 5,263</b>	<b>\$ 4,242</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 2,663</b>	<b>\$ 1,792</b>

Specific fee amounts in above example are based on 1,800 sf single-family house with 576 sf garage.  
\*\* Water Meter--In all discounted cases, A-D, meter charge is set at amount to simply recover City's cost for meter, pit, and labor.

### OTHER DISCOUNT POLICY COMPONENTS

- I. Discount program expires on March 21, 2012 and requires that applicant:
  1. Discount program expires on March 21, 2012 and requires that applicant:
  2. Begin construction within 45 days after issuance of building permit.
  3. Completes housing unit within one year of issuance of permit.
- II. Discount program is only for applicants in currently approved/platted subdivisions AND:
  1. "A" and "B" available to all applicants who hook up to City water AND sewer.
  2. "C" and "D" available to all applicants who hook up to water but NOT sewer.
- III. Discount program available for unlimited number of qualifying permits.

# LAWN SPRINKLER SYSTEMS

## WATER YOUR LAWN AT A REDUCED COST



Elsewhere in this newsletter is an article describing the City Council's decision to eliminate and reduce City building permit fees. That decision will make it less costly for someone to build a new home in De Soto.

The City Council made a decision in May that reduces another homeowner cost. Until May, if a homeowner wanted to install a lawn sprinkler system, he simply turns on the system and waters

the yard. That water goes through the homeowner's water meter and gets charged to the City's water bill—pretty simple and straightforward. But that common billing practice often makes the homeowner hesitant to install that sprinkler system. Here's why—De Soto, like most communities, bases its monthly sewer service charge on the amount of water that goes through a homeowner's water meter. So the water that goes on your lawn gets charged to the water bill and it also gets billed to the sewer bill, even though none of the sprinklered water ever reaches the City's sewer treatment plant. That combined water and sewer bill often makes the idea of a sprinkler system not very attractive.

So how about this idea? How about investing in a separate water meter that hooks up to the sprinkler system only, a guarantee that none of that sprinklered water will ever reach the sewer treatment plant? The homeowner can then avoid a related sewer bill for the water passing through the second water meter. The City is happy to

accommodate anyone interested in doing that.

Sounds like a good idea until you do the math. Prior to May, the homeowner would have to pay \$1,500 for the cost and installation of a separate water meter plus another \$2,500 for the City's Water Development Fee. That's \$4,000, which is often a bitter pill to swallow.

In May, the City Council decided to do away with the \$2,500 Water Development Fee for residents who want to buy a separate water meter dedicated to an underground sprinkler system. Instead of a \$4,000 city fee, the homeowner will now only pay \$1,500 to cover the cost of a water meter and its installation plus a \$30 connection fee. That just might make financial sense to a homeowner.

So if that makes you think about installing an underground sprinkler system, contact Building Official Steve Chick at 913-583-1182, ext. 130 or by email at [schick@desotoks.us](mailto:schick@desotoks.us) for more details.

## DE SOTO PARKS & RECREATION

### **Aquatic Center Information**

Hours subject to change with inclement weather.

Daily Hours: 12:30-7:00

Appreciation Day:

FREE Admission  
Sunday, August 14, 2011  
12:30 – 6:00

Fall School Hours:

Monday, August 15th through  
Sunday, September 4th

Monday – Friday: CLOSED  
Saturday: 12:30 – 7:00  
Sunday: 12:30 – 6:00

Closing Day:

Sunday, September 4, 2011  
12:30 – 6:00

Doggie Plunge:

Monday, September 5,  
2011 - 12:30 – 3:00

**Youth Basketball Clinic**

Fee: \$30.00

Registration Deadline:

Saturday, November  
5, 2011

Grades: Kindergarten –  
6th Girls and Boys

**Youth Basketball League**

Fee: \$40.00

Registration Deadline:

Friday, November 4, 2011

Grades: 3rd – 6th Girls and Boys

This league is separated into Girls  
and Boys 3rd & 4th Grade Division  
and 5th & 6th Grade Division

**Tiny Basketball League**

Fee: \$30.00

Registration Deadline:

Friday, November 4, 2011

Grades: 1st-2nd Girls and Boys

This is a Co-Ed League

**Adult Co-Ed Volleyball**

Fee: \$110.00

Registration Deadline:

Session 1 – Friday,  
August 26, 2011

Session 2 – Friday,  
October 28, 2011

**Adult Basketball (Men's  
& Women's) League**

Fee: \$225.00

Registration Deadline:

Friday, November 11, 2011

**Yoga**

Fee: \$36.00 for  
6 week session  
\$48.00 for 8 week session

Tentatively Classes  
Start the week of:

-  
September 12, 2011  
November 7, 2011

# THE NATIONAL MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS SOCIETY

## PRESENTS THE MS-150 BICYCLING EVENT



Looking for a fun way to get some exercise and help a great cause at the same time? Want to enjoy a weekend challenge with 2,000 other people as the summer weather turns cooler in mid September? We have an idea worth passing on to you.

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society, through its regional chapters, sponsors a fun two-day bike event known as the MS 150. In the Kansas City area, the MS 150 is organized by the Society's Midwest Chapter based in Kansas City, Mo. For years, the annual event started in Kansas City and pedaled eastward to Sedalia and back. But not this year.

The September 17-18 event is heading westward. For the first time, it will start at the Garmin International headquarters in Olathe and end at South Park in Lawrence. At the end of the first day on September 17, riders will bed down in Lawrence before making the return trip on September 18. On that first day, riders will want to break for lunch somewhere along the ride; that makes sense, right? The question is, where will the lunch stop be? The answer?—right here in downtown De Soto, Ks. The 2,000 bike riders will stop for a lunch provided by the MS Midwest Chapter at Miller Park.

If you are interested in participating in this annual event, you have a few options to consider. If you want the "full Monty" experience, you can do the 72 mile or 100 mile route on the first day and finish up on the second day with either the 37 or 62 mile ride back to Garmin. Don't want to do two day? No problem; you can also go to the

other extreme and take the shorter 37 mile route on the first day and call it quits. Or, at the expense of confusing you, you can mix and match the routes you want to take for a two-day adventure.

Want more information about riding or maybe volunteering at Miller Park to help with the lunch break? Contact the Mid America Chapter for more details. You can visit the website by following the Midwest Chapter link at the [nationalmssociety.org](http://nationalmssociety.org) website. You can also call the Midwest Chapter at 1-800-344-4867 or 913-432-3926 press 2, or email them at [HYPERLINK "mailto:midamericachapter@nmss.org"](mailto:midamericachapter@nmss.org) [midamericachapter@nmss.org](mailto:midamericachapter@nmss.org).

Oh, in case you're wondering, the bike routes will take back roads from Garmin to Lawrence and will not travel along De Soto's 83rd St. which is off-limits to bicyclists.

## WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE?

De Soto Parks and Recreation requests your guidance. We attempt to offer programs and facilities that are doable within limited budgetary capabilities that are responsive to community interests and that are feasible within our physical facilities. Some of our programs are more successful than others; and admittedly, there may be program interests that we're not hearing about and responding to.

Our desire is to be as

responsive to community interests as much as possible.

The first step came with an online survey. We wrote about the survey in the last letter. Many people responded to the survey which proved to be very informative. The on-line survey asked you to tell us about the good and bad of current offerings. Equally important was a chance to identify new programs and facility upgrades that you feel the community will support.

The next step is to have a chance to get together and talk about the survey results. September 27 will give you that opportunity to meet with City staff in an informal gathering at City hall. During the open, public meeting we can discuss the survey results and solicit additional feedback and suggestions.

Mark your calendar for September 27 at 7PM at City Hall. We'll see you then.





# SPWUA

## SUNFLOWER PUBLIC WATER UTILITY AUTHORITY FORMED



In June, De Soto entered into an Interlocal Agreement (ILA) with Baldwin City, Wellsville, and Douglas County RWD #4 that officially formed the Sunflower Public Water Utility Authority (SPWUA). The basic aim of the SPWUA is to provide treated water to each member on a wholesale basis from a renovated Sunflower Water Treatment Plant, which De Soto currently owns and operates. The U.S. Army once owned De Soto's water treatment plant and used it to provide treated water to its former 9,000 acre Sunflower Ordinance Works property. The treatment facility has a production capacity that far exceeds the needs of De Soto. Its design capacity is approximately 10 times De Soto's current demand. It has long been recognized that this excess capacity could be utilized in a cooperative effort with other water suppliers in the region.

The SPWUA is its own legal entity that is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of

one member from each entity. The De Soto City Council chose Council member Ron McDaniel to serve as the City's representative. Initially, the Board is charged with overseeing an engineering and economic study to determine the needed improvements and costs for the district. The Board will also create the bylaws that will govern the SPWUA and draft the water purchase agreements for each entity. After completing these initial tasks, the governing bodies for each member will be asked to consider approving the water purchase contracts, thus committing financially to the SPWUA long-term.

Until the water purchase contracts are executed, membership in the SPWUA does not require a significant financial commitment. It is estimated that the overall costs of engineering, legal and appraisal fees for the initial tasks will be roughly \$40,000. Split four ways, each member is committing an estimated \$10,000.

On June 21, 2011, the initial meeting of the Board of Directors was held. In addition to De Soto's Ron McDaniel, other Board members included Christopher Cross, Wellsville Public Works; Bill Winegar, Baldwin City Director of Public Works; and John Langley, Douglas County Rural Water District #4 Board member. The Board members chose their officers

and decided to retain Larkin Group of Kansas City, Missouri to perform the engineering and financial feasibility study. Other professional consultants will be selected at a later meeting including an attorney to assist with the drafting of by-laws and water purchase contracts, a financial advisor to make recommendations on funding alternatives, and bond counsel to advise on matters of public finance. Although there is no formal timeframe, expectations are that the initial studies and legal matters can be accomplished within 12 months. The second meeting of the SPWUA Board occurred on July 12th, 2011. A July 8 deadline for this newsletter prevents an update on matters covered at that July 12 meeting.

If the initial studies and legal efforts result in the members executing long-term water purchase contracts, the SPWUA will move forward with implementation of improvements at the treatment plant recommended in the study. It is expected that the existing treatment plant infrastructure--including the physical properties, easements, and water rights--will be sold to the SPWUA as part of the water purchase contract with the City of De Soto. Distribution mains needed to transport the treated water to each participant will also be constructed by the SPWUA. After the improvements are

completed, the SPWUA will own and operate the facilities.

Advantages to this arrangement include the following:

Economy of scale. Because the Sunflower Water Treatment Plant has such a large design capacity, the wholesale district will be able to implement a more cost-effective rehabilitation plan than would be possible if De Soto were to go it alone. After all the upgrades are made, it will be more efficient to operate the plant at a flow rate closer to the plant capacity.

Lower unit costs for operation and maintenance activities. Much of the costs associated with running a water treatment plant are fixed, and are not dependent on how much water is treated or sold.

Examples of fixed costs are debt service payments on capital improvements, employee salaries, and equipment replacement costs. Producing water for several entities will lower the unit cost for everyone.

A wholesale water partnership utilizing the Sunflower Water Treatment facility is a goal the City Council has been pursuing for several years. Its implementation could result in a lowering of the cost to provide safe drinking water to De Soto and others in the area.