



City of Wausau Residents – Update on operations from the Department of Public Works & Utilities

The Department has been working diligently to put proper safety measures in place to ensure a healthy workforce is maintained and services to the City of Wausau are sustained through this pandemic. The Department includes the following divisions; Water, Sewer, Streets & Maintenance (715-261-6960), Engineering/GIS (715-261-6740), Inspections & Zoning (715-261-6780) and Parking (715-261-6765). Department wide we have implemented and have been practicing CDC guidelines for each of the divisions.

Our workforce remains healthy and is continuing typical operations day to day. With assistance from Human Resource Department and support from the Mayor we have made some changes and implemented some flexibility for our work force to ensure services are being maintained to the public. We have made available to our employees the ability to work an alternate shift if the need arises due to family or child care schedules, we have protocols in place to have people self-quarantine if they become symptomatic, and we have included cleaning and disinfecting of work stations and equipment as part of our daily routine. Residents may see/hear some street maintenance operations (sweeping and cleaning) being performed during different shifts as necessary to ensure we maintain our maintenance schedule while making sure our employees' health, welfare and families are considered first and foremost.

Our highest priority is ensuring the provision of water and sewer services throughout this pandemic. To do this we need to maintain a healthy work force and we are taking every step possible. Water and sewer services are vital for public health and safety and we will ensure these facilities remain fully operational 24/7. I would like to make one request: please refrain from flushing disinfecting wipes and paper towels down the toilet, these need to be disposed of in the trash. These products do not break down and they create clogging issues in the sanitary sewer, pump stations and screens at the wastewater treatment facility; thank you for your cooperation.

Priority services are Streets & Maintenance and Engineering as these are our divisions on the front line for any emergencies related to our infrastructure, flood mitigation and addressing street safety issues. Our workforce remains ready to respond to any situation that may arise. We are expecting the possibility of some additional snow once again and the crews are already setting plans and schedules for fighting the storm and keeping the streets safe as possible.

The Mayor and Administrative Staff have been working with our surrounding communities to prepare a Public Works Emergency Response Mutual Aid Agreement for the City Council's review and approval; expected at the March 24th City Council meeting. This is an agreement that allows

each of us to assist one another during emergencies and work in other jurisdictions as necessary to ensure public health and safety within the region.

We are currently asking residents to request permits online rather than coming into inspections and engineering at City Hall. We are also asking vendors, contractors and residents to call and make appointments rather than just stopping by for routine visits.

Our work environment is ever changing, in this instance it is not something we could have foreseen. Department employees have and continue to adapt to the changes and they continue to be committed to providing service to the community; I am proud of all of my employees for meeting this challenge head on, and once again, exceeding expectations!!!

All press release announcements related to COVID-19 pandemic may be found on the city website at the following link:

<https://www.ci.wausau.wi.us/Home/Announcements.aspx>

I will continue to post updates related to any changes in services as we move forward and as the work environment may change. We at the Department of Public Works and Utilities are committed to serve all residents within Wausau and be a partner to our surrounding municipalities.