

## City Manager Update – 6/7/24

June 1, 2024 marked my 10<sup>th</sup> year as Smithville’s City Manager. It’s hard to believe 3,650 days have passed since officially being hired for the position. Well, you know the old saying, “How time flies when you’re having fun.” We have dealt with pit bulls, golf carts, smart meters, JADE-HELM, fires, floods, freezes, hurricanes, bridge failures, litigation, legislation, COVID-19, and a host of other issues over the past decade---all while trying to improve our infrastructure and manage growth. The pace has not slowed since stepping into the role back in 2014. However, I am pleased that we are making progress as a community. Also, June 1<sup>st</sup> marked the official start of the [2024 Atlantic Hurricane Season](#) which will run until November 30, 2024.

Summer is upon us and triple-digit temperatures are just around the corner. As we prepare for higher temperatures in Central Texas, take time to recognize and prevent heat-related illnesses while at work or home. Heat-related illnesses kill more people each year than earthquakes and hurricanes combined. Heat stress-related medical conditions occur when excess heat is allowed to build in the body over time. These include:

**Sunburn:** A reddening of the skin caused by excess sun exposure. Treatment: Avoid further sun exposure, cool area with water, use a non-oil-based moisturizer if needed.

**Heat Rash:** Excess moisture on the skin causes sweat glands to become clogged resulting in a rash. Treatment: Cool and dry the skin.

**Heat Cramps:** Muscle pain due to the rapid depletion of body salts. Treatment: Rest in a cool area. Drink plenty of water. Seek medical attention if pain persists.

**Heat Syncope:** Fainting caused by heat exposure and transient vasodilation. Treatment: Lie down in a cool place. Elevate legs. If conscious, drink water.

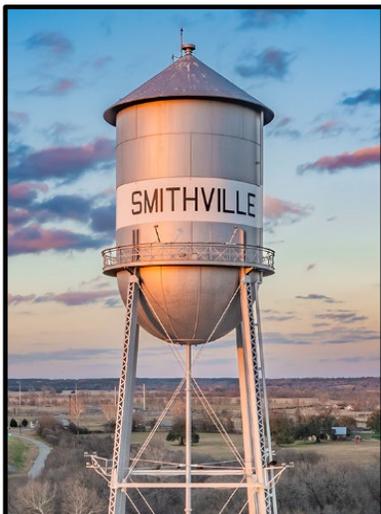
**Heat Exhaustion:** Exhaustion brought on due to heat exposure and fluid loss. Symptoms include: heavy perspiration, extreme thirst, fatigue, headache, nausea, and sometimes diarrhea. A person experiencing heat exhaustion is going through severe dehydration. Treatment: Lie down in a cool area, drink cool water, slightly elevate legs, remove excess clothing, and sponge down with cool liquid. If no improvement is seen within 30 minutes, seek medical attention immediately.

**Heat Stroke:** Heat exposure causes malfunction in portion of the brain that monitors and controls internal body temperature. During heat stroke, the core body temperature of the victim is approximately 105-110 F. Symptoms include red or flushed skin that feels hot to the touch, altered mental status (may be combative), rapid pulse, and possible absence of sweating. Treatment: This is a very serious condition. Call “911.” While awaiting medical assistance, rapidly lower a victim’s body temperature through ice-water baths, cold compresses, fan, etc.

The infographic is split into two columns: Heat Exhaustion (left, orange background) and Heat Stroke (right, red background). In the center is a stylized human figure with a thermometer in its head. To the left of the figure, under 'Heat Exhaustion', are symptoms: Dizziness, Thirst, Heavy Sweating, Nausea, and Weakness. To the right, under 'Heat Stroke', are symptoms: Confusion, Dizziness, and Becomes Unconscious. Below the figure, it states 'Heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke.' and 'Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not given.'

Heat Exhaustion	Heat Stroke
<b>ACT FAST</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Move to a cooler area</li><li>• Loosen clothing</li><li>• Sip cool water</li><li>• Seek medical help if symptoms don't improve</li></ul>	<b>ACT FAST</b> <b>CALL 911</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Move person to a cooler area</li><li>• Loosen clothing and remove extra layers</li><li>• Cool with water or ice</li></ul>

Recognizing the warning signs and symptoms of heat stress and taking preventive control measures can greatly reduce the risk of heat-related illness. For additional information, visit [KVUE-Austin Sees Increase in Heat-Related Illnesses](#). All City personnel working outdoors have been instructed to remain hydrated and take frequent breaks to prevent heat-related injury/illness. The hot temperature(s) combined with high humidity can elevate the heat index well above triple digits making outdoor working conditions hazardous. A cooler with ice-water and/or Gatorade is provided on each City vehicle. With the higher summer temperatures, citizens will be using more water to keep their lawns green and more electricity to keep their houses cool (present company included). With respect to water use, the City has a [Drought Contingency Plan](#) whereby water use restrictions will be implemented based upon triggering events. Specifically, the cumulative use of 1.5 million gallons of water (or more) for three (3) consecutive days. I’m pleased to report that we are a long way from hitting the 1.5-million-gallon drought contingency plan action level. During the current calendar year, the peak daily water demand for the City of Smithville occurred on January 29<sup>th</sup> with 1,068,725 gallons used during Winter Storm Mara. In comparison, the largest peak demand recorded in the past few years occurred on February 17, 2021 with 1,252,947 gallons used. The large amount of water used was attributed to busted / broken water lines due to the winter storm Uri. Our current city-wide water storage capacity is approximately 1.6 million gallons. The monthly base rate for residential water service in Smithville is \$18.00 (which includes the first 2000 gallons) plus \$4.50 for every 1000 gallons of water used thereafter. Note: An average family of 4 uses approximately 400 gallons of water per day and 12,000 gallons / month. With the \$18.00 base rate included, this equates to an average water bill of \$63.00 / month.

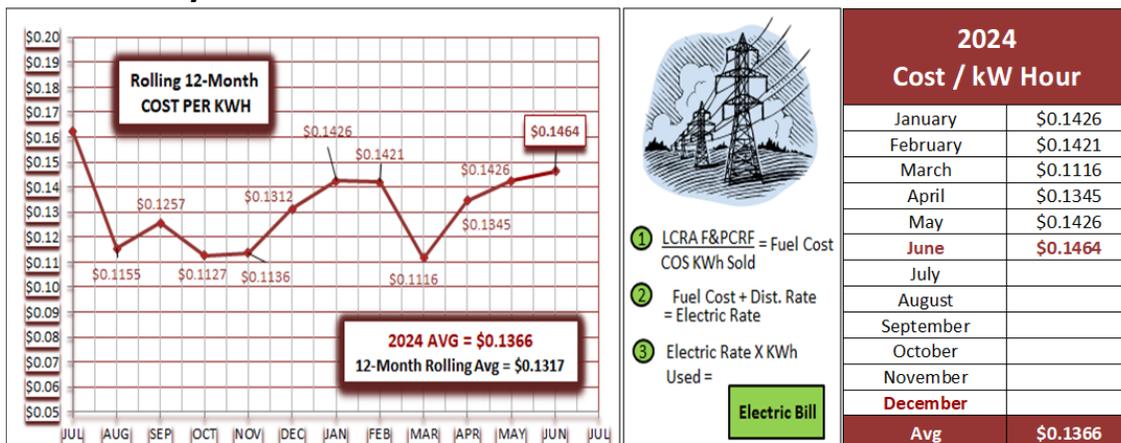


# City Manager Update – 6/7/24 (continued)

Here is a list of accomplishments, issues, and planned activities since my last update:

- 1) City Council to Consider Resolution in Support of an Emergency Service District #3 for Ambulance Service** – In response to a petition of registered voters from Bastrop County, the City of Smithville received a formal request from Preston McGrew (Vice President - Bastrop County First Responders) on June 4, 2024 to provide consent to include our city limits and ETJ in the creation of Emergency Services District #3 for ambulance services. The petition required signatures from 100 registered voters (already obtained) within the County to put the measure on the ballot in November. If the ballot measure passes in November, the tax rate (Bastrop County portion only) will increase \$0.10 per \$100 valuation and will allow for the construction of an ESD (ambulance) station in Smithville. The creation of Bastrop County Emergency Services District #3 will greatly expand the quantity, availability, and reliability of ambulance services within our community. The City Council will consider a resolution in support of this measure during the June 10, 2024 City Council meeting. Approving this resolution only provides the city’s consent to “opt” into the program but will not guarantee the measure will pass.
- 2) Department of Energy (DOE) Grid Resilience Grant (GRG)** – The City Council will be considering a resolution during the June 10, 2024 Council meeting in support of a Department of Energy (DOE) Grid Resilience Grant (GRG) to replace the over-head utility lines with underground service in our historic downtown commercial district. Specifically, in the alley running north to south behind Main Street from Loop 230 to 1st Street. Providing underground service will improve grid stability, resiliency, AND promote economic development. We have a developer who owns two (2) large buildings downtown and vacant lots who wants to restore / renovate said buildings for a possible boutique hotel with rooftop garden, restaurant, parking garage, and apartments / condos. However, he will not commit to starting the project until the City commits to providing underground service. We have “internally” estimated the project to be between \$1.0-1.5M which would equate to a \$500-750k match at a future date. If we apply for the grant and are awarded funding for the project, we can turn down the grant funding without penalty should the city be unable to secure funding for the match or choose not to do the project. The Texas Department of Emergency Management (TDEM) is administering the DOE-GRG application approval / award process to distribute \$150M in DOE funding. The grant application / approval process typically takes 1-2 years with completion of construction an additional 18-months.
- 3) Residential Cost Per Kilowatt Hour (kWh) Calculated** - An analysis of LCRA billing data was conducted to determine residential cost per kilowatt hour (kWh) in JUNE. Fuel costs vary month to month and are based upon utility generation, transmission, line loss, and service fees. The cost per kWh for residential customers in JUNE will be \$0.1464. This represents an **2.61% INCREASE** compared to the MAY cost per kWh of \$0.1426. Fuel costs are typically higher during the summer months and the higher temperatures will increase both consumption and demand. As such, some citizens may not be able to pay or become angry that their bill “skyrocketed”. Utility customers can make payment arrangements if their account is not over 30-days past due. Under no circumstance will the City disconnect power to an occupied residence when the temperature is above 100° F or below freezing (32° F). The Texas Public Utility Commission (PUC) provides energy conservation tips → <https://www.puc.texas.gov/consumer/facts/Save.aspx> to help reduce consumption which in turn will help citizens save money. Below you will find a “rolling” 12-month residential cost per kWh and a fuel cost comparison chart.

## City of Smithville Residential Cost Per kWh – JUNE 2024



Note: Fuel & Power Cost Recovery Factor + City Distribution Fee\* (\$0.0550) = Cost / kWh  
 \*Residential Distribution Fee = \$0.0550/kWh (Effective October 1, 2023). Non-Resident (i.e., service outside city limit) Distribution Fee = \$0.0650/kWh

## City Manager Update – 6/7/24 (continued)

There are several meetings and events in Smithville scheduled the next few weeks:

**Saturday, June 8<sup>th</sup>**– There will be JUNETEETH CELEBRATION AT MLK PARK (10am-10pm). Horseshoes, basketball, ring toss, domino tournament, and activities for kids, FREE food, and music for the community. For more information, call (737) 348-5269 and/or click on the following link → [2024 JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION](#).

**Monday, June 10<sup>th</sup>**: - The June CITY COUNCIL meeting will be held at City Hall beginning at 6:00 pm. Click for link to access the [COUNCIL AGENDA](#) and DATA PACKET.

**Wednesday, June 12<sup>th</sup>**: There will be a SPECIAL-CALLED CITY COUNCIL MEETING / BUDGET WORKSHOP at City Hall (317 Main) from 5:30-7:30 pm to review DRAFT Short-Term Rental (STR) ordinance and discuss FY24/25 preliminary budget. Click link for [WORKSHOP AGENDA](#).

**Thursday, June 13<sup>th</sup>**: There will be a COMPREHENSIVE PLAN KEY ORGANIZATION STAKEHOLDER MEETING at the Smithville Recreation Center (106 Royston) from 5:30-7:30 pm.

**Sunday, June 16<sup>th</sup>**: - is FATHER'S DAY.

**Thursday, June 20<sup>th</sup>**: The Smithville Area Chamber of Commerce MONTHLY MIXER will be held at THE FRONT ROOM WINE BAR (located at 116 Main Street) from 5:00-7:00 pm.

**Wednesday, June 19<sup>th</sup>**: - City Offices will be CLOSED in observance of JUNETEENTH. City Hall office hours before and after the Holiday will be from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

**Tuesday, July 2, 2024**: - The next P&Z COMMISSION meeting will be at City Hall (317 Main) starting at 6:00 pm.

**Thursday, July 4<sup>th</sup>**: City Offices will be CLOSED in observance of INDEPENDENCE DAY. City Hall office hours Tuesday-Friday will be from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Have a great weekend!

-- Robert --

# PHOTOS - 6/7/24

City Warehouse Office Space Expansion @ 1001 SE MLK Drive



2024 Memorial Day at Veteran's Park and VFW Post 1309



Main Street ADA Ramp / Sidewalk Project



Fallen Tree at 700 Mills (Storm Damage)

