



City of East Gull Lake
 10790 Squaw Point Rd
 East Gull Lake MN 56401

MAYOR
 Dave Kavanaugh

COUNCIL MEMBERS
 Carol Demgen
 Dennis Lang
 Scott Hoffmann
 James Ruttger

Spring 2015

Pillager Area Fire Protection to Provide EGL Service



Pillager Area Fire & Rescue 2014

*Front Row (l to r): Lieutenant Scott Eastman, Tyler Kosloski, Chief Randy Lee, Lieutenant Jason Eastman, Bob Jackson, Trent Hawkinson, Pete Smude, Chris Berent, Cindy Eastman & Sandie Youngblom.
 Back Row (l to r): Jay Personius, Chris Korwes, Captain Greg Ringler, Brent Johnson, Thomas Cremers, Ben Davis, Jim Weizenegger, Assistant Chief Les Fundine, Captain Tom Youngblom & Josh Eastman.
 Not Pictured: Rob Freelove, Joe Klein, Bret Mattheisen, BJ Thorstenson, Ted Feyder, Devrin House & Jerrad Sheflo.*

The townships of Sylvan, Fairview, Homebrook, Rosing, the east half of May, and the City of Pillager are the governmental units that own the Pillager Area Fire Department (by a joint powers agreement). The Association has one representative from each township and the city. The group meets monthly, usually the first Monday at 7:00 pm at Station 1, to conduct business and approve bills. The Association has two stations. Station #1 is in Pillager. Station #2 is on the west side of Gull Lake in Fairview Township.

Pillager Area Fire and Rescue (PAFR) is the firefighting or “hands on” part of the Association. At this time there are 24

firefighters on the team. The firefighters are required to have at least 40 hours of in-house training and 25% of the runs per year. They are also required to do an annual physical ability evaluation. All firefighters are required to be Emergency Medical Responders (EMR) and Firefighter I’s with Haz Mat Ops certification within 2 years of joining. Most have also gone on to be Firefighter II certified. Two of the crew are also EMT Certified.

The Association contracted with the City of East Gull Lake to provide fire and rescue coverage starting on 1/1/15. The agreement does not include medicals but could in the future. I feel that this agreement will benefit the Association members, PAFR and the City of East Gull Lake in the long run.

PAFR responded to 246 runs in 2014 which was 15 more than the previous record of 231 in 2013. PAFR firefighters had a total of 1555.5 man hours of training. Figuring one hour per run there was a total of 2909 man hours on runs.

Most area departments are now paid-on-call; in other words they are paid something per call and per training. PAFR is 100% volunteer so our members are not paid anything for runs or training. This is not the norm, but it saves the Association and taxpayers thousands of dollars per year.

I do not think of the team from PAFR as just volunteers. I think of them as Professional Firefighters that volunteer. **Doing it for PRIDE not PAY.**

The Association took in \$79,764.36 in grants, donations, and other unbudgeted money this year. This helps to keep the budget low while at the same time providing

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newer, safer and more up-to-date equipment. Our area can be proud of our equipment which helps the firefighters do their job more safely; plus it also helps keep the residents and those passing through the area safer. Residents should review their home driveways to make sure they have at least 13 feet height and 20 feet width of clearance of trees, branches, wires, and snow banks. If there was a fire we need to get two or more trucks into the driveway and then be able to work and move all the way around them.

Most home fires are caused by heating or cooking. So keep your heating equipment well maintained and in good working order, and pay good attention while you are cooking because bad things can happen in just minutes. Also make sure your C.O. and smoke alarms are in good working condition and replace them if they are over 7 years old. **“Have a Safe and Great Year!”**

Fire Chief Randy Lee

The officers of PAFR are as follows:

Chief #1

Randy Lee, 40 years of service, 26 years as Chief

Chief #2

Greg Ringler, 28 years of service

Captain #1

Tom Youngblom, 22 years of service

Captain #2

Jason Eastman, 8 years of service

Lieutenant #1

Josh Eastman, 8 years of service

Lieutenant #2

Trent Hawkinson, 7 years of service

Meet Kathy Schack



Kathy Schack is the City's Administrative Assistant. She has worked for the City for over three years, but has recently changed to fulltime to help Rob Mason, City Administrator with the large workload. Previously Kathy worked at Potlatch until it closed, and at Widseth Smith Nolting for several years. She also had her own bridal alteration business for a few years.

In her new position, Kathy will have the responsibility of billing clerk, clerical support, administrative detail, and inter-function organizing and will also perform other duties in the absence of the City Administrator.

Kathy and her husband Dave have two children, a boy, Kurt, and a girl, Dana; and two granddaughters, Jourdyn & Sasha. Kathy and Dave have been married for 40 years.

Next time you are near City Hall stop in and say 'hi' to Kathy.

Rocky Waldin is the City's New Planning & Zoning Commissioner

Rocky Waldin, the City's newest Planning & Zoning Commissioner, has been a summer resident of Gull Lake for 60 years, having spent summers at his grandparents' cabin on the Pine Beach Peninsula. He has been enjoying golf, waterskiing, sailing and a little fishing on Gull Lake since his childhood. He's worked for more than 35 years in the construction industry, with the past 25 years focusing on erosion and sediment control. He brings a broad range of experience and knowledge of storm water management practices and products to the Commission. Rocky and his wife Judy bought their cabin on the Pine Beach Peninsula in 2005, and their two children will be the 4th generation to grow up on Gull Lake. They plan to sell their home in Chanhasen, MN within the next year or so and move permanently to East Gull Lake.

The City welcomes Rocky to the Planning & Zoning Commission and is looking forward to making good use of his expertise in construction, and erosion control.



Flushable Wipes Can Cost Thousands to Fix Clogged Pipes

Excerpts from Article by: JENNA ROSS, initially published in the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* on 4/5/15

Sewage was seeping into a resident's basement, and Dan Kovar could guess the cause: wet wipes. Across the country, public works directors like Kovar are extracting the disposable baby, facial and disinfecting wipes that have gotten caught in key pieces of their plumbing networks. The cloths have increasingly plugged pipes and pumps in recent years, forcing Minnesota cities to boost their monitoring and invest in expensive grinders.



The flooded basement in Wadena, Minn., led workers to the latest blockage, a dirty mass largely comprised of wipes that would not break down. "They come out just like they go in," Kovar said, "in one piece." In March, he posted a warning to the city's Facebook page: A wipe labeled "flushable," he explained, only means that it "will fit down the piping within your home."

Down the line, it's another story. The wipes combine with grease and paper, forming massive clumps wastewater folks have nicknamed polar bears. They eventually wind around pumps at lift stations, which bring sewage and wastewater to higher

elevations, testing their motors and gears.

"It's a huge problem — an absolutely horrible problem," said Frank Stuemke, of the Minnesota Rural Water Association. Wipes have shortened pumps' lives and transformed what it means to maintain a system, he said. "To smaller communities, in particular, it can be difficult."

On Friday morning, workers in Avon, Minn., pulled up two wastewater pumps from 15 and 25 feet underground. Then they removed, with gloved hands and tools, gobs of wet rags.

Utilities Supervisor Jon Forsell and his team monitor these pumps daily, removing wipes weekly. "Unfortunately, we have to do it all the time," he said. They're educating residents, folding pamphlets into water bills. They're also upgrading their equipment: At Monday night's City Council meeting, Forsell will request \$17,000 to replace a pump with a better brand. "That's a great expense for a smaller city like this," he said.

While some Minnesota cities have found that pamphlets and videos have helped, others say the problem is still picking up. In Edina last year, 13 of 15 sewer blockages involved rags and wipes, said David Goergen, Public Works coordinator.

"It's getting worse," said Scott Gilbertson, Detroit Lakes' wastewater supervisor, of the more widespread use. "We're just constantly fighting it."

Gilbertson won't use wipes in his own home.

People don't consider what follows a flush, he said. "Until they have a problem or they don't have water, they don't think about it."

The City of East Gull Lake requests that residents do not flush any type of wipes down their toilets, but instead if used to dispose of them with their trash. Wet wipes not only can cause problems for the City at the waste water plants and the grinder stations, but also in residents' plumbing systems.

Fireworks in the City



Please be aware that any firework display in the City of East Gull Lake does need a permit. The following is a partial excerpt from the Statute:

An application for a permit for an outdoor fireworks display must be made in writing to the municipal clerk at least 15 days in advance of the date of the display and must list the name of an operator who is certified by the state fire marshal and will supervise the display. The application must be promptly referred to the chief of the fire department, who shall make an investigation to determine whether the operator of the display is competent and is certified by the state fire marshal, and whether the display is of such a character and is to be so located, discharged, or fired that it will not be hazardous to property or endanger any person. The fire chief shall report the results of this investigation to the clerk. If the fire chief reports that the operator is certified, that in the chief's opinion the operator is competent, and that the fireworks display as planned will conform to the safety guidelines of the state fire marshal provided for in paragraph (f), the clerk shall issue a permit for the display when the applicant pays a permit fee.

History Project Progress Continues, Slow but Sure



City residents Richard and Marie Esser are strolling along a sandy, sunny beach which hints of days soon returning to the lakes' area.

March winds are forcibly ushering in April while this issue of our newsletter is assembling for print. Darkening ice, yielding to nature's power, is cracking and splitting open. Sporadic crystalline ice piles are accumulating to create space for the returning open water. All of this drama is in sharp contrast to the photo shown here.

Two members of the history committee, Richard and Marie Esser, are being featured in this issue because the city wants to thank them. They volunteered to donate time, energy and supplies for scanning family and historical photographs for the history section of the website. Already they've logged many hours on the project. Their input and expertise are appreciated.

Since the late '80s, the couple has had property on the big portion of Gull Lake. They moved from Baxter to live year around in their current home late in the '90's. Marie (Walsh) moved to Brainerd from Duluth as a teenager. Her father was a railroad engineer. Richard has been a life time area resident. His parents owned property near the Gull Lake Yacht Club in the fifties and were business owners in Brainerd.

The couple has three children: a son residing in Canada, a daughter in Hawaii and one daughter closer to home in St. Paul. Watch for the rest of their story to appear in the Family Story section of the website.

The most recent story added to the website includes history surrounding Donald Baakkonen, his wife Joan (Santi) and their family. Thanks also to this couple for sharing Donald's memories of attending school at what is now City Hall. His mother, Helen Lee, grew up in one of the pioneer families living near the Gull River Dam and played with Native American children who lived in the vicinity. One of the activities she learned from those early encounters was making corn husk dolls.

The history committee looks eagerly forward to sharing more history and stories. Please search your memories for rituals, traditions and other experiences your families accumulated over the years. Don't forget to loan precious photos! They will be scanned and promptly returned to you for safe keeping.

Linda Engel, EGL History Writer

Why Might Sewers Freeze?

Reprinted with permission from the Lake Hubert Conversation Club, written by Sara Heger and Ken Olson

A winter of cold temperatures and little snow cover can cause freezing of systems. Even in a normal Minnesota winter, freezing can occasionally be a problem. Identifying and correcting a potential freezing problem is far easier than dealing with a frozen system. Here are a few common causes of system freeze-ups.

Lack of Snow Cover: Snow serves as an insulating blanket over the tank(s) and lines. Snow Lack of snow allows frost to go deeper into the ground, potentially freezing the system.

Compacted Snow: Compacted snow will not insulate as well as uncompacted snow. Driving any type of equipment over the system compacts snow and sends the frost down deeper. Automobiles, ATV's, and foot-traffic should stay off the system in the winter. Anytime traffic over a sewer pipe or tank is anticipated, insulated pipe should be used.

Compacted Soils: Areas that have compacted soils, such as driveways, or paths, tend to freeze deeper.

Lack of Plant Cover: The vegetative cover insulates the system and helps hold snow.

Irregular Use of System: When homes or cabins are unoccupied for long weekends or longer, no sewage enters the system to maintain sufficient temperatures to avoid freezing. This can also occur when low volumes of sewage are being

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generated. A home with only one or two people may use only a small percentage of the designed flow for the system. Frequent use, warmer water temperatures and greater water use are all important in cold temperature.

Leaking Plumbing Fixtures: When a fixture such as a toilet or faucet leaks, it sends a small trickle of sewage to the system. The slow moving, thin film of water caused by trickle flow can freeze within the pipe and eventually cause the pipe to freeze solid. Appliances such as high efficiency furnaces and humidifiers can also cause water to freeze in the pipes due to the small amount they discharge.

Pipes Not Draining Properly: A common cause of freeze-ups are sewer pipes and pump lines that are not installed with proper fall (change of elevation) or pipes that settle or sag after installation. Anytime a dip or low spot occurs in a pipe, sewage can collect and freeze.

Cold Air Entering the System: Open and uncapped riser or inspection pipes and manhole covers allow cold air into the system and can cause the system to freeze.

What Can You Do to Prevent Your System From Freezing in the Future?

Depending on your system, location, and water use, you may never have a freezing problem. However, there are several steps that you can take if you are concerned about your system freezing. It is not necessary to do all of these, but you may pick and choose based on your situation:

1. Place a layer of mulch (8-12 inches) over the pipes and tanks to provide extra insulation. This mulch could be straw, leaves, hay or any other loose material that will not compact and stay in place.
2. Let the grass in your lawn get a little longer in the late summer/fall around the tank and where the sewer lines come from your house. This will provide extra insulation and help hold any snow that may fall.
3. Use water; the warmer the better! This includes spreading out your laundry schedule to doing one warm/hot load per day, using your dishwasher or taking a hot bath. DO NOT leave water running all the time, as this could overload the system.
4. If you know you are going to be gone for an extended period, plan accordingly. This could include having someone use sufficient quantities of water in the home regularly. This could take 20-30 minutes of running hot water from a faucet.
5. Fix any leaky plumbing fixtures or appliances in your home. This will help prevent freezing problems and help your system work better year round. If you have appliances that generate very low flows such as high efficiency furnaces, you can put a heat tape in the pipe, and while on vacation have someone come by and run warm water for a while. Alternately, you could install a small condensate pump that holds and discharges 2 gallons per cycle.
6. Shut your well off, drain the lines from the lowest faucet, and flush all the toilets to drain the tanks. You should now have no water leaving your house. If you do lose heat and the lines break you will not have water spraying everywhere.
7. Keep all types of vehicles and high traffic people activities off of the system. This is a good rule to follow year round.
8. Add more insulation to your system. This could include replacing pipe with insulated pipe, adding high density Styrofoam over the lines; within 6 inches of the line.

If you have a sewer emergency please call the City at 218 828-9279 or the wastewater operator on-call at 218 330-7519.

Please - Don't Cover Your Wastewater Tanks

As spring rolls around and the landscaping season is upon us, a reminder about the tanks in your yard. City staff needs to access these tanks periodically for maintenance, so please do not cover with sod, fabric, mulch, heavy ornaments or stack wood pile on the tanks. These items make it very difficult to access the tank, especially in the winter. Light objects that are easy to move like plastic yard ornaments or light flower pots are fine. The green tanks have an insulated lid, but if you'd like to help protect them from freezing we ask that you only cover the tanks with straw or leaves for easy access.

*Remember before you dig, have your utilities located
by calling 811 or go to gopherstateonecall.org to submit an "E-Ticket".*



City of East Gull Lake
1790 Sub Point Rd
East Gull Lake MN 56401

Phone: (218) 828-9279
Fax: 218-825-8422
Email: ctyegull@scicable.com

Sign up for email alerts:
www.eastgulllake.govoffice.com

Household Hazardous Waste & Electronics Mobile Collection

East Gull Lake City Hall
Tuesday, June 23rd
12 noon - 4:00 pm

For Cass County Residents only
No appointment necessary

Examples of accepted wastes:

- ◆ unwanted or unusable paint and paint products
- ◆ adhesives, mercury products, corrosives, pesticides, oven cleaners
- ◆ cleaning products, old gasoline, automotive products (except motor oil)



◆ Also accepting
fluorescent bulbs



Do NOT bring these:

- ◆ explosives or radioactive wastes
- ◆ used motor oil, oil filters or antifreeze - these can be taken to any county transfer site at no charge year round.
- ◆ Unusable joint compound - this should be dried out and disposed of in regular garbage.

If you have questions, or need to make an appointment to drop off your wastes at the HHW facility north of Pine River at other times call:

**Cass Co. Household Hazardous Waste facility
at Pine River; 888-910-2425 ext. #2**
**Or: Cass Co. Environmental Service Dept. at
Walker. 218- 547-7287**
Or go to: www.co.cass.mn.us

East Gull Lake Council Meetings:

First Tuesday of month, 6:30 p.m., June. 2nd, July 7th, Aug. 4th, Sept. 1st and Oct. 6th at City Hall.

See the Calendar section on the website for additional meetings and updates.

www.eastgulllake.govoffice.com