



City of Kimball

March 2013

City Hall will be closed the following dates:

- March 19 - 22

New City Hall Hours:

Monday:
8:00am – 4:30pm

Tuesday:
8:00am – 6:00pm

Wednesday: Closed

Thursday:
8:00am – 6:00pm

Friday:
8:00am – 4:30pm

Upcoming City Council Meetings:

- March 5
- March 19
- April 2
- May 7
- June 4
- July 2
- July 16
- August 6
- September 3
- September 17
- October 1
- November 5
- November 19
- December 3

Enforcing the State Building Code – Not Always a Pleasant Job

The Building Official can be compared to a police officer issuing a ticket for speeding. Before driving, a driver is responsible to know traffic laws. Similarly, a contractor or homeowner is responsible to know the building code, and to complete the work in compliance with the code. A police officer is responsible for enforcing the law and, if necessary, issuing a ticket – hopefully, preventing accidents. Likewise, the building official is responsible for enforcing the State Building Code – hopefully, preventing injuries, deaths and damage to property. Just as most folks aren't happy when they receive a speeding ticket, most folks aren't happy when they are told that their construction does not meet the requirements of the Building Code and needs to be corrected. My guess is that few police officers get back into their patrol car after issuing a ticket and think "Boy that was fun – I hope they have to work extra hours to pay for that ticket." Likewise, the Building Official and Inspectors do not receive any gratification from making people correct their work or get permits. In reality, they have a lot to lose if they do not enforce the code.

Minn. Stat. § 326B.121 subd. 3 states, "If the commissioner determines that a municipality that has adopted the State Building Code is not properly administering and enforcing the code...the commissioner may have the administration and enforcement in the involved municipality undertaken by the state building official or by another building official certified by the state." Municipalities outside the Twin Cities area can choose whether or not to enforce the State Building Code BUT did you know that contractors and homeowners doing construction work outside an enforced area are still required to follow the State Building Code? *Minn. Stat. § 326B.121 subd. 1 (a)* states, "The State Building Code is the standard that applies statewide for the construction, reconstruction, alteration, and repair of buildings and other structures of the type governed by the code."

One of the common complaints Building Officials or Inspectors hear is that the code is too strict or that we are being unreasonable in enforcing the code. *Minn. Rules, Chapter 1300 Purpose and Application Sub. 1* defines the purpose of the code as "to establish minimum requirements to safeguard the public health, safety, and general welfare through structural strength, means of egress facilities, stability, sanitation, adequate light and ventilation, energy conservation, and safety to life and property from fire and other hazards...and to provide safety to firefighters and emergency responders during emergency operations." To sum it up, the code is there for the safety of the occupants, their guests, and emergency responders. Going back to the enforcement section above, the Building Official is held responsible to make sure the work is done to ensure everyone's safety. If the Official lets something go because it appears to be a trivial matter, that decision could come back and haunt the Official, or the municipality, later.

The Building Code is heavy on our minds today as we read about the tragic fire in Brazil this year that took over 230 lives. In our minds, we think "it couldn't happen here." However in 2003, 100 people died in a similar situation at a nightclub in Rhode Island. It appears that both fires were caused by the bands' pyrotechnics starting a fire on the insulation used to sound-proof the structures. These two nightclub fires are extreme examples of how following the Building Code we have in Minnesota might have saved lives. Not all violations are this bad. In 2011, a deck attached to a house in Rosemount, MN, collapsed. Injuries were minor, but could have been much worse. There were no permits issued for the deck, and it was installed incorrectly. Relatively few speeding violations result in accidents and/or injuries, but the speed limits are enforced to prevent those incidents. Likewise, not all building code violations will result in injury, but the State Building Code is enforced to prevent incidents that could cause harm to you, your family, your guests, or emergency responders.

*Reprinted from the February 2013 MNSPECT Minute

City of Kimball

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Make sure to attend the
Annual Kimball Firemen's Relief Association Pancake Breakfast
Sunday, March 24, 2013
7:30am-12:30pm at the Kimball Fire Hall

The new City website will be up and running soon. Also coming in 2013 - the ability to pay via credit card or ACH withdrawal. Stay tuned for future updates!



Minnesota Department of Transportation

News Release

Mn/DOT cautions property owners against dumping snow on roadways, it is against the law.

St. Cloud Minn – The Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) would like to remind everyone, including commercial snow removal operators, that it is against state law to deposit snow onto a public roadway. Dumping or plowing snow onto a roadway can create a slippery area, frozen rut, or bump, which has the potential to contribute to a motor vehicle or pedestrian accident.

Minnesota Statute 160.27 and many local ordinances prohibit the plowing, blowing, shoveling or otherwise placing of snow from sidewalks, driveways, and parking lots onto public roadways, which can include the ditch and right-of-way in certain situations. The public is cautioned that violations are misdemeanors, and civil liability can extend to both the property owner and the person or company who placed the snow improperly.

To determine the proper placement of snow and minimize your inconvenience when a snowplow comes along after you've cleared your driveway, Mn/DOT offers the following tip: By shoveling or plowing snow in the same direction as traffic and making a snow collection "pocket", the snow collected by the plows will accumulate in the "pocket" rather than into the driveway opening (*diagram right*).

Mn/DOT cautions anyone working close to a roadway to watch for ongoing traffic and warns drivers to be alert of individuals clearing snow.

STAY BACK STAY ALIVE

