



# Newsletter

January 2014

*Water damage from a broken sewer lateral*

## Voters to Decide on Fee Increase for Sewer Lateral Insurance Program

“Out of sight, out of mind” is probably the relationship most homeowners have with their sewer lateral, the pipe that carries household wastes to the Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District’s (MSD’s) main line. But sewer laterals do fail, which can cause sewage to back up into the home, portions of the yard to collapse or both. Making a bad situation even worse is the fact that most homeowner’s insurance policies don’t cover sewer lateral repairs, which typically cost \$3,000 to \$5,000 and sometimes more.

Fortunately, homeowners in Maryland Heights who find themselves in this situation have an important resource they can turn to: the city’s sewer lateral insurance program.

In 1999, Maryland Heights voters overwhelmingly approved the creation of a sewer lateral insurance program to cover the cost of repairing broken sewer laterals. Homeowners pay \$28 as part of their annual property tax bill to fund

the program. Since it was established, the program has served more than 700 residents.

“The demand for the program has increased, while the average cost per repair has also increased,” Director of Public Works Bryan Pearl said.

In order to restore the program’s financial stability and maintain future service levels, the City Council will ask voters in the election to be held April 8, 2014 to increase the annual fee to \$50.

“The increase will cover the cost of the program and allow us to continue operating it at current levels,” Mayor Mike Moeller said. “Without additional funding, we would need to make changes to the way the program operates.”

These changes could include placing some homeowners on a waiting list until funds became available for their repairs

*See SEWER, page 4*

## RESOLVE TO GET INVOLVED IN YOUR COMMUNITY

If increasing your civic involvement is on your to-do list this year, Mayor Mike Moeller is looking for residents to fill vacancies on four city boards and commissions:

- The Traffic Commission advises the City Council in matters of traffic regulations, parking restrictions and road sign placement.
- The Stormwater Advisory Committee oversees stormwater management projects throughout the city.
- The Human Rights Commission exists to ensure equality and eliminate discriminatory policies in housing practices.
- The Cultural Arts Commission promotes the fine arts in Maryland Heights through fairs, festivals, concerts and other activities.

To learn more or apply, visit [www.marylandheights.com/boardsandcommissions](http://www.marylandheights.com/boardsandcommissions) or contact City Clerk JoAnn Cova at (314) 738-2211.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO HELP SENIORS WITH SNOW REMOVAL

The Maryland Heights Parks and Recreation Department is looking for volunteers to help older residents with snow shoveling and snow removal during the winter months. Many older residents need assistance clearing snow from their driveways and walks in order to safely leave their homes. Without cleared paths, some older adults are unable to leave home to buy needed supplies or risk falling when they do. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Social Services Coordinator Elizabeth Mensing at (314) 738-2599.

## TEST YOUR SMARTS AT TRIVIA NIGHT

Trivia buffs are invited to show off their skills at the city's Jan. 24 Trivia Night at the Maryland Heights Centre. Teams of up to eight players will battle one another through 10 rounds of 10 questions each, with the top-scoring teams earning \$304 for first place, \$200 for second place and \$120 for third place. Attendance prizes will be awarded throughout the evening, and attendees may also try their luck in two 50/50 drawings.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and play begins at 7 p.m. Free beer and soda will be available while they last; outside food and drinks are permitted. Registration is \$120 per resident team and \$160 per non-resident team and available at [www.marylandheights.com](http://www.marylandheights.com) or at the Maryland Heights Centre. For more information, call (314) 738-2599.

## The Mayor's Message



Mayor Mike Moeller  
878-6730

In Maryland Heights, Jan. 1 isn't just the start of a new calendar year—it's also the beginning of our fiscal year. Last month, the City Council approved the 2014 budget, which is summarized in the "Budget in Brief" inside this newsletter and posted in its entirety at [www.marylandheights.com/budget](http://www.marylandheights.com/budget).

You can learn a lot about an organization from its budget. At its core, a budget is a financial plan: it shows how much money is coming in and where it's coming from, and where money is being spent and in what amount. But it also reflects priorities and values and acts as a "steering wheel" that helps direct the organization toward its future goals.

Our 2014 budget process began last spring when we conducted the biennial resident survey. That information helps us determine what we are doing well, where we can improve, and where we can most effectively invest our resources. The process continued into the summer, when our Finance and Administration Intern updated the five-year financial projection to help us anticipate fluctuations in revenues and expenditures.

Last fall, each department head submitted program cost estimates to the City Administrator. The City Council then received the Administrator's proposed budget for review in early November, which was discussed in detail at a public workshop later that month. Finally, on Dec. 5, the Council held a public hearing and later voted to approve the budget.

The 2014 budget is a reflection of the city's strategic goals:

- **Quality Housing:** This goal is reflected in our continued investment in building inspections and code enforcement and in programs like the spring Home Improvement Expo.
- **Building Community:** The budget includes funds for implementing some of the improvements recommended during the Great Streets study and money for special events like the International Festival and Maryland Heights Night Out. We will also spend next year working to design a new community center.
- **City Services:** The budget maintains the superior services our residents enjoy, including free trash, yard waste and recycling collection and outstanding snow removal.
- **Financial Stability:** The 2014 budget is balanced and continues the city's practice of maintaining a year's operating expenses in reserve.
- **Safety:** The budget supports a fully staffed, well-trained police department, whose proactive approach has helped make our city one of the safest in the region.
- **Economic Development:** As outlined in the budget, one of our goals for next year is to make our zoning code and permitting process more business-friendly to encourage new development in our city.
- **Creating Identity:** In addition to some of the Great Streets improvements mentioned earlier, we have also provided for new entryway signage at various city limits.

A great deal of time and effort goes into the budget, and I'm proud of what the final product says about our city, our values and our future. I hope you feel the same way.

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "mike moeller".

# City Sees Modest Development Activity in 2013

As the economy continued to recover from the Great Recession, the City of Maryland Heights saw modest growth in the area of economic development in 2013.

The construction of a new parking lot marked the final piece in the completion of the Millwell Green business park, a nine-acre development just north of the Government Center.

The project included renovation of four obsolete buildings, including the former City Hall building. The park's tenants include a Bimbo Bakeries distribution facility, Bellevue Pharmacy, Professional Office Environments, Innova Specialties, Sentia Biosciences, Simutronics Corporation and Serpro Logistics. Conrad Properties plans to seek LEED certification for the development, meaning the developer met specific standards for energy efficiency, water savings, materials selection indoor environmental quality and site development.

Hollywood Casino completed major reno-



*Construction began on a new U.S. Bank.*

novations in 2013, including a new casino floor and the opening of two new restaurants: Final Cut Steakhouse and Celebrity Grill.

The Humane Society of Missouri broke ground on its new 51,000 square foot facility at Page Avenue and Schuetz Road. The building will replace a former restaurant on the site. The Humane Society also purchased the property at the northeast corner of Schuetz Road and Administration Drive and plans to raze the existing building to develop a private dog park.

Construction began on several other significant projects in 2013, including a U.S. Bank in the Lakeside Crossing business park off Page; a Waffle House restaurant on Old Dorsett Road east of I-270; and the redevelopment of the former Gateway Ready Mix property at 11930 Dorsett Road for Brickman Group, one of the nation's leading providers of commercial landscape maintenance and related services.

Several more projects received approval from the City Council and are now in the early stages of development, including plans for a four-story Staybridge Suites hotel on Progress Parkway and the redevelopment of 11738 Administration Drive with a new facility for Car Doc Automotive.

To stay up-to-date on the latest development news in the city, residents may subscribe to the bimonthly City Planner's Report by sending an email to [planning@marylandheights.com](mailto:planning@marylandheights.com). The report is also available on [www.marylandheights.com](http://www.marylandheights.com).

## Municipal Calendar

JANUARY			FEBRUARY		
1/1		New Year's Day (city offices closed)	2/6	7:00 p.m.	City Council
1/2	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting	2/11	5:30 p.m.	Community Development Committee
1/8	6:00 p.m.	Public Improvements Committee	2/11	7:00 p.m.	Planning and Zoning
1/8	6:30 p.m.	Beautification Commission	2/12	6:00 p.m.	Public Improvements Committee
1/14	5:30 p.m.	Community Development Committee	2/12	6:30 p.m.	Beautification Commission
1/14	7:00 p.m.	Planning and Zoning	2/17		Presidents Day (city offices closed)
1/15	6:30 p.m.	Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission (MHC)	2/19	6:30 p.m.	Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission (MHC)
1/16	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting	2/20	7:00 p.m.	City Council
1/20		MLK Day (city offices closed)	2/23	12:00 p.m.	Celebrate the World: An International Festival (MHC)
1/22	5:30 p.m.	Parks and Recreation Committee	2/25	7:00 p.m.	Planning and Zoning
1/23	6:00 p.m.	Cultural Arts Commission (MHC)	2/26	5:30 p.m.	Parks and Recreation Committee
1/28	7:00 p.m.	Planning and Zoning			

Meeting details subject to change. Verify at [www.marylandheights.com](http://www.marylandheights.com).

## SEWER, from page 1

or asking homeowners to pay a share of the repair costs (currently, the program covers 100% of repairs up to \$10,000 and 50% of repairs above that amount).

Members of the City Council will hold ward meetings this spring to answer questions about the proposed increase; once dates are set, a schedule will be available at [www.marylandheights.com](http://www.marylandheights.com).

The following frequently asked questions explain more about the sewer lateral program and the proposed funding increase.

### **Q: How does the program work?**

A: If a resident suspects that their sewer lateral is damaged, they would hire a plumbing or sewer service to clean the sewer lateral pipe. The homeowner is responsible for the cost of this service call. If the cleaning solves the problem, the sewer lateral is not damaged. If the cleaning does not work, the resident files a claim with the city.

The city then reviews the claim and arranges for a contractor to videotape the inside of the pipe to verify the damage to the line. If the videotape shows damage, a city contractor fixes the line. The homeowner is not required to get bids. Expenses less than \$10,000 are paid for by the city. Costs above \$10,000 are split by the city and the property owner.

### **Q: How do I know if my sewer lateral is damaged?**

A: Usually, sewage will either not flush or will back up into your home. Portions of your yard may collapse over the damaged section of the line, or sewage may leak.

### **Q: Why do homeowners have to pay for this? Doesn't MSD own the sewer line?**

A: The sewer lateral connecting the home to MSD's main line is part of the home-

owner's property, meaning the homeowner is responsible for repairing it if it breaks.

### **Q: Won't my homeowner's insurance pay for repairs?**

A: Probably not. Most policies do not cover sewer lateral repair costs, which are considered a home maintenance expense.

### **Q: How much does it cost to replace the sewer lateral?**

A: Most repairs cost at least \$3,000, and more complicated repairs can exceed \$10,000.

### **Q: Do other cities offer sewer lateral insurance?**

A: Yes. Most cities in the region have similar programs, including Creve Coeur, Bridgeton, Chesterfield and Florissant.

### **Q: How much do residents pay in other cities?**

A: It varies from city to city. Annual fees range from \$28 to \$50, but many cities require residents to pay for a percentage of the repair cost. Some also require resi-

dents to get bids, hire the contractor, pay for the work up front and then request reimbursement from the city. Maryland Heights' program is very simple: residents pay nothing as long as the cost is less than \$10,000, and the city hires the contractor.

### **Q: Who is included in this program?**

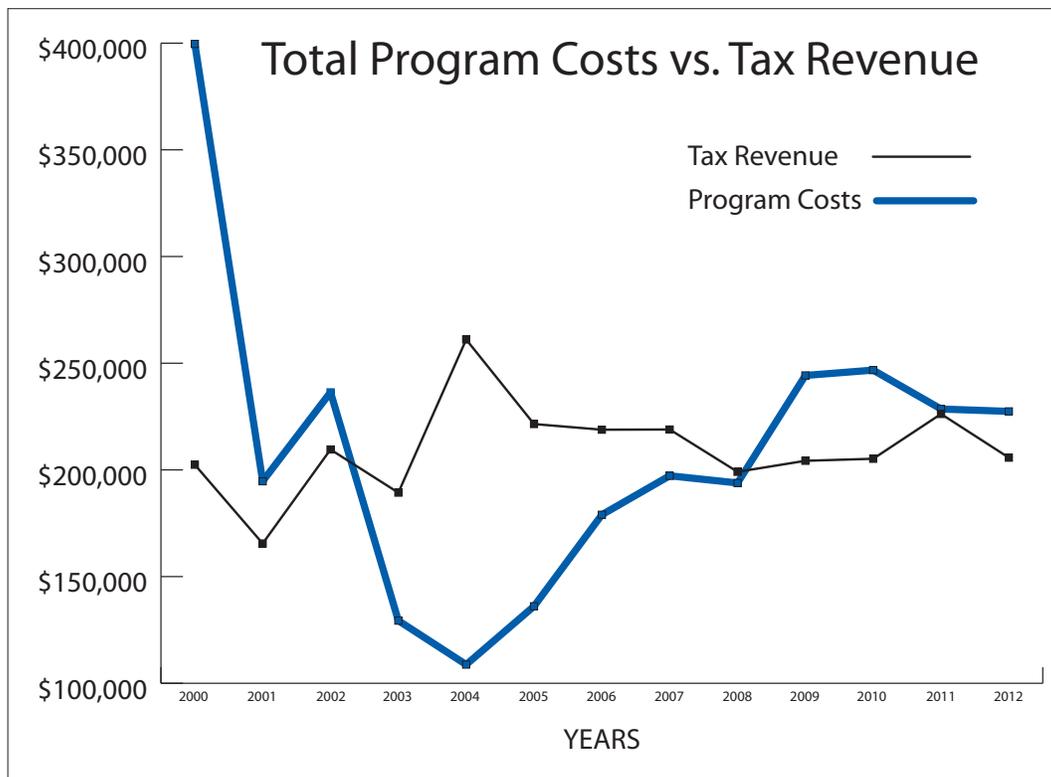
A: Residential properties (including condominiums) with six or fewer dwellings within Maryland Heights are eligible. Homes with septic tanks or that do not connect to MSD lines are not eligible.

### **Q: What kind of vote would it take to approve Proposition S?**

A: A majority of voters—50 percent plus one—would have to vote to approve the increase for it to take effect. If Proposition S fails, residents would continue to pay the \$28 annual fee approved in 1999.

### **Q: What happens if Proposition S doesn't pass?**

A: The City Council would have to consider changes to the way the program currently operates in order to restore a balance between costs and revenues.



# Council Approves 2014 Budget, Zoning Code Changes

The following is a summary of action taken at the Nov. 21 and Dec. 5 City Council meetings. For complete meeting minutes, visit [www.marylandheights.com](http://www.marylandheights.com).

Nov. 21:

- Approved the furnishing and installation by Ameren of street lighting in the amount of \$5,900 for the Driftwood Lane (Marine Ave. to terminus) roadway project
- Increased the Sewer Lateral Fund budget by \$10,000 to accommodate the demand for additional repair services
- Approved the preliminary subdivision plat for the 2960 and 2976 Doddridge Subdivision
- Approved the subdivision record plat for the 2960 and 2976 Doddridge Subdivision
- Amended Chapter 25 (Zoning Code) of the Municipal Code to correct, clarify, and update regulations and definitions regarding land uses, variances, signs, landscaping, and home-based businesses
- Approved a construction services

- contract with Karrenbrock Construction for the 36 Millwell Subdivision Storm Water Improvement Project
- Authorized the removal of one fire hydrant on Edward Jones property at 201 Progress Parkway as requested by the Maryland Heights Fire Protection District
- Approved a contract with Baxter Farms and Nurseries to supply and plant street trees in the FY2013 Street Tree Planting Program
- Authorized the City Administrator to purchase rights-of-way and temporary slope construction licenses in connection with the Progress Parkway (Westport Plaza Drive to North of Kimler Drive) Improvement Project
- Approved an agreement with Crawford, Bunte, Brammeier to conduct an inventory of signalized intersections and design plans for upgrading to ADA compliance
- Approved a contract with Tope, Inc. to provide services for the FY 2014-2015 Sanitary Sewer Lateral Investigations and Repairs Program
- Approved an agreement with the law

firm of McMahon Berger, P.C. to provide legal counsel with regard to the Affordable Care Act

Dec. 5:

- Approved a Wine Tasting Liquor License for Wine Market located at 12207 Dorsett Rd.
- Approved the Proposed 2014 Budget as submitted and reviewed by the Council at the Budget Workshop
- Amended the Employee Classification Plan to reclassify the position of Recreation Assistant from G2 to G3
- Enacted a new employee pay plan to implement the changes in compensation discussed by the City Council during the recent budget workshop, including a 2% across-the-board increase for all employees on a step plan
- Approved a conditional use permit for general automotive repair and maintenance at 11738 Administration Drive
- Amended Chapter 25, Zoning Code, of the Municipal Code with regard to vending machines at gasoline station convenience stores

## Construction Begins on New Facility for Humane Society



On Nov. 20, the Humane Society of Missouri broke ground on its new facility at the corner of Page Avenue and Schuetz Road, shown in the rendering at left.

The 51,000 square foot facility, like the current building off Adie Road, will offer adoption and veterinary services and will be able to accommodate between 400 and 500 animals. Construction is expected to take about 18 months.

The design team for the project includes two Maryland Heights-based firms, Kuhlmann Design Group and Dermody & Associates.

## AUDITIONS SET FOR YOUTH PRODUCTION OF 'ALICE@ WONDERLAND'

Young actors, singers and dancers of all experience levels are invited to audition for the city's production of "Alice@ Wonderland," a modern retelling of the classic Lewis Carroll tale.

Auditions will be held at the Maryland Heights Centre from 6 to 8:30 p.m. on Jan. 14. Auditions are open to actors ages 6 to 21 and are available by appointment only. Registration and commitment forms must be submitted to Jennifer Van Dyke by Jan. 13; email [jvandyke@marylandheights.com](mailto:jvandyke@marylandheights.com) or call (314) 738-2599 to obtain forms. Performers should wear clothing and shoes that are comfortable and easy to move in and bring something quiet to do during down time.

Performances of "Alice@Wonderland" will take place at the Maryland Heights Centre on April 10 and 13; most rehearsals will be held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Registration is \$105 per cast actor.

Written by Jonathan Yukich and offered through Pioneer Drama Service, the 65-minute show imagines a present-day Alice encountering the Wonderland so many of us treasure. It includes all of the well-loved characters of the original version—including the Mad Hatter, White Rabbit and Queen of Hearts—but Alice is distinctly contemporary, complete with cell phone in hand. A sharply told, crisply-paced ride, this quality adaptation has been praised for its humor, modern style and appeals to both children and adults.

## Get in the Summer Spirit! Camp Registration Starts This Month

The weather outside may be cold and dreary, but it's time to start thinking ahead to the sunny days of summer. Registration for summer camps begins on Jan. 2, and the city offers opportunities for kids of all ages and interests.

Tiny Tots Camp is the perfect way to help toddlers gain independence while giving parents some much-needed free time. Held daily from June 9 through Aug. 1 at the Maryland Heights Centre, this morning camp keeps kids busy with fun activities and social interaction. Toddlers ages 2½ to 3 may attend from 9 a.m. to noon on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday, while Thursday and Friday sessions are reserved for kids age 2 to 2½. Fees are \$14/day for residents and \$17/day for non-residents.

Mini-Indoor Camp, which provides activities and adventures for children ages 2½ to 5, is held in the preschool at the Maryland Heights Centre from 9 a.m. to noon. Three weekly sessions are offered: June 2-6, Aug. 4-8 and Aug. 11-15. Fees are \$70/week for residents and \$85/week for non-residents.

Kids Club Summer Camp, for kids ages 3 to 6, is held at Eise Memorial Park from 9 a.m. to noon. Eight weekly sessions will be held from June 9 through Aug. 1, so kids can attend for one week or several. Campers will enjoy outdoor fun and adventure while making friends. Fees are \$70/week for residents and \$85/week for non-residents.

Kids ages 5½ to 8 are sure to love Theme Camp, a weekly camp with different fun themed activities each week. This summer's themes include Clever and Crazy Crafty Creations, Circus Camp and Olympic Week. Sessions are held June 2 through Aug. 1 and meet from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Vago Park.



Campers will swim at Aquaport once per week, weather permitting. Fees are \$90/week for residents and \$108/week for non-residents.

Camp Fun Under the Sun is a weekly camp for kids ages 6 to 13. Held at Vago Park from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., this camp includes exciting activities like kickball, soccer, crafts, games, songs and nature walks. Campers will swim at Aquaport once per week, weather permitting. Fees are \$90/week for residents and \$108/week for non-residents.

Families participating in Theme Camp or Camp Fun Under the Sun may also take advantage of the city's extended AM and PM Care programs, where children may relax, play board games, play on the playground or work on art projects. The morning session is available from 7 to 9 a.m. and the afternoon session runs from 3 to 6 p.m. AM Care fees are \$25/week for residents and \$30 for non-residents; PM Care is \$30 for residents and \$36 for non-residents.

To register or get more information about summer camps, visit [www.marylandheights.com](http://www.marylandheights.com) and click on the Program Registration icon or call (314) 738-2599.

## This Resolution Could Help Make Our Roads Safer in 2014

A New Year's resolution is a promise that you make to yourself at the beginning of a year to start doing something good or stop doing something bad. Though Jan. 1 has come and gone, we can still make a resolution to live by for the rest of 2014. Let's all resolve to be more courteous, patient and forgiving this year as we share the roads as drivers.

Remember the driver who wouldn't let you into his traffic lane, even though you had your turn signal on? Remember the driver who sped by you and then cut in front of you, almost causing an accident? Remember the driver who failed to cover the load he was hauling, and debris flew out and struck your car? Remember the driver who failed to turn on her headlights when required by law? Did these situations make you angry?

Road rage is aggressive or angry behavior by the driver of an automobile or other vehicle. Such behavior might include rude gestures, verbal insults or threats or deliberately driving in an unsafe or

threatening manner. Road rage can lead to altercations, assault and collisions that result in injuries and even deaths.

A few months ago, an incident in New York was captured on video and posted online, where it then received significant news coverage. The clip showed dozens of motorcycle riders intimidating the driver of an automobile. The fearful driver and his family were so desperate to escape the situation that the driver ended up running over one of the motorcyclists. The other riders followed the driver and surrounded his car until he was forced to pull over; they then violently assaulted him and damaged his vehicle. Several of the cyclists were charged with assault, and the drivers of the car and the first motorcycle both sustained serious injuries. There were no winners in that situation.

In Maryland Heights, drivers who participate in a road rage event may be charged with careless and imprudent driving. If someone is injured during the incident,

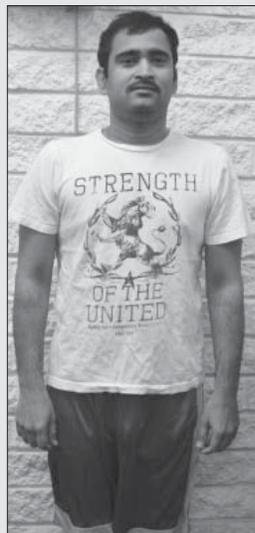
the aggressor could also be charged with assault.

When we see other drivers behaving in a manner we consider unsafe or rude, it can be tempting to respond with equally rude behavior to "teach them a lesson." But in doing so, we run the risk of becoming involved in a road rage incident or even an accident. It's just not worth the risk.

Let's resolve together to be a little kinder and more patient with our fellow drivers this year. Instead of speeding up to close the gap between your car and the car in front of you, let the car next to you make the lane change they are signaling. If another driver honks his horn or makes a rude gesture in your direction, ignore it or respond with a smile or a wave. We've all had bad days, and your small act of kindness might just be the bright spot that person needs to turn his or her day around. At the very least, you'll know you did your part to make our roads safer, more pleasant places to drive.

*Officer Steve Osterloh*

## 'Biggest Loser' Competitor Takes Early Lead, Wins Top Prize



The Parks and Recreation Department crowned a new "Biggest Loser" last month. Resident Sudhakara Gundam lost a total of 30 pounds—nearly 17 percent of his starting body weight—to win the competition's top prize of \$300.

"He was in the lead from the very beginning," program coordinator Eilien Ramirez said. "None of the 55 other competitors ever got close."

It's not too late to sign up for the spring session of Maryland Heights' Biggest Loser, which kicks off

with a wellness fair on Jan. 9 and concludes with the final weigh-in on May 9. Participants receive full access to the city's Fitness Centre, admission to group exercise classes, four 30-minute sessions with a certified personal trainer and weekly challenges, as well as information about healthy eating presented by a registered dietitian. Registration is \$155 for residents and \$175 for non-residents.

For more information or to sign up, visit [www.marylandheights.com](http://www.marylandheights.com) or call (314) 738-2599.



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## ECRWSS Postal Customer

### Mission

We will provide superior municipal services in a safe and appealing setting in order to attract and retain residents committed to our city, thriving businesses and premier hospitality venues.

#### GOVERNMENT CENTER

##### PHONE

(314) 291-6550

##### FAX

(314) 291-7457

##### CITY ADMINISTRATOR

Mark M. Levin

##### CITY CLERK

JoAnn Cova

##### DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

David Watson

##### DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Wayne Oldroyd

##### DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

Bryan Pearl

#### MUNICIPAL COURT

##### PHONE

(314) 291-6036

##### COURT ADMINISTRATOR

Gerald Durfee

#### POLICE

##### EMERGENCY

911

##### CHIEF OF POLICE

Bill Carson

##### NON-EMERGENCY

(314) 298-8700

##### TIPS HOTLINE

(314) 209-TIPS (8477)

#### MARYLAND HEIGHTS CENTRE AND AQUAPORT

##### 2344 MCKELVEY ROAD

(314) 738-2599

##### DIRECTOR OF PARKS & RECREATION

Mary Vaughan

#### PUBLIC WORKS

##### 2715 FEE FEE ROAD

(314) 298-6800

##### AFTER HOURS/EMERGENCY

(314) 298-8700

#### CITY WEBSITE

[www.marylandheights.com](http://www.marylandheights.com)

#### EMAIL

[feedback@marylandheights.com](mailto:feedback@marylandheights.com)

#### FACEBOOK

[facebook.com/cityofmarylandheights](https://facebook.com/cityofmarylandheights)

#### TWITTER

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#### WARD 1



**Ken Gold**  
434-2543



**Don Hunt**  
878-8579

#### WARD 2



**Kim Baker**  
275-4954



**Ed Dirck**  
Pres. Pro Tem  
878-9001

#### WARD 3



**Chuck Caverly**  
566-0424



**Michael Hachmeister**  
291-4236

#### WARD 4



**Jim Carver**  
291-8958



**Norm Rhea**  
739-0096