

Below is the weekly report for the week ending today, May 2nd, 2024.

Items for Newsletters:

1. **Fleet Maintenance Manager Job Opening:** Pursuant to our 2024 Operating Budget, Public Works is now recruiting for the Fleet Maintenance Manager position. This position will be responsible for the management of the Fleet Maintenance Division which includes four skilled mechanics and performs routine and non-routine maintenance on the 300+ vehicles and pieces of equipment in the City fleet, in addition to assisting other divisions and departments.

If you or anyone you know is interested in this opportunity or other potential positions at the city like police officer, please visit the City's employment portal which can be found here: <https://newarkde.gov/73/Employment>

2. **Free Water for a Year initiative:** We have selected our 3rd winner in the free water survey drawing! There is 1 more chance to win \$1000 worth of free water for anyone who completes a survey before June 2024. Newark Water customers are encouraged to complete the online survey at this link: <https://newarkde.gov/lead> to enter a sweepstakes for free water for a year, up to \$1000 value! The data we collect will help complete a required inventory of service lines and reduce operating costs for the water utility.
3. **Bike to Work Day 2024:** Friday, May 17 is Newark Bike to Work Day at Mentors' Circle at the University of Delaware Campus. The event is held in cooperation with the City of Newark, BikeNewark, and the University of Delaware. Each year an award is given to a "Bicycle Friendly Leader". This year, our very own retiring Parks and Recreation Director Joe Spadafino is the recipient of the award. A flyer and more abbreviated postcard that give additional information about the event are attached.
4. **City newsletter:** The May newsletter went out this week, it can be found here: <https://newarkde.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/7957>

To sign up for the City's email newsletter, [click here](#).

Parks and Recreation

1. **Devon Park:** Work continues. Park maintenance staff will begin setting the playground footers on Monday and the pathway work will also continue through next week, weather permitting.
2. **Spring Tree Giveaway:** This year's spring tree giveaway will be held tomorrow at Hillside Park for those who registered to receive a free planting. All plants have been reserved for this event.
3. **Arbor Day:** for arborists at Lumbrook – went well, 2 invasive trees were removed behind the tennis court area and another invasive tree removed was the tree of heaven, host of the spotted lantern fly.

4. **Weed War:** The “Weed War” event was held this past Saturday. We had 60 participants register and 25 show up but were able to remove invasive species in designated areas at Lewis Park
5. **Spring Concert Series:** The Spring Concert Series began on Thursday May 2nd with the Brandywine Riders performing with a crowd estimated at 70 people. This was good attendance for the first night.
6. **Parks Maintenance:** Rough Cut mowing at Handloff Park, Folk Park and the reservoir Meadow areas was completed.
7. **George Read Park Project:** The Engineer’s estimate for the George Read Park Walking and Jogging trail and other park improvements came in higher than anticipated. This will likely require a budget amendment alongside the contract award for the project.

Public Works and Water Resources

1. **Water Main Replacement – Hanover Place:** Our contractor, Mumford and Miller, has begun the water main replacement on Hanover Place. Residents have been notified of the work and will be notified of any service disruptions as the project moves forward.
2. **Hawaiian Shirt and Hot Dog Day:** PWWR staff will be celebrating the warm weather this Friday by wearing Hawaiian shirts and having some hot dogs for lunch.
3. **Water Tank Painting:** After several weeks of preparation work and background air monitoring, our contractor will begin the removal of the lead-based paint on the outside of the Arbour Park Water Tank, located near Dove Drive in Arbour Park. Residents have received notices informing them of the upcoming work to remove the lead-based paint from the tank and recoat it with a lead-free coating. Follow-up notifications include our scope of work along with contact information for the department for any questions or concerns. We expect the containment and removal to begin on or about April 30 and last approximately 2 weeks, assuming good weather.

Police

1. **Police Promotions:** During the week, as one part of the police promotional process Newark PD held promotional interviews for the ranks of Master Corporal and Sergeant. The interviews were conducted by an outside panel of law enforcement professionals including a Sergeant from Dover Police Department, a Lieutenant from the West Chester, PA Police Department and a Captain from the Wilmington Police Department. Thirteen NPD officers are participating in the process.
2. **Law Enforcement Memorial Service:** On Wednesday, a contingent of officers attended the Delaware Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Service at Legislative Hall. The event was well attended by active law enforcement officers from around the state along with survivors of police officers killed in the line of duty, Governor Carney and several state politicians.

3. **Fishing with First Responders:** On Friday, Newark PD officers will be participating in a Fishing with First Responders event at Hillside Park. The event, which is always a big hit in the community has 49 young fishermen registered! On Saturday, Newark PD and the Newark PAL trailer will be at Captain Blue Hen Comics for a community event and comic book give away.

Planning and Development

1. Land Use

- a. Staff completed and posted the [May 7 Planning Commission agenda and packet](#). The Comprehensive Development Plan amendment, rezoning and major subdivision for 30 South Chapel Street and the draft language for Chapter 32, Zoning, amendments related to marijuana-related zoning regulations are on the agenda.
- b. Staff completed the Annual Recertification to FEMA's Community Rating Service (CRS) as part of the National Flood Insurance Program. Newark's participation in the CRS program gives Newark residents lower flood insurance rates, as well as helps protect property and mitigate damages in flooding conditions.
- c. Staff issued Subdivision Advisory Committee comment letters for the following projects:
 - i. Rezoning, Minor Subdivision and Special Use Permits for [1110 South College Avenue](#) on April 29.
 - ii. Comprehensive Development Plan Amendment, Rezoning and Major Subdivision for [30 South Chapel Street](#) on April 30.

2. Code Enforcement

- a. 179 Madison Drive was condemned as Unfit for Habitation following a call from Newark PD reporting sanitation and hoarding concerns.
- b. 49 Church Street was condemned as Unfit for Habitation following reports of no water or electric.
- c. A meeting with Lambda Chi, Newark PD and UD Conflict resolution is set for May 7th to talk with the students about actions during interaction with the police.
- d. West Knoll and Southgate apartment complexes have both had their exterior, common area interior and fire inspections and both had issues to be addressed. PM and Fire staff are working to get the necessary items into compliance.

3. Parking

- a. Interviews were held for the vacant part-time Parking Ambassador positions on May 1. Six candidates were interviewed and three of those candidates are moving forward to references with the intention to extend conditional offers to successful candidates by the end of next week.
- b. Maurice Coleman started as the new FT Parking Ambassador on April 29. This position has been moved to the evening shift (4:00 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.) to provide better coverage for the later parking staffing times.
- c. Staff are currently testing the automation of expiration notices for Special Residential Parking Permits and Guest Passes with T2 to give people an automated email notice 30 days before expiration. As part of this, staff is reviewing potential code changes to extend the special residential parking permits for owner-occupied properties to reduce

the administrative burden on staff for renewals and to make the permit process less burdensome to residents.

Electric

1. **Outage:** Friday, April 26 at 11:45pm a primary cable at the Sandy Brae Substation faulted and caught a pole on fire. The substation's two transformers and four circuits that served 2034 customers were off until 1:30am. The line crews are pulling new cables to refeed the station today.
2. **Outage:** On Sunday afternoon, a large tree branch fell on Creek Road between Delmarva's and Newark's circuits. The reclosing system operated to bring the Freemont Road Substation back on in approximately 5 minutes. 800 customers were affected.
3. **Electric Construction:** The line crews have pulled primary cable for the Fintech parking lot at STAR campus and the Main Street Danneman Project this week.

Facilities and Purchasing

1. **Council Chamber Renovations:** BSS Contractors completed drywall, ceiling tile track, and demolition for the new emergency door this week. Lights should be completed next week, along with the installation of the new door. They intend to be finished by the first or second week of June; we are hopeful the June 10th Council meeting will be the first back in the renovated room but will know more in a week or two.

Finance

1. **Budget:** Staff are preparing for the beginning of the 2025 budget process. Information will go out to department directors at the end of next week.
2. **Budget:** Staff are working to pull credit card data for all transactions processed by the City in 2023. This data will help us prepare for the staff presentation to Council scheduled for the May 20th Council meeting.
3. **Pension/OPEB:** All funds have officially been transferred from Vanguard to Charles Schwab for the Pension and OPEB accounts.
4. **AutoPay:** The Payments and Utility Billing Group sent out an email on Friday May 3rd to entice our customers to sign up for AutoPay. The goal is to cut down on the number of customers paying by credit/debit card, and instead move them to eCheck. Ideally, customers will sign up to have their bills paid automatically (auto pay) so we can cut down on the amount of paper bills

(postage savings). Staff will likely recommend to Council as part of the budget process that we make paperless billing the default billing method to save money on paper and postage.

5. **Reassessment:** New Castle County has begun to notify commercial owners with letters asking for additional information to help them determine the assessed value of their properties. The proper completion of this information will help the County property value these parcels. If the information is not provided, it is the finance director's belief that those properties would be valued higher than the owner would like. As a reminder, commercial property valuation is much more complex than residential properties. Income generation is a factor that is considered when determining the assessed value of commercial property.

Bike to Work, Newark!

Fri., May 17, 2024

Bike to Work Day Event

7:30–8:30 a.m. at Mentors' Circle*
on the University of Delaware campus

*just off South College
Avenue at Kent Way

WHERE WILL
THE RIDE
TAKE YOU?

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BikeNewark is a partnership of interested cyclists and
organizations working to improve bicycling in Newark, Del.



Event Partners



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