



CITY OF NEWARK DELAWARE

Below is the weekly report for the week ending today, January 17, 2025.

Items for Newsletters:

- 1. Winter Weather Jan 19:** We are expecting another round of several inches of snow over the weekend, followed up by frigid cold next week. Crews will be prepared and respond to the snow event as the forecast narrows down on a snow total. We will clean and salt all of our streets during and after the storm to make sure they are clear to allow the sunlight and wind to dry them up for the duration of the cold snap. Residents and businesses are reminded that Public Works will call the end of the storm and sidewalks must be cleared or treated within 24 hours. Violations will be sent to property owners who fail to clear the sidewalks.
- 2. Christmas Tree Collection underway:** Christmas Tree collection is underway until the end of January. Trees should be near the curb by Monday at 7am for collection during the week. Some tree collection will be completed using the knuckleboom grapppler arm in order to train new employees on the equipment. This collection method is not as efficient but is good for training for use in storm cleanup and heavy bulk item collection.
- 3. Pothole Season:** The recent precipitation mixed with freezing and thawing of the pavement has caused potholes to begin to form over the past few weeks. Crews are dispatched daily to make temporary repairs while we plan permanent repairs or repaving of the street for spring/summer. Please report any potholes you observe to Public Works and we will evaluate and repair according to weather conditions.
- 4. Tax Billing –** Accounting staff mailed 357 letters to property owners last week totaling \$1.6M in taxes and penalties. We have been receiving calls, answering questions, helping those in arrears pay their outstanding tax bills. Tax bills can be paid using this link:
<https://cityofnewarkde.tylerportico.com/css/citizen-selfservice/real-estate/home>
- 5. City newsletter:** To sign up for the City's email newsletter, [click here](#).

Public Works and Water Resources

- 1. Water Main Replacement (Ridge Ave out of town):** The water main replacement on Ridge Avenue just outside of town is complete and all services have been moved over to the new main. The water main replacement project will be on hold until the temperatures begin to warm up in the spring.
- 2. Possum Park Road Roundabout (Out of Town):** DelDOT will be replacing the intersection of Possum Park Road, Old Possum Park Road, and St. Regis Drive with a roundabout. Preliminary plans are drafted and under review by multiple agencies including Newark Water. We expect this project to be underway in 2026. Project details may be found at the following link, please keep in mind these are preliminary plans and subject to change. [Possum Park Roundabout](#)

Police

1. Education and Outreach

- a. On January 9th and January 16th, Cpl. Adam Mease of the Community Engagement Unit provided instruction on rules of the road to the Newark Charter High School Drivers Education class.
- b. On January 10th, members of the Newark Police Department were recognized by the UD Ice Hockey Team at Fred Rust Arena during a Law Enforcement Appreciation night. K9 Luto conducted the ceremonial puck drop before the game.

2. Mental Health Case Manager Program: Mental Health Case Manager Eric Harrington is finalizing a resource guide for the homeless. Once finalized, this guide will be provided to all NPD officers which they can then disseminate to subjects experiencing homelessness, substance abuse and mental health issues. During the week, Mr. Harrington, assisted by our Community Engagement Unit, conducted outreach to our homeless population in Newark. The goal was to ensure that they had access to shelter and other resources given the extreme cold/Cold Purple conditions.

3. Recruitment: On January 16th, two conditional offers of employment were extended for the position of police officer.

Finance and Information Technology

1. Finance Director resignation – Director Del Grande’s last day with Newark will be January 31st and we have been working to ensure a smooth transition.

2. Insurance Renewals – Accounting staff is working on applications to renew the City’s insurance policies. Current insurance coverage expires on March 31. Director Del Grande and Deputy Director Hollander met with USI to discuss the progress of the renewal process this week. Since we are not doing a full search for new carriers (only recommended every 3 years), the renewal process should be less tedious than in recent years.

3. CSR Vacancy – The job posting for the vacant customer service representative closed January 10th. There were 81 applicants, and we will be interviewing 15 candidates the last week of January. HR is working on scheduling interviews. In the meantime, the PUB team has been operating shorthanded, so please be patient with us during this period. We do encourage all our customers to make use of the utility customer portal (SilverBlaze) to help resolve any questions you may have via this link: <https://payments.newarkde.gov/app/login.jsp>

4. Disaster Recovery – IT team had a planning call with CISA for an upcoming tabletop exercise focused on our Incident Response and Disaster Recovery. The exercise is scheduled for March 5th. In addition, the IT team successfully tested the recovery of a system backup, and we have scheduled a maintenance window to patch our primary firewalls.

5. IT Desktop Support – Our new IT Desktop support team member will be starting on Tuesday, January 21st.

6. New Utility Bills – Staff is currently working on the final stages of revising the look of the utility bills to make them easier to read. This was a component of the SSRS Bill Print Project approved by Council in 2024. <https://newarkde.gov/DocumentCenter/View/19013/3G>

Purchasing/Facilities Maintenance/Records Management:

1. **Municipal Center Signage:** New building, gate, and dais signage has been installed at the Municipal Center. Additionally, new flagpoles and an LED sign on the corner of Veterans Lane and S. Main Street have been installed. Electrical work for the LED sign will occur next week, with electrical work to connect the new building signs and a light for the flagpoles later this month.
2. **CFI Grant:** Lucas Beidler and Jeff Martindale have 2 webinars with the CFI grant program later this month. Coming out of these meetings, staff will know more about the grant timelines. A budget amendment will come before council on this item in February.

Parks and Recreation

1. Capital Projects:

- a. Dickey Park improvement – construction is on-going, progress meeting held
- b. George Read Park improvements – construction delayed until February/March 2025
- c. Old Papermill Road Park – pre-construction meeting will be held the end of January

2. Maintenance/Operations:

- a. Received bids from tree maintenance invitation to bid and are reviewing.
- b. Continue completing work orders
- c. Working on dog park design for Folk Park, set up meeting with Dash In representatives to discuss final location on Jan. 21 and reviewing next steps on Jan. 24
- d. Working to clear plantings from in front of City Hall along South Main Street and at the George Wilson Center in preparation for electronic sign installations
- e. Working on end of year report
- f. Starting to replace park parking lot rules signs with updated ones
- g. Preparing for more snow/removal over the weekend.

3. Events:

- a. Receiving many special event permit requests for 2025 runs
- b. Upcoming events:
 - i. Employment and Volunteer Fair – 2/1 at Newark Library
 - ii. Submitted the contract for 2025 Fireworks display scheduled 7/4 at Delaware Stadium

4. Recreation Programming:

- a. 2025 Winter Spring activities registration is ongoing and several programs will be starting over the next few weeks including fitness classes, swim lessons, pottery classes, No School Days, martial arts, yoga, chess and more
- b. Rittenhouse Camp has just 4 openings left in session 4 as of 1/16. The first three sessions are full with waiting lists.
- c. George Wilson Center
 - i. New flooring has been installed in the kitchen and in the Friends of School Hill Association museum room downstairs
 - ii. Construction has limited rentals and programs the first few weeks of 2025
- d. Staff are working on annual report and program statistics
- e. Interviews were held for the full-time Recreation Supervisor position.

5. Volunteers

- a. Finalizing the Volunteer End of the Year Report
- b. Started receiving summer camp volunteer registrations.
- c. Planning for Volunteer recognition event 2/1.

Electric

1. Capital Improvement Projects

- a. **CIP E2002 - New Substation:** We recently held a meeting with Delmarva Power (DPL) to discuss our interconnection application for the new substation. Our application is currently under review and is expected to take three to six months to complete. During the meeting, DPL informed us that once the application is approved, it will take an additional five years to complete the project.

As part of our application, we submitted the station one-line and relay one-line diagrams to DPL. We cannot proceed with the 30% design until DPL approves the concept design and our proposed single-line diagram. Currently, we are working with GAP to apply for a BRIC grant for the new substation. In order to submit the application, we have to have 30% of the design completed. The application due date is in March. We have informed DPL about this grant and asked them to expedite the review process so that we can complete the 30% design and be ready to submit the application.