

Below is the weekly report for the week ending today, October 27th, 2023.

Items for Newsletters:

1. **Fraud Alert!:** Several residents have reported receiving scam phone calls from individuals claiming to be Newark Police Officers. During the call, the caller used the name of a real NPD officer advising them that they failed to appear in court and/or there was a warrant for their arrest. The caller then requested payment to avoid arrest. NPD disseminated a press release and social media alert that this was a scam which can be found here: [Fraud Alert: Scam Phone Calls Pretending to be Newark Police – Newark Police Public Information \(newarkdepolicepress.com\)](https://newarkdepolicepress.com).
2. **Fall Leaf Collection:** The majority of the City was collected this week and for the next 2 months, crews will collect leaves raked to the grass plot between the curb and sidewalk. **Residents are encouraged to place small piles in their yard waste cart for collection every Wednesday. Larger piles may not be collected on a weekly basis, but the yard waste will be collected in any week that does not contain a City Holiday.** 'Leaving' the leaves on the grass and mulching them with the lawn mower is also a great option that provides nutrients for your lawn.
3. **Free Water for a Year initiative:** 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 collected will help complete a required inventory of service lines and reduce operating costs for the water utility. Please share with your newsletters and mailing lists. **We are working with Communications to send postcards to all water customers in order to increase participation ahead of our next drawing in December.**
4. **Halloween Parade and Trick or Treat Main Street:** The Halloween Parade and Trick or Treat Main Street will be held on Sunday, October 29 on Main Street, with the parade stepping onto main Street at 3:00 and trick or treating beginning immediately following the parade
5. **2024 Budget:** Staff are preparing for the November 6th budget presentation to Council. All budget documentation can be found on Budget Central here: [Budget Central 2024 | Newark, DE - Official Website \(newarkde.gov\)](https://newarkde.gov/budget)

Public Works and Water Resources

1. **Raw Water Transmission – Main Break:** The water division has been working to address a main break on our raw water transmission line that serves the South Well Field (SWF) Treatment Plant. This line carries non-potable water from our groundwater wells to the SWF treatment plant for treatment before it enters our distribution system. This line is critical to the operation of our SWF treatment plant and the leak has been a challenging one to locate and address. The break is located on Sunset Lake Road (Rt. 72) just south of Old Baltimore Pike within the SR72 work zone. We have successfully located the break and intend to work over the weekend to finalize the repair and restore the state road. We have been able to isolate the main and continue to operate SWF treatment plant at a reduced production rate to keep up with customer demand. Our Curtis Water Treatment Plant is able to supplement the system while SWF is operating at the reduced flow rate.

2. **PWWR New Employee Training:** We have several new employees across the department, and we have been working to get everyone the training necessary to perform their daily tasks efficiently and safely. Six (6) new employees from the department attended a chainsaw training seminar this week and two (2) new Street division employees attended a seminar on Concrete Best Construction Practices. As we transition into the winter months, we will work to get the new employees trained on snowplow operations. We have eight (8) employees scheduled to attend snowplow simulator training at the Delaware Technical College Middletown Training Center. We will also be sending 8 employees to represent the City in the 2023 Snowplow ROADEO. The Snowplow Rodeo is a course set up at University of Delaware STAR campus with many obstacles that operators must navigate and demonstrate their skills while the clock is ticking. This year we hope to reclaim our first and second place standings from years past.

3. **South Well Field Treatment Plant PFAS Project:** Our contractor has mobilized to the South Well Field Treatment Plant to begin the site preparation for the installation of new Calgon Model 12-40 carbon and ion exchange vessels. This project is anticipated to be substantially complete by February 2024 and once complete, will effectively remove PFAS and PFOS (also known as forever chemicals) from the City's groundwater sources. The compounds are present in our groundwater sources at low concentrations but PWWR's goal is to have the treatment process fully functional prior to the formal promulgation of EPS's proposed maximum contaminant level (MCL) or enforceable level.

4. **ADA Transition (Curb Ramp Replacement) Plan:** Our contractor will be replacing 5 (five) curb ramps at Gilberti Lane and Anna Way beginning Monday 10/30. Notices have been sent to residents in the immediate area of the planned work. Please reach out to Public Works if there are any questions or concerns. Our inspectors will address individual concerns in the field with anyone near the work.

Parks and Recreation

1. 20 Adult volleyball teams will participate in the Winter Volleyball League that will be held Wednesday and Thursday at the Newark Charter School.

2. We held a dedication ceremony for the Sharon Hughes pavilion in Lumbrook Park last Friday. The ceremony was very nice with several of Sharon's friends and Family in attendance.

Police

1. Throughout the week, the Newark PD Traffic Unit conducted several car safety seat installations and inspections. The members of the Traffic Unit are trained Car Safety Seat Technicians and provide this service free of charge for those looking for assistance in properly installing child safety seats. The unit averages 4-5 installations/inspections each week.

2. On Tuesday, October 24th, the Knights of Columbus recognized four NPD Officers as the 2022 Knights of Columbus Officer of the Quarter award recipients. The Knights had previously delayed the 2022 presentations due to COVID restrictions. The award recipients were as follows:

1Q 2022 – Corporal Andrew Vari
2Q 2022 – Detective John Saitis
3Q 2022 – Corporal Daniel Burgess
4Q 2022 – Master Corporal Carter McKennon and Cpl. Andrew Vari
3. On Wednesday, October 25th, Victim Service Coordinator Melissa Pennachi conducted a presentation on Victim Services and support during sexual assault investigations to a University of Delaware class, WOMS335 – Sexual Assault Studies.
4. On Saturday, October 28th, from 10am until 2pm, Newark PD will participate in the US Drug Enforcement Agency’s annual prescription drug take back event. Residents can bring expired or unwanted prescription and over-the-counter medications for disposal. www.DEATakeBack.com Newark PD also maintains a prescription drug collection container within the NPD lobby where residents can deposit smaller quantities of medications outside of the annual take back event.

Planning and Development

1. Land Use
 - a. Staff spent significant time reviewing rental data in advance of the expected implementation of [SB9](#), which mandates that after January 1, 2024 all rental properties built before January 1, 1978 be screened for the presence of lead based paint hazards before the rental properties are made available to a new tenant and at least once before January 1, 2026 even if the rental properties are not made available to a new tenant and that all lead based paint hazards are abated or remediated promptly on discovery. Based on current rental permit data, the City has 1,027 single family rentals that fit this criteria, with another 214 potential unregistered rentals that are properties either owned by corporate entities or are properties where the mailing address for the property is different from the property address. Director Bensley also attended the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Advisory Committee meeting on October 19. This committee has been charged with making recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly by January 1 and Director Bensley has been providing feedback to the committee through public comment to provide feedback regarding the logistical challenges of implementation of this program.
 - b. Staff reviewed the most recent submission for 313 East Main Street, which is the redevelopment of the Newark Housing Authority property at George Reed Village. Several major issues related to utilities have been found and staff are working with the engineer to get them corrected to try to make the November 7 Planning Commission meeting.
 - c. The Planning Commission held a special meeting on October 17, where they recommended that Council approve the 2024-2028 Capital Improvement Program. This will be presented to Council as part of the full budget hearing on November 6.

2. Code Enforcement

- a. Code Enforcement continues to work with Alderman's Court regarding service of summonses related to violations of the nuisance property ordinance. This has been challenging in regard to properties owned by LLCs and out of state/out of country owners and is taking significant staff time. There are currently 8 properties that have reached 8 or more points, 8 properties that are at 7 points, and 13 more properties that have been sent warning letters for passing the 5 point threshold for a total of 29 properties.
- b. Staff continue to work on the 2021 International Property Maintenance Code updates to bring to Council. This will include updates to Chapters 1, 13 and 17 to adopt the 2021 IPMC, update rental permit fees, and potentially include rental permits as part of the good standing ordinance. Staff is meeting internally on October 31 for a final draft of the changes, which will then go to the director and city manager for review prior to meeting with the Newark Landlords Association and bringing an ordinance to Council.
- c. EPL (fka Energov) implementation continues with the next scheduled working dates with Tyler as follows:
 - i. 10/24-10/26
 - ii. 11/7-11/9
 - iii. 11/28-11/30
 - iv. 12/5-12/7
 - v. 12/12-12/14

Staff have been working with IT to determine the best path forward regarding data conversion from the current software to EPL as well as continuing to clean the data in the existing system as issues are found.

3. Parking

- a. The third License Plate Reader was installed on October 18 and 19 and is now in circulation.
- b. The Division welcomed new part-time parking ambassador John Schafferman to the team on October 16. With the three new hires in October, the Division is down to one vacancy for part-time parking ambassadors.
- c. Staff were informed by a member of the Parking Advisory Committee that they are unable to participate in the Committee at this time due to medical issues. There are also two vacancies on this committee, which means that all four of the other current appointees must be available for a quorum to be achieved.