



Letter from the Mayor



First, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for providing me the opportunity to serve our great city. It was only eight short years ago that we rolled up our

sleeves and got to work. Over that time we have focused on strengthening existing relationships, building new relationships, and creating a culture and a community where businesses and people can thrive. We plan for our future by focusing on economic development, affordable housing, infrastructure, public safety, recreation, tourism, and education. We plan for our future by creating a community that is a place where people and businesses want to be.

Reflecting over the past eight years, what stands out the most in Gering is its people. Our small business owners and

citizens. Our first responders, veterans and military friends. Our educators and volunteers. Our City staff and numerous agencies that work every day to make Gering the best it can be for you, our citizens, and more importantly our youth... Gering's future. You are helping to make Gering better every day.

Together, we have worked to enhance our community by investing in our Downtown Civic Plaza, Oregon Trail Park Stadium, Dome Rock Diamonds, refurbishment of the Gering Civic Center, development of a regional landfill and regional land bank. We have focused internally to build a government to gain efficiencies through policy and procedure to help the City better serve the ever changing needs of our community. Together, we have worked through a global pandemic to help keep our businesses and families safe while trying to create an environment to con-

tinue to let our builders build, our investors invest, our workers work and our dreamers to dream. However, our vision for growing and building a stronger Gering doesn't stop there as the work to build a great community and a great City is never finished.

Gering is a great community and has outstanding community-minded people working every day to help shape the vision for our community for tomorrow and beyond. To build and grow a community it takes all of us to make a difference. So, thanks to all of you for helping to make Gering stronger and thank you for allowing me to share in our effort for the past eight years. While I will be leaving this role, I look forward to continuing to work with you to help strengthen the city and continue to build a better Gering for our tomorrow.

Tony Kaufman - Mayor, City of Gering

INCENTIVE TO UPGRADE HOME INSULATION

With cooler temperatures, now is a good time to make energy efficiency upgrades for the upcoming colder months. The Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska provides a financial incentive for upgrading attic insulation to residential homes. The Attic Insulation Program provides cash incentives of \$0.15/per square foot with a maximum incentive of \$300 per existing residential dwelling for attic insulation. The program is among a suite of five energy efficiency programs offered. Each program provides cash incentives for homeowners to make energy efficiency upgrades.

The other programs include:

High Efficiency Heat-Up Program

Provides cash incentives from \$400 to \$3,000 to residential homeowners who are installing a new heat pump system to their residential single-family dwelling.

Smart Thermostat Program

Provides a cash incentive of up to \$100 paid directly to residential customers to help cover the cost of installing a qualifying smart thermostat.

Cooling System Tune-Up Program

Provides a \$30 cash incentive to residential homeowners who have their cooling system tuned up by a HVAC contractor, regardless of what type or age of cooling system (air conditioner/air or water source heat pump).

Commercial LED Lighting Program

Provides cash incentives paid directly to commercial customers to help cover the cost of lighting upgrades and replacements.

For more information on each program go to <https://mean.nmppenergy.org/about/energy-efficiency-programs> to download program guidelines and application forms.



Please look for a complete article on Backflow Prevention in this Newsletter. Backflow prevention is extremely important for all residents!

REMINDER

With your City of Gering utility bill, you have a free dump pass to the landfill each month!



Emergency Snow Routes

Please clear public walks within 12 hours after the cessation of a storm.

ORDINANCE 2059

SECTION 1. SNOW, ICE AND MUD

It shall be unlawful for the occupant of any lot or lots, or the owner of any vacant lot or lots within the corporate limits of the City of Gering, Nebraska, to allow snow, sleet, mud, ice or other substance to accumulate on the sidewalk contiguous thereto, or to permit any hard trodden snow, sleet, ice, mud or other substances to remain upon said sidewalk; but such sidewalk shall be cleaned within twelve (12) hours after the cessation of a storm. In addition, any snow, sleet, ice, mud or other substance which remains on a sidewalk contrary to the provisions of this section is hereby declared to be a public nuisance, in the discretion of Gering Transportation Superintendent or other agent of the City.

SECTION 2. NOTICE TO REMOVE AND PENALTY.

Notice to remove such substance shall be made upon the owner or occupant of the premises, or their agent. If the person owning or occupying such premises be unknown or cannot be found, or if

any reasonable service cannot be had upon any such owner, agent or occupant within this City, then such service of said notice shall be made by posting a notice in a conspicuous place on the premises; and any owner or occupant who fails to clean off and remove ice, snow, mud, sleet or other substance which constitutes a nuisance as required herein, and upon conviction thereof shall be deemed guilty of an infraction and shall be fined \$100.00.

SECTION 3. EMERGENCY.

If the Transportation Superintendent or another agent of the City shall determine that an accumulation of snow, sleet, ice or mud is so unsafe, or is unsafe in a respect such that a delay in removal thereof would result in undue danger or other hazard to the public, he or she may declare in writing that there exists an emergency requiring that the snow, sleet, ice or mud be removed immediately and order the owner or occupant to remove the snow, sleet, ice or mud from public walkways and sidewalks.



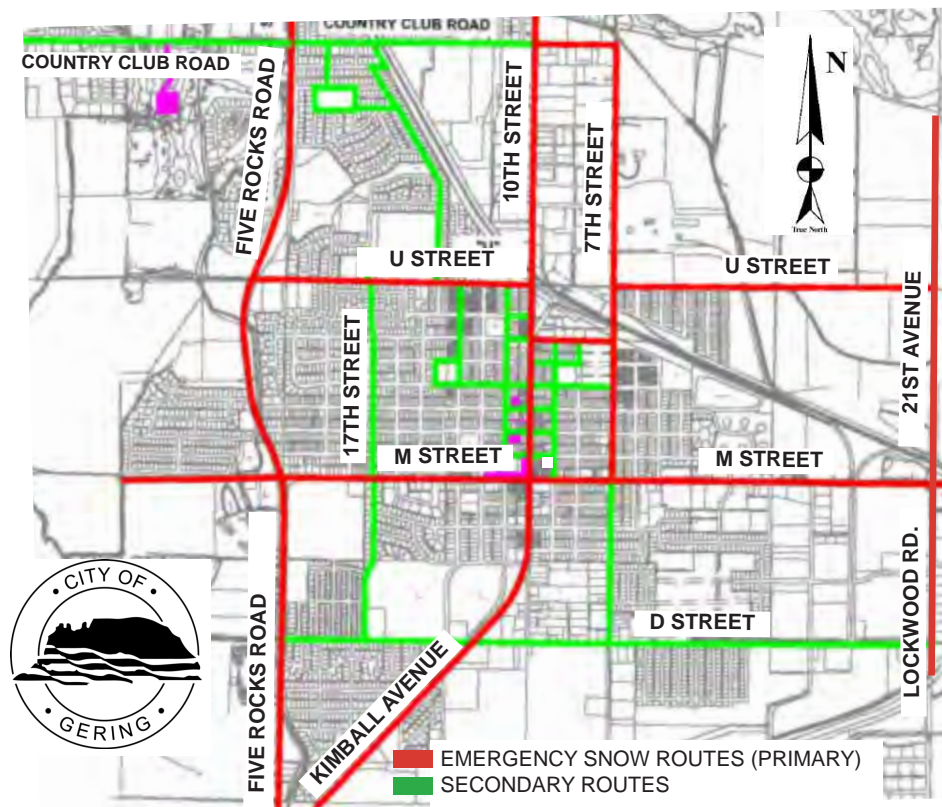
Please do not pile snow on or around fire hydrants!



ORDINANCE No. 2053

§ 76.06 VIOLATION OF VEHICLES PARKING ON EMERGENCY SNOW ROUTES.
A violation of this ordinance shall be punishable by a fine.

When a Snow Emergency is declared, please move vehicles that are parked on Emergency Snow Routes. Vehicles that are not moved may be towed.



EMERGENCY SNOW ROUTES

- 10th Street from "J" Street to "U" Street
- 10th Street (Scottsbluff/Gering Highway) from "U" Street to the river bridge
- "M" Street/Old Oregon Trail from the cemetery road east to Hwy. 71 bypass
- Kimball Avenue from Five Rocks Road to "J" Street
- Five Rocks Road from Robidoux Road to Country Club Road
- "U" Street from Five Rocks Road to 10th Street
- "U" Street from 7th Street east to City limits
- "S" Street from 10th Street to 7th Street
- 7th Street from "M" Street to Country Club Rd.
- Country Club Rd. from 10th Street to 7th Street
- Lockwood Road from Hwy 71 to M Street
- 21st Avenue from M Street to the North Platte River bridge

BACKFLOW PREVENTION

Backflow prevention is necessary to ensure that the water we get from our faucets and taps is safe to drink.

State of Nebraska Statutes require all public water systems to conduct an ongoing program to detect and eliminate cross connections. There are many different ways to prevent backflow from occurring, this article will introduce you to some of these methods, devices and assemblies, and point out where they might be found and why they are there.



AIR GAP - Air gaps are the most common means of protecting against backflow and they are also the best protection.

An air gap is simply a physical break between the source of the water and the container into which it is running. Air gaps are built in to most sinks found in residences. Kitchen and bathroom sinks, as well as bathtubs, showers, washing machines and dish washers are designed with an air gap to protect the water supply. Placing a hose on the end of these faucets will render the air gap useless and could allow the contents of the sink to be drawn back into the water supply. Water bed filler kits and old-fashioned spray hoses that fit over the faucet



are common ways of bypassing an air gap. **These should be avoided at all costs.**

HOSE BIB VACUUM BREAKERS - Most houses have hose bibs installed on them so that the owner can use a garden hose to water the lawn and gardens or use it to wash the car or do other chores that require water. Newer hose bibs are constructed with a built-in vacuum breaker to prevent backflow but many older homes do not have this type of outside faucet.



These older faucets need to be protected with a hose-bib vacuum breaker which can be screwed onto the hose bib, and the hose is then attached to the vacuum breaker. These vacuum breakers need to be left on the hose bib to prevent backsiphonage occurring in the event of a loss of water pressure. The contents of any container on the end of the hose could be siphoned back into the water system if this vacuum breaker is removed. No one wants to drink the contents of a baby pool, a hot tub or the bucket of suds used to wash the car. If you do not have hose bibs with built-in protection or hose bib vacuum breakers installed, you can purchase them from your local hardware store or plumber and install them yourself.



PRESSURE VACUUM BREAKERS - Pressure vacuum breakers are the newest testable backflow preventers available. These testable backflow preventers are primarily found on underground sprinkler systems to protect against backsiphonage.

There are many different manufacturers of pressure vacuum breakers, and some of them may look a little different than this picture, but they all function pretty much the same way. There is a check valve inside of the assembly that has a spring keeping it closed so no water can pass back through the assembly if the supply pressure drops for any reason.



There is a spring in the top of the assembly that will open an inlet valve which allows air into the system to break the siphon effect and allow the water downstream to flow out of the piping. These devices are very good at preventing backflow on sprinkler systems. City of Gering plumbing codes require all new underground sprinkler systems to be protected by pressure vacuum breakers. It should be noted that this protection is in the best interest of every homeowner as any contamination pooled around a sprinkler head, such as pesticides, herbicides or animal waste, could be siphoned into their water pipes anytime there is a loss of pressure. This loss of pressure could be from the water supplier or due to plumbing repairs within the home itself.

DOUBLE CHECK VALVES - Double check valves are good protection for low hazards, which are hazards that are not harmful to human health.

Breweries, vineyards and food services are examples of low hazards. Since most inside uses of water in homes are protected with built-in air gaps, these assemblies are seldom found in residential buildings, though homes that are heated with boilers connected to the public water supply system may need one of these installed on the boiler feed line. Where they are installed, they must be tested annually by a grade 6 licensed tester to insure they are functioning properly.

REDUCED PRESSURE PRINCIPLE BACKFLOW PREVENTER - These assemblies are used in situations where a high hazard exists, and an air gap cannot be used. This can occur when water pressure is required beyond the point of protection. In this case, an air gap would not likely work well as water pressure can only occur beyond the air gap if a pump is installed to place the water back under pressure.



These assemblies are not common in homes; though homes that are heated with boilers connected to the public water supply system may need one of these installed on the boiler feed line. As with the other assemblies, a reduced pressure principal backflow preventer will have to be tested on an annual basis by a licensed backflow tester to insure it is operating properly. If you find one of the testable backflow preventers on your property, you should check with the City to determine if you need to have it tested on a routine basis, or if there is any regular maintenance that needs to be performed.



SURVEY YOUR RESIDENCE - Homeowners should inspect their plumbing to determine if they have any of these devices or assemblies installed. State Statutes require every homeowner and business to survey their facilities every five years. The City mails surveys to customers every five years. Surveys are also available online <http://www.gering.org/departments-services/public-works/water-department> and at City Hall. If you need assistance completing the survey you can call the water department at 436-6834.

Preventing backflow is the responsibility of all customers of the water system. The safe water that results from installing proper protection benefits everyone.

Gering Public



The Gering Library is busy this fall!

After much measuring and planning, we decided to move the children's collection downstairs to make more room for teens and adults upstairs. This involves adding staff, painting, rearranging, and some electrical work. We also received some new activities for the children's area.

We started a monthly Library Chess Club. This group is open to all ages and abilities – and we even have some checkers pieces available if you are not a chess player. The club will meet at 6:30 p.m. on December 15, January 26 and February 23.

The Adult Learners at the Library (ALL) program is designed for adults with developmental disabilities. Each month we explore a topic with a guest speaker, listen to a read-aloud and take some time to explore our creative sides with a craft or activity. Call the library to find out more about this program.

Eighth graders in Ms. Gifford's English classes visited the library in October. Throughout the day, more than 90 students walked from the Gering Junior High to the library, where they were able to check out books, read, and hear about the library's upcoming programs.

At the end of October, the library hosted three different spooky events – Halloween story time with hands-on activities, glow-in-the-dark pumpkin painting, and a wicked potion bottle craft. Librarians also participated in the Gering Merchant's Trick or Treat event.

The Friends of the Gering Library Holiday Mingle and Jingle is scheduled for December 9. Stop in from 3:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. for snacks and holiday cheer. You can also explore the changes we are making to the library.



Libraries store the energy that fuels the imagination. They open up windows to the world and inspire us to explore and achieve, and contribute to improving our quality of life. Libraries change lives for the better.
— Sidney Sheldon



Gering Fire Department volunteers talk to students about fire safety during Fire Prevention Month in October.

Children's Programs

Lego Club is back after a short break! Wednesday afternoons from 3:00-4:00 the community room is bustling again with kids building all kinds of amazing Lego projects. Lego Club is open to all ages, but children ages eight and younger must be accompanied by an adult. Join in the fun!



Our Story & Playtime meets each Wednesday morning at 10 a.m., and is targeted toward children ages 1 - 5. The first 30 minutes consists of books, songs, fingerplays, felt-board stories, rhymes, and movement activities, and the second 30 minutes involves hands-on materials and activities for an educational and social play time. Children must be accompanied by a caregiver while attending story time, but no registration is necessary.

It's story
TIME
@your library

Save the Date!
Gering Library's
Mingle and Jingle is
scheduled
for December 9
from 3:00 to
6:00 p.m.



On Tuesday, December 6th from 4 – 5 p.m., we're hosting a Wrap Up! Adults are invited to come wrap gifts while the kids make apple cider mix and crafts in our new children's space. Wrapping paper, tape, and craft supplies will be provided.

Lowering electric bills through energy efficiency

The easiest way to reduce your utility bill is through energy efficiency. There are some low-cost, no-cost ways to reduce your energy usage, such as:

- Adjusting thermostats down a few degrees.
- Ensure adequate insulation levels in your attic, ceilings, exterior and basement walls and crawl spaces.
- Check for any air leaks around walls, windows, doors, light and plumbing fixtures, switches and electrical outlets.
- Turn down the temperature on your hot water heater to 125 degrees (or warm setting) and insulate it and your pipes.
- Wash only full loads of clothing and use cold water as much as possible.



Please do not pile snow on or around fire hydrants.

Please contact the City to obtain a building permit prior to beginning work. Call the Building Inspector at 436-6813 if you have questions.



Electrical Safety

- Have all electrical work done by a qualified electrician.
- Only plug one heat-producing appliance (such as a coffee maker, toaster, space heater, etc.) into a receptacle outlet at one time.
- Major appliances should be plugged directly into a wall outlet; do not use extension cords or plug strips.

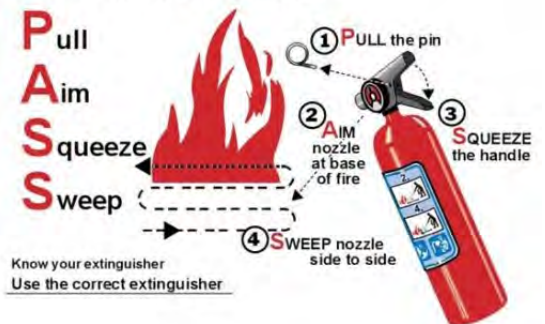


- Call a qualified electrician if you have: frequent problems with blowing fuses or tripping circuit breakers, a tingling feeling when you touch an appliance, a discolored or warm wall outlet, a burning or rubber smell coming from an appliance, flickering or dimming lights, or sparks from an outlet.
- Test AFCIs once a month to make sure they are working properly
- make sure electrical cords are not running across doorways or under carpets. Extension cords are intended for temporary use.

Source: NFPA

Fire Safety Tips

To operate an extinguisher:



**WORKING
SMOKE ALARMS
SAVE LIVES**



Save the Date!

Gering Library's Mingle and Jingle is scheduled for December 9 from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m.



With winter approaching, please keep in mind that your pet can succumb to frostbite and hypothermia. It's important to provide a warm, dry shelter for your pet to get out of the elements. Remove snow between your pet's toes to prevent frostbite and make sure they

have plenty of fresh drinking water at all times. Keep pets away from hazards such as antifreeze, poinsettias, lit candles, cords, decorations and chocolate.



PLEASE

Keep your pet on a leash when not confined on your property and keep your pet under control from running away from you. Keeping your pet restrained not only protects your pet but other people and animals as well. Please pick up after your pet when on public or private property (§ 96.04 RUNNING AT LARGE)

