



# CITYSCAPES

St. George City Newsletter

www.sgcity.org

## Energy Services: Powering Forward



**T**he City of St. George Energy Services Department is one of 2,000 municipal, not for profit electrical utilities in the nation.

*This utility provides an essential service to the residents and businesses in the community. The businesses the city serves employ local residents, add to the tax base and help the economy remain vibrant.*

It is the goal of the department to maintain a high level of reliability and keep rates as low as possible. The current power rates in St. George are approximately 20% below the national average. Primarily due to the increased use of air conditioning by residential and small commercial customers, which have traditionally used evaporative coolers, the City of St. George summer peak load is increasing at a rate of approximately 6% a year. In order to meet the peak summer energy demand as efficiently and inexpensively as possible the city is installing a 40 mega watt (MW) natural gas fired generation unit in the Millcreek Industrial Park. Energy Services staff evaluated several options in the process of selecting the best type of generation to meet customer needs. A concern was the amount of water usually needed

to operate and cool a natural gas fired plant. The unit selected, an LM6000 PD Dry Low Emissions unit, is designed to be a dry configuration which lowers emissions without using water. As part of the project, the city will also install a closed loop chiller system for cooling the intake air of the engine rather than an open cooling system that would use significantly more water as well as adding steam and vapor to the air.

Customer and community service are important to the Energy Services Department. The city has earned a track record of reliable service by keeping the power on and restoring it as quickly as possible in the case of outages. Washington County experienced exceptionally high temperatures and wild fires in the month of July 2005. Several PacifiCorp poles and equipment were lost, resulting in power outages in various areas of the County. The Energy Services Department worked cooperatively with other area utilities to provide power to affected customers while PacifiCorp made the necessary repairs. Most customers were unaware of the "behind the scenes" teamwork that reduced these major outages to minor inconveniences.

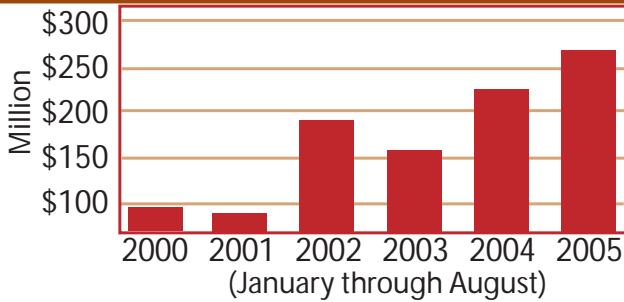
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# St. George Growth Continues



## TOTAL CONSTRUCTION VALUATION PERMITTED



The St. George metro area (Washington City to Ivins) was recently ranked as the second fastest growing metro area in the nation behind Greeley, Colorado and ahead of the Las Vegas metro area. (The rankings are in terms of percentage growth rates and not in terms of actual growth).

Twelve of the 20 fastest growing metro areas are located in the western United States. For the City of St. George, 2005 appears to be another record breaking year in terms of construction activity. Through August, the city permitted \$265.8 million in total construction valuation, compared with \$223.1 million for the same 8 month period in 2004.

*With all of the recent designations given to Southern Utah as a quickly expanding area, St. George residents often wonder what the city's position is regarding growth. The follow is a summary of keys points on the issue:*

**1. Growth should be managed and focused in order to maximize its benefits while attempting to minimize the negative effects.**

Amended in July, 2002, the St. George General Plan helps guide and manage growth in a positive manner towards a common vision. In addition the city has other tools such as zoning, subdivision, and other development codes and standards that determine how growth will occur and impact the community.

*continued on page 7*



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# Taking Training to the Next Level

**O**n a Saturday afternoon in August if you happened to drive by Dixie Regional Medical Center you may have seen the St. George Technical Rescue Team hanging from the side of the hospital. As a result of a grant through the Department of Homeland Security, the St. George Fire Department received \$143,000 for equipment and training in special operations.

*Over the past year members of the department have been training in several areas of specialized rescue, hazardous materials, and airport fire rescue. Firefighters worked with members of the Salt Lake City Technical Rescue Team on ropes, trench and confined space rescue. Firefighters learned to set up rope rigging to allow for rescuing victims off high-rise building, such as window washers or trapped climbers. Other training included trench rescue and confined space, with the ever-increasing number of construction sites across the city.*

In addition, firefighters spent several days at the Salt Lake International Airport to train on airport fire rescue, along with members of the St. George City airport staff. Firefighters attended a forty-hour ground school on airport safety, aircraft familiarization, and fire suppression.

Also this past June eight new members of the St. George Fire Department graduated from the three-month recruit academy. These new firefighters were selected from fifty-three applicants out of four station areas. The firefighters were then trained over a three month period by instructors from the St. George Fire Department. Some of the topics covered included: fire behavior, self-contained breathing apparatus, ladders, fire hoses, and rescue equipment. This recruit academy prepares firefighters to respond to fires, medical calls, hazardous materials, and special rescues.

The St. George Fire Department continues to take great pride in its firefighters by offering them state-of-the-art training and supplying them with the necessary equipment to respond to emergencies in an effective and timely manner.



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# Community Action Teams to assist with neighborhood issues



sure the correct action is taken to resolve issues. C.A.T. teams will be comprised of citizens from neighborhoods and city employees from different departments including police. Each C.A.T. team will consist of at least two citizens from the neighborhood who will serve as chairperson(s). The chairperson designee will act as the spokesperson for the neighborhood and will work closely with the mayor, city council and city staff in identifying issues and finding solutions.

*The St. George Police Department recently made significant changes in its organization and operation in order to assign officers to a neighborhood for a one-year period. This will allow the officers to become more familiar with issues related to citizens and businesses in their assigned areas. Officers will work with the citizens in the neighborhood identifying and resolving crime problems and other issues.*

**T**his past summer, Mayor McArthur, the city council and city staff met with citizens throughout the community to discuss issues in their neighborhoods. City officials reported what the city is doing in individual neighborhoods covering a broad range of topics from zoning enforcement to police protection. The meetings were very beneficial and informative for all who attended.

Due to the success of the meetings, Mayor McArthur and the city council have decided to take this citizen/city interaction to the next level. Citizens in individual neighborhoods will be working with elected officials and city staff to help improve the community. Neighborhoods are being organized into Community Action Teams (C.A.T.), the key word being "action." Not only does the city need ideas and input from the citizenry, it needs them to roll up their sleeves and get involved.

As elected officials meet with neighborhoods, the C.A.T. team for a particular area will be instrumental in making

*and resolving crime problems and other issues.*

Throughout the city many neighborhoods face similar issues while other neighborhoods may differ from each other to some degree. C.A.T. teams will address specific issues related to each individual neighborhood. For example, if a neighborhood is experiencing issues related to traffic, then a traffic officer will be assigned to that C.A.T. team. If another neighborhood has a drug and/or a gang issue, a drug/gang task force officer will be assigned to that team. C.A.T. teams may also have city employees from other departments such as fire, public works, water services, energy services and zoning who will be working together with citizens to identify and resolve problems.

If there is anyone interested in becoming a member of a C.A.T. team in their neighborhood, they can call the St. George Police Department at 634-5001 and ask for the C.A.T. team officer assigned to their area.



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# On the Move In Transportation



**M**eeting transportation needs continues to be one of the city's top priorities. In the Public Works Department, a year-long effort has begun to update the city's Master Transportation Plan. The purpose of the plan is to identify projects and services that will meet transportation needs over the next thirty years. The plan will integrate roads, bridges, bike paths, trails, public transit and state-of-the-art technology into a proactive program to stay ahead of the growth curve.

A major transportation project that has been planned for many years is the Atkinville Interchange and the Southern Corridor located near the Arizona border. The environmental impact for this project is expected to be approved by the Federal Highway Administration this month. Both the city and the Utah Department of Transportation are poised to move ahead with design and construction of the project, once approval is given. A single point urban design, similar to the Green Springs Interchange, has been selected as the preferred option for the Atkinville Interchange. The Southern Corridor is planned as a two-lane divided parkway that will eventually connect Ivins to Hurricane and serve as the primary access to the replacement airport.

The project will include: design, aesthetics, landscaping, trails, and access. The interchange is expected to cost \$15,000,000 and is slated for construction in 2007. Thanks to St. George's Congressional Delegation, the city has secured \$28.6 million in federal

funds authorized toward construction of the interchange and the Southern Corridor.

Those who have driven or walked to the top of Main Street lately have probably noticed the latest edition in a series of roundabouts along Main Street. The use of roundabouts has become a popular method of traffic calming in neighborhoods. Public Works personnel have been working with home owners at 500 North Main Street to install a roundabout. It is designed to reduce truck traffic through their neighborhood and will be beautifully landscaped to fit into the theme of the City's proposed Town Square and Historic Water Walk on Main project by providing improved pedestrian access. Construction is well underway and slated for completion by the end of the year.

Since the unforgettable days last January, a lot of progress has been made in the city flood recovery effort. The second phase of the river armoring program has begun. It will include additional rock walls on the Santa Clara River upstream of the Mathis Park and on the Virgin River in the Bloomington, Dixie Center and Springs Estates areas. A temporary bridge has also been put into place on Valley View Drive until a permanent bridge is complete in 2007. The old Tonaquint Bridge is also being repaired. It will be restored as a one-way street northbound and will include a pedestrian walkway. Completion is anticipated by this November.



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St. George City's New Year's Eve Celebration on Main Street.

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# Water Conservation; Landscape Audits and Education

The City of St. George Water Services Department has teamed up with the Washington County Water Conservancy District (WCWCD) to offer several conservation programs. This was the city's first year offering "Slow the Flow" landscape irrigation audits. This program started in May and will continue through the fall. A landscape audit will give a resident an idea of how efficiently their system operates, soil infiltration rate and provide a suggested irrigation schedule. Many residents have taken advantage of this program, some of whom have been contacted for feedback on the program. This feedback indicates the program has been a success. All of those contacted found the audit to be helpful and several have implemented some of the suggested improvements. Look for this program to be expanded in 2006.

In addition to the water audits there are also monthly garden workshops. These workshops feature community gardening experts and focus on water conservation in the field of horticulture. The next workshop, to be held October 29, 2005, will be the second annual Pumpkin Patch Party and will be held at The Garden, at Tonaquint Park. November's workshop "I do what? Where? How to Maintain Desert Plants" will be held November 19, 2005.

Commercial customers can receive a rebate of up to \$150 for installation of foot pedal controls on commercial kitchen sinks that would normally run non-stop. Not only will installing a foot-pedal control reduce a water bill, it will also reduce the sewer discharge rate based on water consumption.

Residential customers can receive a rebate for installation of Smart Water Application Technology (SWAT). These devices precisely sense a landscape's changing water needs based on soil type, plant types and weather conditions. This program is effective from July 1, 2005 through July 1, 2006.

For more information on these programs, please contact René Fleming, Conservation Coordinator at [rene.fleming@sgcity.org](mailto:rene.fleming@sgcity.org).

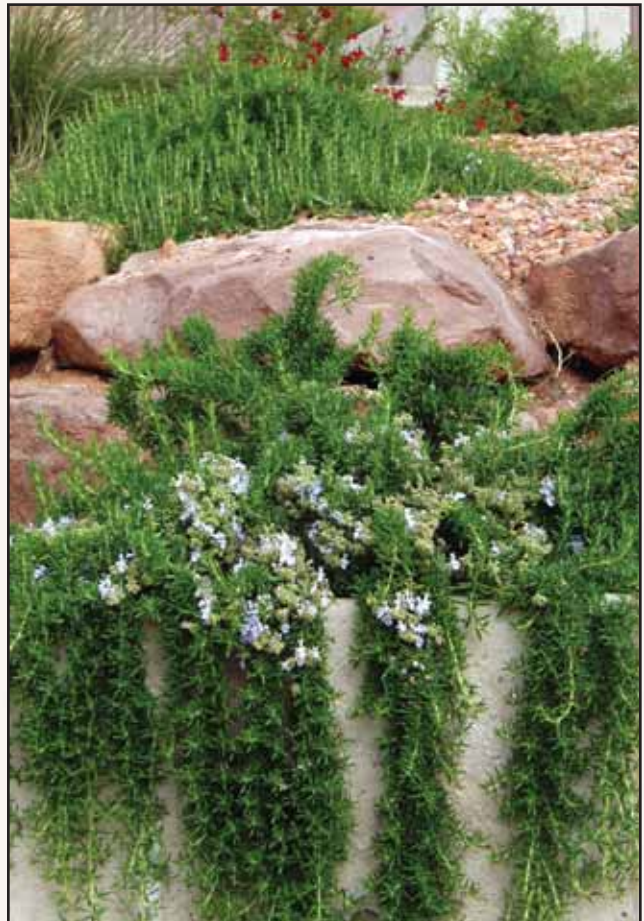
***The City of St. George Water Services Department is working to provide its customers with valuable information. Look for changes in utility bill statements that include a graph of 13 months of water use, allowing the customer to quickly see how their water and energy use compares with the same period the prior year.***

Fall is a good time to do some basic checks on residential and commercial water systems by evaluating usage and making needed repairs. It's also a good time to check the pressure regulating valve (PRV) installed on the customer side of the meter to make sure it is working properly; a pressure gauge can be installed next to PRV to indicate at a glance if it is working properly. Another piece of equipment to check is the backflow prevention device. These de-

vices are an important part of protecting water quality by preventing water from flowing back into the culinary system in the event of a pressure drop.

You may notice city water crews or fire department personnel flushing water from hydrants. This is another important step in maintaining water quality; flushing lines keeps water fresh; it also provides a chance for fire department personnel to make sure that hydrants are operating correctly, providing enough flow for fire protection.

The City of St. George appreciates the efforts of its citizens to "Reduce the Use" during the past summer and looks forward to providing quality and reliable service in the years to come.



## Service that Shines.

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## GROWTH *continued from page 2*

### 2. Growth should generally pay its own way

The city has adopted impact fee schedules, development application fees and related fees to put costs associated with growth on new development rather than placing those costs on existing residents. However some city services and facilities which are improved for both existing and new residents are paid for with general city revenues. Striking the appropriate balance in this budgeting process takes a considerable amount of time and effort by city staff and the mayor and city council.

### 3. Where feasible, let free-market forces determine the amount of growth.

Historically growth has been somewhat cyclical in nature with rapid growth occurring during times of low-interest rates and high job opportunity. When the economy slows, typically home building decreases. Although some residents have urged the city council to limit building, the council has been hesitant to interfere with the market forces of supply and demand.

Rather than artificially capping or limiting growth, the city has adopted certain "Adequate Public Facilities" standards which must be provided concurrent with new development in order to maintain a certain level of public services. In brief, where adequate public facilities are lacking, a developer can either pay for and install the necessary service or facility or wait until the city provides the facility or service through its normal capital improvements programming.

### 4. Growth should not destroy important natural resources and amenities such as hillsides, flood plains or clean air.

The city council tries to balance the rights of private property owners with public safety and community aesthetic needs. The city has adopted standards for developing on hillsides and within proximity to rivers and washes to prevent loss of life, property and important aesthetic resources due to flooding, landslides or other geologic events.

### 5. The city encourages job growth, particularly jobs which pay significantly (30%+) above the average county wage.

The mayor, city council and city staff believe that commercial services such as retail stores, restaurants and similar services do not need any particular encouragement or incentives to locate in St. George, but rather will respond to market opportunities. Skilled manufacturing and technical jobs which pay significantly above the average county wage, may qualify for limited start-up incentives. High-wage jobs allow people to purchase homes within the community. Therefore the city encourages the relocation or start-up of businesses which pay higher than average wages while providing a safe, environmentally friendly workplace.

## ENERGY SERVICES *continued from page 1*



This past summer, the Energy Services Department administered the Dixie Conservation Alert Program. This program includes a method of alerting customers throughout the county to times when extra conservation is needed. Most days were designated a "GREEN" day with normal conservation requested. However, there were 11 "YELLOW" days when extra conservation was requested. Most of the "YELLOW" occurrences were during the high temperatures of July. The Energy Services Department operated internal diesel generation to support voltage over the entire transmission system during heavy usage. By working with customers who implemented extra conservation measures the city was able to maintain reliable power service.

Another service offered to customers is information and methods to reduce energy use, thereby lowering their energy bills. The city offers programs, such as the Clean Green Power Program, which provides customers with the option of purchasing a portion of their energy from renewable energy sources. The city is also in the process of implementing a program to offer net metering; which will allow customers who install solar systems to sell back to the utility energy generated in excess of their needs. The more renewable resources used, the better it is for the environment by reducing emissions and decreasing the use of fossil fuels.

*Like other municipal utilities, stable and affordable rates are important to the city. St. George officials expect rates to remain the same in the coming fiscal year. This is due, in part, to the hard work of the Energy Services employees to reduce exposure to the volatility of market prices. The addition of the Millcreek Generation Facility coupled with the development of computer models that better predict load forecasts and maximize resources allow the utility to keep the cost of power as low as possible, which allows the city to pass on the savings to the customer.*

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# Message from Mayor Dan McArthur



I am not sure where the time goes, only that it seems to be flying by in leaps and bounds. This may not be true for those who have a business on St. George Boulevard as this first phase has taken a little longer than anticipated. However, we are optimistic that the next phase of the project will proceed faster. I only ask that each of our citizens pay at least one visit to a business on the Boulevard during the re-con-

struction. This will help tremendously by showing support for both the project and the businesses. Next summer the Boulevard will be one of the finest roadways in our community. Please be patient.

We just completed our 29th Annual Marathon and what a success it was. Kent Perkins and his staff along with the countless volunteers need to be congratulated and given a big THANK YOU for a job well done. It is great to be your mayor during these wonderful events because of the compliments that we receive as a community. Right on the tail of the Marathon came the 19th Annual World Senior Games with over 9000 participants (no wonder it seemed so busy). Unlike years ago, today one has to pick and choose what to do or see because of all that is going on in the city. At the opening ceremonies of the games, Governor Huntsman stated that "St George is the Greatest City in the State." I tend to agree with that statement and know that he was speaking about all our communities in Utah's DIXIE.

Have you ever asked yourself "what is there to do?" Well, I can tell you that if you have not been privileged to see one of St. George Musical Theater's productions downtown then you have missed a wonderful event that entertains and leaves you in awe of all the talent that is prevalent in this area. The Water Walk on Main Street is in full swing with the open house a short time ago showing the plans for the Water Walk, Town Square and Library. These great projects could not be accomplished without the help and cooperation of all parties including the city, county and school district. The elected and appointed officials are great to work with and we owe them a sincere thank you and a pat on the back for their tireless efforts.

We are in the process of organizing Community Action Teams (CAT) in each of the six patrol areas of the city. We have had some very productive meetings with citizens, neighbors and patrol officers. A few of the neighborhood representatives have accepted the call to serve as a "chairperson" to help identify and solve problems that may be present in particular neighborhoods. Watch for a meeting in your area or if you want to become involved call the city offices at 634-5800 and leave me a message. In the meantime, enjoy this beautiful time of the year.

## Contact Information

### Mayor and City Council

Daniel D. McArthur	mcarthur@infowest.com
Rod Orton	rodorton@infowest.com
Suzanne B. Allen	suzanne.allen@sgcity.org
Larry H. Gardner	jmlarry@infowest.com
Gail Bunker	gbunker@dixie.edu
Robert Whatcott	whatcott@infowest.com

### City Manager

Gary S. Esplin	gary.esplin@sgcity.org
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### City Services

Administration	634-5800
Airport	634-5822
Animal Shelter	634-5829
Building/Planning	674-4206
Business Licenses	674-4240
Community Arts	634-5942
Economic Development	674-4418
Engineering	674-4287
Fire	634-5844
Leisure Services	634-5850
Parks	634-5869
Police	634-5001
Public Information	674-4267
Public Works	674-4287
Recorder	674-4203
Recreation Center/Programs	634-5860
Sand Hollow Aquatic Center	634-5938
Streets	634-5825
Suntran	673-8726
Utilities	634-5800
Water/Energy Emergencies	634-5835
Water/Energy Conservation	674-4213

**For emergencies please call 911**

### City Meetings

#### City Council

Regularly scheduled city council meetings are held on the first and third Thursdays each month starting at 4:00 pm at the City Office Building (175 East 200 North) unless otherwise noticed. Work meeting sessions are held on the second, fourth, and fifth Thursdays at the same location.

#### Planning Commission

Regularly scheduled planning commission meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesdays each month starting at 5:00 pm at the City Office Building unless otherwise noticed.

For more information on city services, contact information, and events please visit the city website at

**[www.sgcity.org](http://www.sgcity.org)**