



City of Sebastopol Community Newsletter

CityofSebastopol.org

October - November, 2017



The City of Sebastopol community newsletter is one way to stay in touch with what's going on in Sebastopol. Our web site, CityofSebastopol.org is another. It is chock-full of information on City services, public meetings, and community resources. Or, stop by City offices any time we are open!

FIRE EMERGENCY

Devastating fires have struck Sonoma County. As of press time Sebastopol has been spared, but as Santa Rosa's experience demonstrates, even urban areas can be terribly impacted by wildfires.

Community organizations, schools, and volunteers have stepped forward to help our Sonoma County community. Thank you!

Effective communication is critical in emergency situations. The main page of the City web site will provide Sebastopol-specific information. But in some situations, the internet will be down. Do you have a battery-powered radio in your house? This is a way to get information when power is out, the internet is not working, and cell phones are down.

Have you signed up for emergency alerts via Sonoma County Alerts or Nixle? Please consider doing so. These services can be geographically customized to provide emergency information specific to your area.

Sonoma County Alerts: <http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/FES/Emergency-Management/SoCoAlert/>

Nixle: <http://www.nixle.com/> and/or text your zip code to 888-777.

If you are on the 'urban edge' with exposure to wildlands or grassy fields, consider taking action to create more fire-defensible space. Trim up tree limbs and cut back on combustible vegetation, especially in proximity to structures. Regularly clean out rain gutters to remove dry leaves and debris. Do not stockpile fire wood or other combustible materials next to your house.



Give the Gift of Preparedness This Holiday Season

Make sure your friends and family are ready for the next emergency with a flashlight, battery-operated radio, first aid kit, a fully stocked "go-kit," or other essentials. Visit the **FEMA website** at <https://www.ready.gov> for more suggestions.

**PLEASE REFRAIN FROM CALLING PUBLIC SAFETY EMERGENCY LINES
UNLESS YOU HAVE AN EMERGENCY SITUATION**

CITY COUNCIL TAKES ACTION ON RAGLE ROAD INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

A recent tragic accident focused community concern on the Ragle Road/Bodega Avenue intersection. The City is moving forward with plans to improve the intersection.

Design of a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) crosswalk improvement, including a pedestrian 'refuge' median strip and changes to roadway striping is underway. At a recent City Council meeting, the Council rejected an alternative improvement and directed staff to continue with the RRFB improvement. The Council asked that further enhancements, such as curb extensions to narrow the crossing distance, be explored.

Roadway improvements are only one factor in accidents. Both drivers and pedestrians must maintain alertness, minimize distractions, obey traffic safety laws, and use good judgment.



Improvement of the intersection is a priority project for the City.

Planning Commission Developing Comprehensive Update to Cannabis Regulations

The City Council has asked the Planning Commission to develop a comprehensive update to the City's cannabis regulations. Presently, the regulations allow two medical cannabis dispensaries, and limited medical cannabis patient personal (not commercial) growing.

There have been major changes in State law since the City's regulations were enacted, including the creation of many new cannabis business categories, and the allowance for non-medical sale of cannabis.

For some types of uses, local jurisdictions have discretion on whether and how to allow various types of businesses.

A number of cities throughout California are developing new ordinances to address these issues, so Sebastopol will have other examples to draw from in developing its comprehensive update.



If you have questions or comments on this issue, please contact the Planning Department.

(Photo by Bogdan/Wikimedia)

PREPARE!

The current Sonoma County fire emergency, not to mention recent disasters in Texas, Florida, Mexico and Puerto Rico have highlighted the need for all of us to prepare.



In a major disaster, help can take days to arrive, and basic services will take time to restore. Normal government and utility services and emergency relief organizations are typically not initially adequate to deal with sudden major disaster events.

Each of us should have food, water, and other supplies for at least three days, and preferably longer, as well as a 'go bag' with essential supplies in the event you have to relocate. And, a battery-powered radio can provide critical information when cell service, cable, and telephones are down. Networking with your neighbors is another way to pool resources and help your community.

For more detailed information, see recommendations from FEMA at <https://www.ready.gov/>, and the State Office of Emergency Services at <http://www.caloes.ca.gov/for-individuals-families>

How you and your family cope with a disaster may depend on how well you prepare *before* the disaster strikes.

Cut Down on Your Paperwork

You can now pay your water and sewer bill online! Sebastopol offers online bill payment for water and sewer services. The system uses a secure, cloud-based, off-site portal where you can log in, check your bills, make a payment or sign up for Auto Pay with your Credit or Debit card. See more information at:

<http://ci.sebastopol.ca.us/Billpay.aspx>

