Dear Ephraim City Residents,

How exciting it is for spring to be here. I love this time of the year. Recently I did a gardening presentation for a local women’s organization and that just got me all excited about planting my garden, flowers and flowering pots. I have already put up my greenhouse and planted my tomatoes. Spring? Bring it on!

Some of you have been wondering about our water situation for this coming year since the Governor has declared a drought situation throughout the state. So, I thought that I would cover our local Ephraim City water situation for you so that you can have the information about where we stand. I want to thank Bryan Kimball for this important information.

Where does the water come from?
- Normally, all our water comes from springs from over 16 different collection sites in the mountains above Ephraim and is collected and piped down the canyon into our system. In a normal water year, the springs produce enough water to meet all the demand for the city.
- We have a back-up well that is used in times of drought or if our main pipeline breaks in the canyon. In a normal water year, the backup well is used infrequently and sometimes not at all.

Do we have enough water?
- We have all kinds of capacity for indoor watering. In the wintertime we use roughly 650K gallons per day (GPD). During the winter, our springs alone produce about 2-3 million gallons per day (gpd). So we use just a small portion of our available water in a typical indoor water use only scenario, and we usually have several million gpd in the wintertime that simply overflow and run down the ditch because the tanks are full. If we had no outdoor watering at all, we would be good on water for a long time to come with just our springs.
- Outdoor watering is the real concern. In the late summer, with hot temperatures, we can use over 4 million gpd at peak. At the end of the summer, during dry summers, the springs can be reduced to less than 2 million gpd, which means we use more than the springs produce, and we need to use the storage in our tanks to meet the demand. We only have 5 million gallons of storage in our tanks, so once the tanks start dropping, then we need to turn on the well to help meet the demand.
- In 2019, we rarely turned on the well. We had enough rainfall that the springs did well and were adequate pretty much all summer long. In 2020 we received very little rain after the early spring, and in the dry, hot weather we turned on the well almost every day for much of the summer. What this does, is create a situation where the “back-up” well starts to become necessary for “normal” consumption. That’s where people are right.
to be concerned, because it means we don’t have any redundancy if something were to happen to our springs or our well. In this condition, if something were to happen to either the well or the springs, we would set immediate water restrictions and likely ban or drastically reduce outdoor watering like we did in 2018.

Here’s what we’ve done and are doing about improving our water supply and redundancy:
- The water tunnel conveys more than half our culinary water by water right. It was collapsing, and we took steps to protect/preserve that water supply. This was a multi-million dollar, and a multi-year project, to protect our critical water supply.
- When our well broke in 2018, the well was pumping at roughly 400 gallons per minute (576,000 gallons per day, or gpd). When we fixed it, rather than put in a quick band-aid fix for an immediately available 200 gpm pump, which would have been faster and cheaper, we instead took the extra time to find and install a larger pump that could pump up to 800 gpm (1.1 Million gpd). That was double the previous flow capacity. It was painful at the time to take a few extra weeks to get it shipped from California and installed, but this well was a huge help to us in 2020, as we were able to keep up with demand with the repaired back-up well.
- In 2020, when we were running the well, we turned it on in the mornings to fill up the tanks, and off again in the evenings when the tanks were full. Back when we were only pumping 400 gpd in 2018, we had to leave the well on almost 24/7 for most of the entire summer just to maintain the tank levels.
- We drilled a new well last year and are just finishing it up. This will add another 400 gpm. We were able to complete this project with a $650K WaterSmart grant from the Bureau of Reclamation, and a $110K grant from the state, with the rest coming from a low interest loan from the state. This new well will come online sometime in the next six weeks and will give us another 576K gpd. So combined, we’ve added over 1.1 million gallons per day to our system since our well broke in 2018. This increases our late-summer flow capacity by roughly 50%, which is significant. We’re feeling pretty good about the two wells together making a substantial improvement to our capacity.

To put this into perspective, some cities in Sanpete have wells that produce less than 100 gpm, so adding over 1,000 gallons per minute (1.1 million gpd) to our system in just two and a half years is significant.
- In an effort to pursue actual redundancy and provide for future growth, we have obtained a $2M grant from the Corps of Engineers and intend to use that to pursue tying into Rex Nielsen’s well behind Walmart, that we bought a few years ago. We think this well could add another 1,300 gpm, (1.9 million gallons per day) based on previous flow tests. This well alone could nearly replace the spring flows that we have, and that would give us both redundancy and room to grow. We are actively working on this now as the next top priority water project, and we hope to have this in operation by summer 2022.

In summary, we’ve already added over a million gallons per day to our system capacity since the well broke in 2018, and we hope to add another nearly 2 million gallons per day by the end of next year, essentially doubling our previous water supply capacity in just four years since our well broke. Even though our total investment for these water source projects is just above five million dollars, we’ve been able to do this with a relatively minor increase in user rates, because of the grants we were awarded and are yet pursuing.
- But we’re not done, yet. We’re already working on the next well after that, likely further south of our new well that is just wrapping up this year. Also, we may be able to get an additional 500 gpm from the existing well with a different pump and some additional work, which we will pursue once the other well comes online. We’ve also identified the most vulnerable sections of pipe in the canyon where we’ve had the most breaks, and are now pursuing funding to replace our pipelines in the canyon so we can preserve our valuable spring water supply. We have some indication that the Corps of Engineers might be willing to help fund that with another 75% grant.

Outlook and projections for summer 2021:
With the old well repaired and the new well coming online, we don’t anticipate anything remotely close to 2018 in the way of restrictions. In that year we were hit with an historic drought and depleted springs, combined with multiple breaks in our pipelines in the canyon and then a catastrophic failure of our only well at the time, which forced mandatory water restrictions to indoor water use until we could repair the canyon waterline breaks and the well. However, we are going on the second year of a pretty significant drought. This will likely reduce our springs to below normal flows. The governor has declared a state of emergency statewide for ongoing drought conditions. Since we have no water storage reservoirs, our primary water supply is tied to the snowpack in the mountains. We started the year with dismal snowpack conditions and have not made enough progress since then to overcome the drought. We are still well below normal snowpack. That means that while the snow runoff is flowing (May through maybe early June depending on weather patterns), we usually have plenty of water and don’t anticipate any water restrictions during that time. However, by late summer, we may be forced to rely more on the wells as the springs reduce their flows. The end of the summer is the most critical time, as the springs drop to their lowest levels and thousands of college students come back to Snow College. That combination could put a strain on our system until the weather cools down and people start turning off their sprinklers a few weeks after school starts in the fall.

Even though we know of other cities in Sanpete that have already implemented water restrictions this year, at this point, barring something unexpected, the current projection is that we may be asked towards the mid to end of the summer to reduce outdoor watering to every other day and maybe even every third day, but we don’t anticipate banning outdoor watering as was done in 2018 when our well broke.

Hopefully, this helps you understand the water situation a little bit more. People are right to be concerned about water, but it’s also important to know that we are actively working on improving our long-term viability and redundancy/reliability of our water systems and are seeking to position ourselves in a good way as we contemplate the future of the city and its anticipated growth.

Sincerely,

John Scott
Ephraim City Mayor
Free Art Kits for Kids + Virtual Workshop Wednesday

We are offering free art kits with our weekly video workshops! Pick up your kit at Granary Arts, available on a first come, first served basis. New video workshops + kits posted to Facebook every Wednesday at Facebook.com/GranaryArtsUtah. Subscribe to our mailing list for weekly video workshops straight to your inbox, GranaryArts.org/Subscribe.

Virtual Workshop Schedule:

5/5 Stencil Portraits
5/12 Self Affirmation Silhouette
5/19 Fluffy Puppy Portrait

Exhibitions


Jann Haworth + Liberty Blake / Work in Progress Mural
(At Granary Arts 2/10 – 9/17)

Fazilat Soukhakian / Anonymous Battle
(At Snow College Library through 6/04/2021)

Events

Scandinavian Festival, Saturday May 29th 2021

11am - 1pm: Kids Art Activity / Painted Dala Horse. Come pick up your kit on the lawn between the Ephraim Co-op and Granary Arts.

2pm - 3:30pm: Concert on the Lawn / The Family Trade: Ashley Hanson and Brian Laidlaw / Bird’s Eye Chisel Album Release. Bird’s Eye Chisel is a collection of original songs written by Ashley Hanson and Brian Laidlaw of the folk band, The Family Trade during a year-long Granary Artist Fellowship in the Sanpete Valley. Drawing on story circles with community members, archival and experiential research, these songs attempt to capture the beauty and complexity of the area’s human and natural history.

11am - 5pm: Opening Reception / New Exhibitions

Visit Us

86 North Main, Ephraim / W-S 11am - 5pm / 435.283.3456 / Parking behind Ephraim Co-op

Granary Arts is supported in part by Utah Division of Arts & Museums, with funding from the State of Utah and the

SENIOR CENTER MAY ACTIVITY

85 WEST 100 NORTH
(435) 813-2508 OR
(435) 283-6310
ephraimseniors@hotmail.com

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, ALL REQUESTS FOR DAY RENTAL SHOULD BE MADE TO JEANIE TIDWELL AT (435) 283-6310 OR (435) 813-2508.

AVAILABLE FROM SIX COUNTY IS THE SENIOR TRANSPORTATION VOUCHER SYSTEM. CONTACT SIX COUNTY AT (435) 893-0726 FOR INFORMATION. YOU OBTAIN A QUALIFIED DRIVER AND THEY RECEIVE FUNDING TO DRIVE TO DR. VISITS, ETC.

FREE TAX PREPARATION FROM UTATAXHELP.ORG. (IN PERSON FEDERAL AND STATE TAX PREP BY IRS-CERTIFIED VOLUNTEERS)

NOTE: INCOME LIMITS APPLY. Call Shara Bastian (435) 893-0735 with the Volunteer Connection VITA Tax Program.

DUP will meet the 2nd Monday of May.

Stitchin’ Sisters will meet on the 2nd Wednesday of each month.

Lions Club will meet on the 2nd Thursday of each month.

SCHEDULED:

5/10/21 DUP
5/12/21 Stitchin’ Sisters
5/13/21 Lions Club

Athenian Academy Home School
May 6, 13, 20, 27, 2021

LUNCHEON AND BINGO CANCELED DUE TO COVID CONCERN
Ephraim’s Youth City Council are BUSY all Year Long!

Public Works Job Openings

FULL TIME EPHRAIM PUBLIC WORKS POSITION

Ephraim City Public Works Department has a new position open for a long-term, full-time Maintenance Operator II, to become wastewater certified. Applicants must be a high school graduate with first consideration given to applicants with three years’ experience in construction, maintenance, or repair of public works systems; OR an equivalent combination of education and experience. Salary: $19.00 - $21.00 DOQ. Full benefits apply. A full job description and copies of the Ephraim City Employment Application can be found on our website at www.ephraimcity.org. Please submit an application with resume by 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 5, 2021 to the Ephraim City offices at 5 South Main, Ephraim, Utah 84627. Applications may also be faxed to 435-283-4867. Questions about the position should be directed to Public Works Director, Jeff Jensen at 435-851-9784. Ephraim City is an equal opportunity employer.

TEMPORARY EPHRAIM CITY GROUNDS POSITIONS

Ephraim City is looking for 2 qualified individuals to work on a temporary basis, now through fall 2021. One position will be working with the Public Works Department and the other working with the cemetery/parks. Interested individuals must have transportation. These positions report to the Public Works Director. Wages will be $12-$13 an hour, with flexible work hours to be determined by employee and supervisor. Please submit applications with references to the Ephraim City offices at 5 South Main, Ephraim, Utah 84627. Positions will remain open until filled. Questions about the position should be directed to Jeff Jensen at 435-851-9784.