



# City of Modesto

## CITY PRIDE

April 2001

City Wide

CITY OF MODESTO SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE TO CITY RESIDENTS ONLY

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<http://www.modestogov.com>

Modesto City Council -- 571-5169

Mayor Carmen Sabatino

Vice Mayor Tim Fisher  
Councilmember Bill Conrad  
Councilmember Bruce Frohman

Councilmember Kenni Friedman  
Councilmember Mike Serpa  
Councilmember Armour Smith

## City roads to benefit from utility tax surplus

Road repairs throughout Modesto will get a boost as a result of a recent decision by the Modesto City Council to spend higher-than-expected Utility Users Tax revenue on fixing roads.

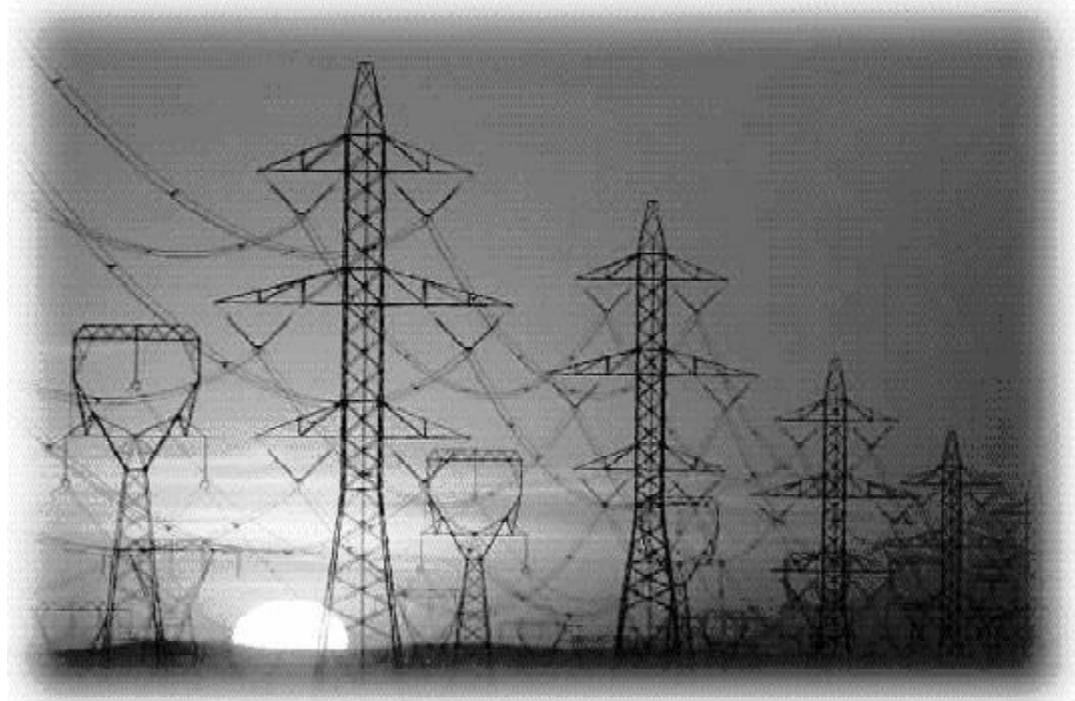
The decision will make available about \$780,000 more for road repair than was originally budgeted.

The \$780,000 surplus is a result of the six percent Utility Users Tax assessed on utilities such as natural gas. As gas prices rise, the amount collected from the tax also rises, resulting in an unexpected surplus.

A council committee determined that putting the money back into the city's street system would benefit all residents, not just a single group of citizens. A majority of council members agreed.

Originally, the city council had earmarked part of that surplus to go towards eliminating the utility tax for low-income residents who participate in Pacific Gas & Electric's CARE program. The council later changed that decision, saying that putting all of the extra revenue towards road repair and maintenance would be the fairest way to distribute the money.

Although no decisions have been finalized by the



city's transportation policy committee, it's estimated that \$780,000 could cover the cost of slurry sealing about 22 miles of city streets.

As the power crunch continues and electrical supplies remain tight, Modesto residents are advised to prepare for rotating outages throughout the summer months.

Last summer high temperatures and overuse of air conditioners throughout the state caused similar threats of power outages.

Trimming your electricity

bill is easier with helpful programs from the Modesto Irrigation District.

MID offers rebates for energy efficiency improvements such as installing sunshades or high efficiency air conditioners. Rebates on qualifying upgrades are available to MID residential customers and owners of residential rental property.

Free in-home energy audits from MID can show residents low-cost and no-cost ways to reduce energy use. For information on rebate programs or to schedule an energy audit, call MID at 526-

7366 or 526-7458.

MID CARES (Community Alternative Rates for Electric Service) offers a 15 percent discount on monthly electric bills to residential customers who qualify at or below 150 percent of federal low-income guidelines. For pre-screening and to order an application, call 1-800-433-4327 Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

To learn more about the energy crisis, conservation tips and ways to save during the power crunch, log onto [www.modestogov.com](http://www.modestogov.com).

## Only MTBE-Free fuel allowed at reservoir



*Jet skis and boats with standard two-stroke engines will have to be fueled with MTBE-free gasoline.*

Remember, MTBE-free fuel is the only gasoline sold at the Modesto Reservoir and visitors are no longer allowed to enter the park with their own gas containers.

The policy is part of Stanislaus County's plan to reduce methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE) at the local reservoir. The reservoir provides a large portion of the drinking water to Modesto area residents.

Owners of jet skis and boats with standard two-stroke carbureted engines must enter the park with empty fuel tanks and fuel up at the marina or loading dock

in the reservoir.

Another alternative is to fuel up at C.L. Bryant's Union 76 station in Waterford where you will receive a validated tag indicating you have fueled up with MTBE-free fuel.

MTBE is a gasoline additive designed to reduce engine pollution. It will be banned in California by December 2002. In the meantime, City of Modesto and Stanislaus County officials are working to reduce or eliminate the amount of MTBE detected at the reservoir.

## Signal improves access to Hwy 99

A new traffic light is now operating at the intersection of Highway 99 and Kansas Avenue. The light was installed to give residents more convenient access to Highway 99 from Kansas Avenue and to make it easier to exit the freeway onto Kansas Avenue.

There were eight traffic accidents reported at that intersection from January 1, 2000 to December 31, 2000.

The traffic signal was installed by the City of Modesto which will share operating and maintenance costs with CalTrans.



## Call the City first if you have sewer line problems

If you suspect your sewer line is blocked, call the City **before** you call a plumber. City crews will inspect the main sewer line to make sure it is clear. If it is clear, you will be notified that the problem is with your house service line and you will be advised to call a plumber.

### What is a house service line?

Your house service line extends from your house out to the main City line in the center of the street or alley. As resident or property owner, it is your responsibility to maintain and repair your house service line, including removing any blockage caused by paper, toys, roots or other household waste such as cooking grease.

### What causes a blocked sewer line?

Chemicals, petroleum products and other substances can harm the sewer

system and cause blocks in both your house service line as well as in the main sewer line. Never dispose of oil, paint thinner, anything flammable, oil base paint, cooking grease, cat litter or similar objects in your toilet or sink.

Pouring hot cooking grease down your sink drain is especially a problem because it will build up in your line after it cools down and will block your house service line.

### What if I call a plumber and the problem is in the main sewer line?

Please call the City first. The City will not assume the cost of your contractor's call, regardless of where the blockage is located. So, to avoid unnecessary expenses, first please **call the City at 577-6200**.

## Crews work to fill potholes quickly

Keeping our local streets free from dangerous potholes is made easier through the City's quick response to pothole complaints. Within 24 hours of receiving a call from a citizen, the Operations & Maintenance Department will check the site to assess the hole. Generally, potholes are filled within two days of the complaint — sooner, if possible.

Filling potholes is an ongoing focus, particularly during the rainy season. Each day, two "patch" trucks are assigned to filling potholes throughout the city. The crews concentrate first on major roads and then on quieter, residential streets.

The City's crews filled more than 8,100 potholes between July 2000 and January 2001.

**You can report potholes to the City at 342-2244**

# Curbmarkers to remind residents: Only Rain Down the Drain to protect our water from contamination

Three thousand curb markers will appear on Modesto sidewalks throughout the year to remind every-

one that storm drains need to be kept clear of pollutants such as motor oil. The curb markers around schools and

parks will display a design created by 5th grader Janet Muramoto, the first place winner of the city's Pollution Prevention Coloring Contest. Curb markers throughout the rest of the city will show C.W. Duck (Clean Water Duck), the Water Quality Control Plant mascot.

Seventy-five thousand informational door hangers will be distributed to residents to alert them of the upcoming curb markers and provide pollution prevention information and resources.

The goal of the program is to educate people about the risk of water contamination by dumping anything but water down a storm drain. It is part of the City's comprehensive plan to comply with the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System

Permit and is partially funded through grants from the California Integrated Waste Management Board.

Many communities mark their storm drains with a painted stencil indicating "No Dumping." The City opted for the non-traditional curb markers instead because they are more economical and provide less harm to the environment than the painted stencils that eventually erode into the very storm drains they protect.

The education campaign "Only Rain Down the Drain" is coordinated by Cheryl Heller, the City's Storm Drain Stenciling Coordinator. She can be reached at 577-6200.



Storm Drain Coordinator Cheryl Heller presents a plaque to Janet Muramoto featuring her winning design.

## FREE BACKYARD COMPOSTING CLASSES

The City of Modesto is offering free backyard composting classes to Modesto residents.

### Wednesday Classes

**September 12, and October 24**

**Modesto Junior College • 6:30-8:30 p.m.**

**To register call 575-6063**

**BACKYARD COMPOST BINS - \$48.50 each**

To order call the Solid Waste Office at 577-5495.



## Tips to prevent pollution

Here are some things you can do to prevent pollution in our waterways:

- Clean up oil drips, fix leaking automobiles, and recycle the used oil and filter after every oil change. To find the used oil recycling location nearest you, call 577-5493.
- Don't dump waste in storm drains.
- Keep yard clippings out of the gutter.
- Dispose of household chemicals properly (follow the directions on the package or call the Hazardous Waste Facility for proper disposal guidelines).
- Sweep driveways clean, do not hose them down.

## Who to call for information

Storm water Hot line 577-6200  
Used Oil/Filter Recycling 577-5493  
Garden Refuse/Leaf Collection 342-2249  
Hazardous Waste Facility 525-4123

To request disposal of soil, concrete or asphalt:  
Solid Waste Division 577-5494



# GOT TIRES?



The City of Modesto is hosting a **FREE TIRE COLLECTION EVENT**

where residents are invited to drop off waste tires.

Tires create a dangerous and unsightly blight throughout the City as they provide convenient shelter for unwanted rodents and insects, and provide a breeding ground for mosquitoes. Help Keep Modesto clean and blight free!

## TIRE COLLECTION EVENT

- Date:** Saturday, May 12, 2001
- Place:** Modesto High School Parking Lot  
Corner of 1st & H Streets
- Time:** 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
- Limits:** Four (4) tires per coupon -- no size limit  
One (1) coupon per household  
Tires with or without rims OK  
Four (4) tires per vehicle

*Limits will be STRICTLY enforced.*

**NO tires will be accepted without this coupon.**

**This event is for CITY OF MODESTO RESIDENTS ONLY!**

**Proof of residency is required**

**NO BUSINESSES OR DEALERS ALLOWED**

Questions? Call the City of Modesto Solid Waste Office at 577-5494  
Funded by the California Integrated Waste Management Board



**Buy one regular priced flat of flowers and get one bag of Mo-Gro Magic FREE or Buy 2 bags at regular price and receive third bag FREE**

**MUST PRESENT COUPON AT TIME OF PURCHASE  
LIMIT 2 FLAT - BAGS PER COUPON  
OFFER EXPIRES 5/14/2001**

Available at these local nurseries:

- Hischier's Nursery** -- 1520 Standiford Avenue
- Scenic Nursery** -- 1313 Scenic Drive
- Westurf** -- 1612 Claus Road



# To Your Health

*...and the health of our community*

## Is your pool ready for summer?

Proper pool maintenance is important. If you must drain your pool for maintenance, please keep the following rules in mind for residential pools:

- Always drain your residential pool into a sewer line. For convenience, use the sewer clean out connection in your yard, generally located near a hose bib close to the house. Never drain your pool into the street or storm drain, even if the water is dechlorinated. That is a citable offense.

- All residential pool water discharged from a waste line must flow through a backwash separation tank or sediment trap, before it discharges into the sewer line. The tanks or sediment traps prevent sediments from entering the sewer line. It is important to filter sand and dirt particles from the water because they do not dissolve easily and can clog the sewer lines.

- Storm drains are designed to allow only rainwater to flow directly into streams, rivers, or our groundwater supply. Never allow any foreign materials to enter storm drains.

If you see anyone draining their pool into a city storm drain, please call 577-6200.

Please direct questions to the Storm Drain Administration Office at 577-6377.

## Report illegal tobacco sales to minors

Every day 200 children in California start smoking or chewing tobacco. Almost nine out of ten smokers begin using tobacco before the age of 18, half before the age of 15. Why? Because they are bombarded with messages that smoking and chewing is okay -- or worse, that tobacco use is "cool." They get these messages from other teens, from advertising, and from businesses that illegally sell them tobacco products.

These messages contradict the education children receive from community and school health programs that tobacco is addictive and dangerous. You can help protect today's youth from this deadly drug by educating them, setting an example of not smoking, and reporting illegal sales to minors.

**The Sale of Tobacco Products to Persons Under 18 Years of Age is Prohibited by Law and Subject to Penalties.**

*Valid Identification May Be Required.*

**To Report Unlawful Tobacco Sales Call:  
1-800-5 ASK-4-ID**

Business and Professions Code 22952