

City Manager Update – 12/11/20

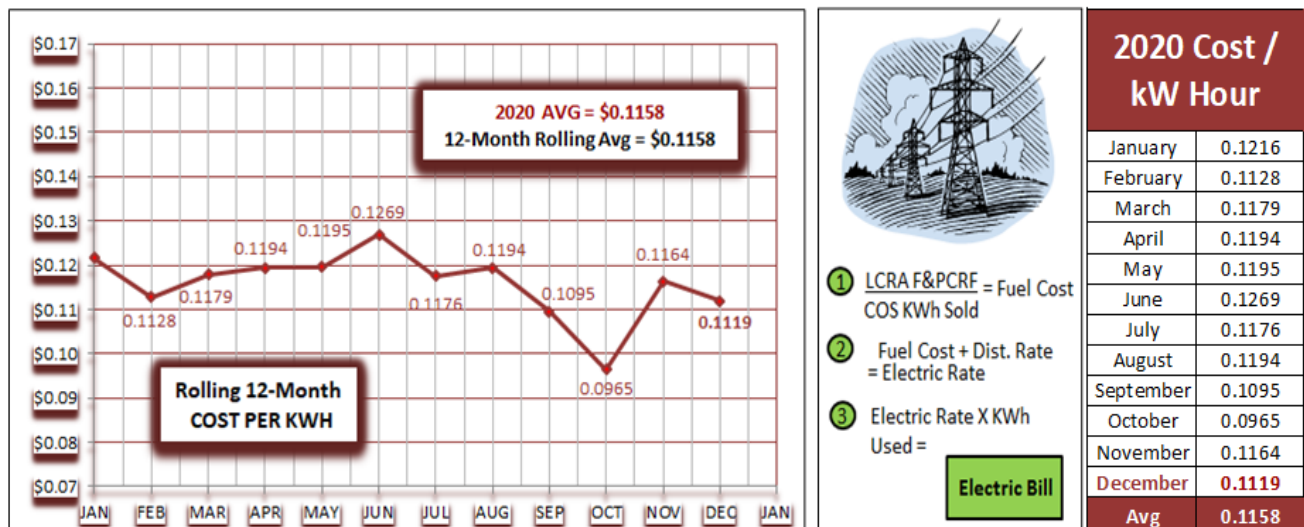
This week, Bastrop County saw an increase in COVID cases with 254 confirmed cases, a 379% increase in confirmed cases compared to last week's 54 confirmed cases. There were 81 recoveries, leaving a total of 341 estimated active cases. In addition, two (2) additional deaths were reported. These numbers are reflecting a similar spike seen in July. Go to the following interactive map on the DSHS website → <http://ow.ly/SM1q50CG5lu> to review trends for all counties in the state. The Bastrop Community Testing Sites completed 420 tests this week. Testing by oral or nasal swabs continues to be available M-F. Anyone who shared the Thanksgiving holidays with others beyond your household are encouraged to get tested. Get free testing information by visiting <https://www.co.bastrop.tx.us/page/em.coronavirus> or by calling 512-972-5560. As of 12/7/20, the Statewide Positivity Rate is 12.83% with the Bastrop Positivity Rate for the week ending 12/2 at 6.70%. Statewide Hospitalization rate is 13.42% of the total statewide hospital capacity. Hospital capacity in our local Trauma Service Area is 6.79%, the lowest in the State.

Please continue to minimize the spread of COVID-19 by following the CDC's suggested 3 W's: wearing masks properly, washing hands thoroughly, and watching your distance around others. The Bastrop County Health Authority and Emergency Management Officials receive this information from the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS). For local questions about COVID-19, please call the Bastrop County COVID-19 Hotline at 512-303-4300.

Here is a list of significant accomplishments, events, and activities since my last report:

- 1) 2021 LCRA “Steps Forward Day” Project Application Submitted** – The City of Smithville submitted the 2021 “Steps Forward Day” project application(s) to the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) for consideration. Unless COVID-19 dictates otherwise, volunteers from LCRA will gather on Friday, April 9, 2021, to work on community projects throughout LCRA’s service territory. Examples of potential projects include cleaning parks, painting pavilions, planting trees or doing carpentry work. Last year, LCRA volunteers painted fifty (50) ornamental light poles on Main Street and NW 1st around the Gazebo area. The volunteers also painted the steps and handicap ramp on the Gazebo. This year (if selected), LCRA volunteers will help the Smithville Community Gardens paint the interior and exterior of the city-owned facility located on SE 2nd street (the old Food Pantry). They will also paint all of the raised cinder block planting beds. The City also submitted an alternate project to paint curbs and parking spaces at the Smithville PD. The City will provide the equipment and tools necessary to support the project with LCRA providing the manpower (20-25 volunteers who will work 4-6 hours).
- 2) Residential Cost Per Kilowatt Hour (kWh) Calculated** – An analysis of LCRA billing data was conducted to determine residential cost per kilowatt hour (kWh) in December. LCRA fuel costs vary month to month and are based upon electric utility generation, transmission, line loss, and service fees. The LCRA fuel cost per kWh for December is \$0.0619. This represents a **6.7% DECREASE** over November’s fuel cost of \$0.0664. Adding the City’s distribution fee of \$0.0500 and LCRA’s \$0.0619 fuel cost, the cost per kWh for residential service in Smithville during DECEMBER will be \$0.1119. On average, the cost per kWh for residential electric service in Smithville is between 11-12 cents.

City of Smithville Residential Cost Per kWh – DECEMBER 2020



Note: LCRA Fuel & Power Cost Recovery Factor + City Distribution Fee* (\$0.0500) = Cost / kWh

*Residential Distribution Fee = \$0.500/kWh. Non-Resident (i.e., service outside city limit) Distribution Fee = \$0.650/kWh Effective October 1, 2019

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- 3) **Wastewater Rates - Three Month Winter Water Average Begins December 1st** - Wastewater rates in Smithville are set by using a three (3) month "winter" water use average between DECEMBER and FEBRUARY. You can reduce your monthly wastewater (sewer) bill by conserving water during these months. In the event that the monthly water usage for any month is less than the computed "winter water average," the lesser of the two shall be used as the basis for calculating the wastewater bill. Residential customers pay a \$10.50 sewer base rate per month and \$3.85 sewer fee per 1000 gallons of water used. Cut back on water use between December and February and let the savings begin! For a list of all utility rates in Smithville, click on the following link → <https://www.ci.smithville.tx.us/city-departments/utilities/rates/>.
- 4) **Asphalt Maintenance at Smithville Crawford Municipal Airport** - Asphalt repair on the apron and ramp area at Smithville Crawford municipal airport was completed this week. The "pavement" had many cracks and chipped asphalt that was causing propeller damage and presenting a hazard to ground personnel when aircraft taxied to the runway. As such, an asphalt emulsion slurry sealer was applied by Sealcoat Specialists, Inc (a contractor recommended by TXDOT Aviation). Approximately 115,000 square feet of asphalt surface was seal-coated at a cost of \$18k with 50% of the cost reimbursable under the TXDOT Routine Airport Maintenance Program (RAMP) grant. In addition, all taxiways and tie-down spaces were re-striped. The repairs should last 2-3 years. The contractor also striped the 4th avenue bridge and diagonal parking spaces on Main Street across from the Post Office. (SEE PHOTOS)
- 5) **Sculpture on Main Survey Input Needed** - The Sculpture on Main program is up for the 2021 season. We are very excited to have some truly stellar and whimsical sculptures to broaden the imagination and provide some art to appreciate every day for everyone in Smithville. Please take a few minutes to take a look at these terrific works of art on Main Street and then take this survey → https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SOM_2021 to help the City determine the "people's choice" for first, second, and third prizes. Feel free to pass this forward to other art lovers as well, but please only take the survey once! The survey will close on December 16th at noon so we can get checks to the artists in time for the holidays. An artists' reception will be held later in 2021 -- after it's safe for people to gather again.
- 6) **City of Smithville Sales Tax Update** - Below are the sales tax allocations for December 2020 vs. December 2019 (retail sales made primarily in October). This data reflects RETAIL sales of goods and services subject to LOCAL sales tax. Our sales tax payment (receipt) for December was \$49,714. This represents a **3.05% INCREASE** in our net payment compared to the same time last year. Smithville's year to date sales tax payments total \$652,540. The data indicates a positive trend (13.33% increase) year over year with Smithville coming in 2nd place for the greatest percentage increase among the Bastrop County "municipal pack". Sales tax dollars are used to make street / road repairs and help pay for community services like FIRE and POLICE. With Christmas only 2-weeks away.... please remember to SHOP LOCAL - it makes a difference!!!

Bastrop County Tax Allocation - DECEMBER 2020

County/City	Current Rate	Net Payment This Period	Comparable Payment Prior Year	% Change	2020 Payments To Date	2019 Payments	% Change
Bastrop	1.50%	\$721,007	\$645,971	11.61%	\$8,206,875	\$7,568,753	8.43%
Elgin	1.50%	\$225,087	\$201,559	11.67%	\$2,746,335	\$2,174,980	26.26%
Smithville	1.50%	\$49,714	\$48,244	3.04%	\$652,541	\$575,742	13.33%
Bastrop County	0.50%	\$446,581	\$421,674	5.90%	\$5,368,172	\$4,719,121	13.75%

Below you will find the City of Smithville Holiday schedule. This information will be communicated on our City website, Facebook Page, and inside the December Utility Bill in the message section. In addition, we will post notices on the doors of City Hall one week in advance of the scheduled Holiday. City Hall hours will be 8:00 am to 5:00 pm during these weeks.

CHRISTMAS:

- Wednesday, December 23, 2020 – (Close at Noon)
- Thursday, December 24, 2020 – Holiday
- Friday, December 25, 2020 – Holiday

NEW YEARS:

- Friday, January 1, 2021 – Holiday

City Manager Update – 12/11/20 (continued)

It's hard to believe another year is coming to an end. I have now been serving as City Manager for over 6-1/2 years....my how time flies when you're having fun. All kidding aside and despite a global pandemic, we have made significant progress on all fronts but there is still much to do. I look forward to another successful year.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information. Wishing you and yours a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

-- Robert --



MERRY CHRISTMAS!

PHOTOS – 12/11/20

Blue Santa 2020



XMAS Village @ City Hall



Mini "Face Mask Required" Signs



Drainage Project on NE 2nd & Mills



Chamber Building Groundbreaking



4th Avenue Bridge Striping



Smithville Airport Taxiway and RAMP Sealcoat / Re-striping



Main Street Parking Space Striping



Rec Center Water Tower Rehabilitation & Repainting

