

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** The Honorable Ron Lucas and Members of the Town Council  
**From:** Paul Loveless, Town Administrator  
**Date:** April 3, 2020  
**Subject:** Updates

### Administration:

#### *Upcoming Meetings:*

Council Meeting – May 5, 2020, at 6:30 PM at Town Hall.

Planning Commission – May 11, 2020 at 6:30 PM at Town Hall.

Civil Service Commission – May 7, 2020 at 2:00 PM at the Community Center.

Preservation and Review Board – May 27, 2020 at 6:30 PM at Town Hall.

#### *Council Future Agenda “Look-Ahead” Issues:*

Copies of the Agenda and staff reports are available at all Town facilities once published. The Agenda and Council meeting minutes are posted to the Town’s official website once approved.

#### *April 7, 2020 and April 21, 2020 Town Council Meetings Cancelled:*

The April 7, 2020 and April 21, 2020 Town Council meeting have been cancelled in accordance with the Governor’s proclamations. The Town has requested/ordered the equipment in order to conduct virtual meetings, however, at this time, the equipment is backordered.

Utilizing powers granted under the emergency proclamation approved by Council on March 17, 2020, the Mayor has approved and/or signed the following items:

1. Town employee payrolls,
2. Vendor payments,
3. Pierce County Force Investigation Team – Memorandum of Understanding (AB 2986)
4. SHSD Childcare Services Agreement (AB 2987)
5. G&O contract for pavement condition rating for Town arterials,
6. G&O contract for 2020 GIS updates.

#### *Town of Steilacoom Sewer System Seeing Increase in Non-Flushable Items:*

There has been an increase in non-flushable items in the public sewer system operated by the Town of Steilacoom recently.

Only toilet paper and what comes from the human body should be flushed down the toilet. Items such as hygiene and disinfecting wipes and paper towels can clog sewer pipes, cause backups in homes and cause severe damage to the sewer system. Even wipes labeled as “flushable” will clog pipes.

Flushing other items down the toilet can be costly to homeowners. Property owners are responsible for the part of the sewer line that runs from the house to the public lines. Property owners on a septic tank have full responsibility for maintenance and repair.

#### *COVID-19 Update:*

On April 2, 2020, Governor Inslee extended his “Stay Home Stay Healthy” proclamation through May 5, 2020. Additional impacts to Town operations are:

### Town Meetings:

In accordance with the Governor's order, the Town cancelled all Council, Board, and Commission meetings through May 4, 2020.

### Town facilities are operating as follows:

1. Community Center – Closed except for the Senior Meal Site program which is being conducted on a take-out basis only.
2. Public Safety – The lobby is closed to the public; however, staff is available on an appointment or emergency only basis. Administrative staff is working from 7 AM to 10 AM and 3 PM to 5 PM Tuesday through Friday. Social distancing practices are being enforced.
3. Public Works – The building is open from 8 AM to noon daily; however, social distancing practices are being enforced. Please do not enter the building unless your activity requires an in-person presence. The utility staff was divided into two crews who are working on alternating days from 7 AM to 11 AM and then on-call for the remainder of the day focusing on essential functions only.
4. Sunnyside Beach park, Saltar's Point park, the multi-purpose court, the Cherrydale basketball court, and all climbing structures/equipment in any of the parks are closed. In common areas of easily accessible parks and walking areas, please remember to practice social distancing guidelines.

If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact Paul Loveless, Town Administrator, at 253.983.2074.

Everyone should follow the recommendations from the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department which include:

- Increase handwashing and use of alcohol-based sanitizer
- Respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette – cover a cough or a sneeze
- Keep distance from others (more than six feet, if possible)
- Frequently clean and disinfect surfaces
- Remain home during a respiratory illness
- Remain calm and don't panic.

More information from the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department can be found at [www.tpchd.org/coronavirus](http://www.tpchd.org/coronavirus).

### **Cleaning Tips:**

Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.

Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.

To make a bleach solution, mix:

5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water

OR 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water

### ***Fraud Alert – Coronavirus:***

**Scammers are taking advantage of fears surrounding the Coronavirus.**

Here are some tips to help you keep the scammers at bay:

- Don't click on links from sources you don't know. They could download viruses onto your computer or device.

- Watch for emails claiming to be from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or experts saying they have information about the virus. For the most up-to-date information about the Coronavirus, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO).
- Ignore online offers for vaccinations. There currently are no vaccines, pills, potions, lotions, lozenges or other prescription or over-the-counter products available to treat or cure Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) — online or in stores.
- Do your homework when it comes to donations, whether through charities or crowdfunding sites. Don't let anyone rush you into making a donation. If someone wants donations in cash, by gift card, or by wiring money, don't do it.

***We Love Steilacoom Association Food Pantry/Bank:***

The We Love Steilacoom Association operates the Food Pantry/Bank at Steilacoom Community Church, 1603 Rainier Street, Steilacoom, Washington. Hours of operation are 9:30 AM to 11:30 AM on Saturdays. If you are experiencing temporary or ongoing financial challenges and/or food instability, please avail yourself of this resource.

Steilacoom Troop 45261 is offering a food delivery service from the We Love Steilacoom Food Bank/Pantry to individuals deemed high risk in our local area. Deliveries are on Saturday mid-morning/ early afternoons.

Please contact: [troop45261@gmail.com](mailto:troop45261@gmail.com)

With your name, address, and phone number

Family Size and number of individuals in each of the following age categories:

0-2; 3-18; 19-54; 55 and over.

***Summer Hires and Volunteers:***

At this time, the Town is advertising the following paid staff and volunteer positions. Additional information is available on the Town's official website.

**Summer Camp Program**

9 Recreation Aide positions

1 Recreation Aide Lead

1 Recreation Aide Lifeguard

**Public Works**

1 six-month Seasonal Maintenance Worker (Parks)

2 three-month Seasonal Maintenance Workers (Parks)

2 three-month Seasonal Maintenance Workers (Streets)

**Community Center**

2 Facility Attendants (Pioneer Park)

**Farmers' Market**

1 Farmers' Market Intern

Farmers' Market Volunteers

**Application Procedures:** Submit a Town of Steilacoom **application and your resume** to: Town of Steilacoom, Attn: Human Resources, 2301 Worthington Street, Steilacoom, Washington 98388. Applications may be obtained at the following link: [Employment Application](#) or by calling the jobline at (253) 983-2590. Please note on the application the position for which you are applying. Those applicants whose qualifications most closely correspond to the Town’s needs may be selected to interview. Successful candidates must pass a driving abstract review, physical examination, and a background check. For more information, visit the Town’s official website at [townofsteilacoom.org](http://townofsteilacoom.org)

**Community Services:**

Childcare:

Community Services staff in conjunction with the Steilacoom Historical School District are providing childcare services to children designated by the School District whose parents are either employed in the medical field, first responders, or other essential employees.

Mealsite:

Catholic Community Services in partnership with the Town continues to operate the senior meal site program on a “to go” basis.

Grease Trap:

Taking advantage of the reduced hours, staff arranged for and completed the annual pumping of the Community Center’s kitchen’s grease trap.

**Public Safety:**

Significant events for Public Safety over the last week:

- 5 medical aid responses
- 1 death investigation, natural causes determined
- 1 domestic disturbance investigation
- 1 report of vehicle prowl
- 1 arrest for domestic violence protection order violation
- 1 arrest for sexual assault

Fewer than 48 hours after Proclamation 20-05 was announced (“Stay Home – Stay Healthy”), Public Safety received multiple reports of gatherings in public areas, most of which dispersed shortly after they were reported. Among the Department’s core values, compassion and professionalism may be of particular significance during times of uncertainty. Public Safety will strive to demonstrate a reasonable approach to the changing landscape. Our officers are grateful for everyone’s patience and understanding with us, as well as each other.

On March 30, 2020, Governor Inslee requested citizens not use the 911 system to report possible violations of the social distancing guidelines but instead contact the local law enforcement agency. Please visit [townofsteilacoom.org](http://townofsteilacoom.org) and select Social Distancing for more information on reporting violations.

Please report any concerns over public gathering to [crimetips@ci.steilacoom.wa.us](mailto:crimetips@ci.steilacoom.wa.us). Please include the following information:

Date:

Time:

Address:

public area

private area

Approx. number of people:

Type of gathering:

- community, civic, public, leisure, faith-based, or sporting event
- parade
- concert
- festival
- convention
- fundraiser
- other similar activity (briefly describe):

As your officers continue to patrol our streets, we are met with an increase in smiles and waves from our many walkers and runners. As always, your officers are appreciative of your support, especially during uncertain times.

***Suspicious Activity:***

If you observe suspicious activity, please contact Public Safety - non-emergency number – (253) 798-4721 as soon as possible. To anonymously report suspicious activity please email the Department at [crimetips@ci.steilacoom.wa.us](mailto:crimetips@ci.steilacoom.wa.us)

**Public Works:**

***Streets and Storm:***

Crew Emphasis:

The crew removed illegally dumped material on Steilacoom Boulevard and on Chambers Creek Road; performed right-of-way maintenance; repaired a barricade at the end of Westshore Drive; and performed other maintenance activities.

Farrell’s Marsh – Beaver Removal:

Earlier this year, Town staff became aware that at least one beaver was again active in Farrell’s Marsh near the bridge. Due to the potential risk to downstream homes and property should an uncontrolled release of water trapped behind the dam occur, Town staff contracted with an individual licensed by the State of Washington for removal of this type of animal. The individual deployed approved traps and trail cameras in areas near the beaver dam. Once the animals had been removed, Town staff’s plan was to file for an HPA permit to remove the dam.

Sometime this last week, an unauthorized individual illegally removed the traps and turned them over to Department of Fish and Wildlife personnel here in Town. WDFW personnel returned the traps on Thursday to the licensed trapper. Due to the potential for damage or theft of the equipment, staff instructed the licensed trapper to not redeploy the equipment until further direction is provided. It is my understanding that WDFW may be initiating an investigation on the illegal removal/damage done to the traps by unauthorized parties.

Annual Town Roadside Herbicide Applications:

The Town’s roadsides will get an annual makeover this spring and summer.

An initial application of herbicides to combat weeds along road shoulders has started and will continue through August. Targeted noxious weeds and brush control applications will occur through the end of November as needed. Only federal and state-approved herbicides are used.

The Town uses Cheetah Pro along rights-of-way adjacent to roads and Mirimichi primarily on sidewalks. (The Town has discontinued the use of Round-up.) Both are applied only by certified pesticide applicators using manufacturer’s recommendations and under the guidance and inspection of the USDA. A recent inspection by USDA revealed no violations of product handling, storage, or use.

Town of Steilacoom road crews will also mow, cut brush and trim trees along roads during the spring and summer, however, the extent of this work this year may be reduced due to COVID-19 impacts. The work, which will be carried out weather permitting, is part of the Town's integrated roadside vegetation management program.

***Electrical:***

Crew Emphasis:

The crew assisted the Water/Sewer crew replacing packing on pump #1 at the Sunnyside pump station; removed two bollards in the 900 block of Powell Street; lowered and adjusted utility boxes in the 900 block of Powell Street; performed transformer maintenance; and performed other system maintenance.

***Water/Sewer:***

Crew Emphasis:

The crew replaced packing on pump #1 at the Sunnyside pump station; assisted the Electric crew lowering the utility boxes on Powell Street; assisted the Street crew removing illegally dumped material on Town rights-of-way; performed final inspections on two lots in the Tasanee development and one lot on Chambers Bay Drive; jetted select sewer mains; and performed other maintenance activities.

***Parks, Buildings and Grounds:***

Crew Emphasis:

The crew performed buildings and grounds maintenance activities including activating sprinkler systems.

**Other:**

***Census 2020: You Count – Respond at 2020census.gov – As of April 1, 2020 – Steilacoom – 52% Response Rate vs. the Pierce County response rate of 41.2%; and the Washington State response rate of 42%.***

Each year, the federal government distributes hundreds of billions of dollars to states and communities based on Census Bureau data. Locally census statistics are used to plan for a variety of resident needs including new roads, schools and emergency services. Businesses use census data to determine where to open places to shop.

In 2020, the U.S. Census Bureau will implement new technology to make it easier to respond. For the first time, people will be able to respond online, by phone, as well as by mail. The bureau will use data that the public has already provided to reduce follow up visits. And, the bureau is building an accurate address list and automating its field operations—all while keeping the public's information confidential and safe.

For those who do not complete the census on or by Census Day (April 1, 2020), in-person house visits will occur. Residents may also see people canvassing neighborhoods to check addresses.

**County Assessor-Treasurer extends property tax due date to June 1**

Citing the financial impact of the COVID-19 virus on Pierce County residents, Assessor-Treasurer Mike Lonergan, in coordination with the County Finance Director, has extended the due date for first-half property tax payments to June 1, 2020. Interest charges will not be assessed on payments made by that date.

With record levels of people filing for unemployment and business closures mandated by Governor Jay Inslee, taxpayers have looked to local and federal government officials for financial help

“We want to give what relief we can to many taxpayers facing financial challenges during the public health emergency,” said Assessor-Treasurer Mike Lonergan. “At the same time, local governments are needed more than ever right now, and the property tax is a major funding source for many needed services. Postponing the due date by a month is the best way to balance these needs.”

The property tax payment extension only applies to taxpayers who pay their residential and commercial property taxes themselves, rather than through a mortgage lender or servicer. Banks and other financial institutions that pay property taxes on behalf of mortgage customers must meet the original April 30 deadline.

Property owners who can pay their taxes now are encouraged to do so by April 30, or as soon thereafter as possible. Unpaid taxes from previous years are excluded from the extension.

Payments may be made:

**By mail** to Pierce County Finance, P.O. Box 11621, Tacoma WA 98411. Make checks payable to Pierce County and please include payment stub or parcel number.

**Online** using e-check, debit card or credit card at [www.piercecountywa.gov/atr](http://www.piercecountywa.gov/atr) or by calling our automated telephone system at (253) 798-3333 Please have your parcel number ready. A handling fee is added by an outside vendor: 50 cents for e-check, \$3.50 for debit and 2.35% for credit card.

**Secure drop box** at Pierce County Annex, 2401 S. 35<sup>th</sup> St., Tacoma. Do not pay in cash. In-person payments at the Assessor-Treasurer's office are suspended until further notice.

This move is consistent with extensions from King and Snohomish county treasurers, who are offering similar payment relief in their jurisdictions. The payment deadline cannot be extended past June 1, as many cities, counties, school districts, fire districts, hospital districts, and other special purpose districts rely on the year's first installment of property tax revenue to make June debt service payments.

Questions – Contact us at 253.581-1912 -- Town's Official Website - [townofsteilacoom.org](http://townofsteilacoom.org)

# ***Burn Guidelines***

## **To Burn or Not to Burn?**

It is illegal to use a burn barrel in the state of Washington. It is also illegal to burn the following:

- Garbage or refuse
- Cardboard and paper
- Building materials including paints, vinyl flooring, roofing, and scrap lumber
- Rubber products, including tires
- Plastics or petroleum products
- Material that produces smoke that is offensive or harmful to your neighbors. If your neighbors complain, you are required to put out the fire immediately.

## **Residential Fires:**

There is a permanent burn ban in Steilacoom which has been declared by the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency and the Steilacoom Fire Marshal Office. Residential fires are considered as burning natural vegetation consisting of leaves, prunings, and other yard and garden refuse to include grass clippings.

## **An Alternate Approach to Residential Fires:**

- Haul it! Rake up your excess material and haul it to your nearest recycling/ transfer station.
- Compost it! Composting yard and garden waste protects the air, land and water resources while providing a rich garden fertilizer.
- Chip it! Some residents are choosing to chip their debris. Chippers may be rented or a chipping service hired to take care of your materials. Wood chips make excellent mulch around trees and shrubs and can also be used to soften garden paths.
- Mulch it! By mulching, we can easily put nature's recycling system to work in our own backyards. Spread yard and garden debris around shrubs.

## **Recreational Fires are usually allowed:**

Recreational fires do not require a permit as long as the following regulations have been followed and no burn ban is implemented by the Pierce County or Washington State Fire Marshal Offices:

- Limited to burning dry, seasoned wood or charcoal briquettes only (no garbage, yard waste, etc.)
- Not to exceed three-feet in diameter by two-feet in height.
- Must be for the purpose of cooking, pleasure or religious ceremonies.
- Recreational fires must be 25 feet away from any structure.
- The fire pits shall be located not less than 10 feet from adjoining property lines, or near overhead branches.

## **Fire Pit Construction:**

- Fire pits shall be constructed of concrete, stone, or approved non-combustible material.
- The bottom of the pit may be of sand, or mineral earth.
- The fire pits shall not exceed three feet in diameter. The depth of the pit shall be minimum of four inches and capable of containing all burned material. (No limbs or brush should extend beyond the pit area).

## **Fire Pit Maintenance:**

- Recreational Fires should be maintained in good condition at all times.
- Fire extinguishing equipment such as buckets, shovels, or garden hoses shall be readily available for use.

If these rules are not followed you can be fined for causing a nuisance and you may be held financially liable for damages caused by your fire.

The Town contracts with the Pierce County Fire Marshal for enforcement of the fire code.

Additional resources may be found at:

<https://pscleanair.gov/168/Current-Status> or <https://www.co.pierce.wa.us/982/Outdoor-Burning>