



APRIL 2007

Congratulations to All Newly Elected and Re-elected Officials!

Upcoming League Meetings

- Thursday, April 26, Membership Meeting, Chesterfield City Hall, 7:30 pm
Monday, April 30, Newly Elected Officials Seminar, Sheraton Westport, 4:30 pm
Saturday, May 19, Installation Dinner, Norwood Hills Country Club, 6:00 pm
Thursday, June 7, Golf Tournament, Golf Club of Florissant, Noon

April 26 Meeting at Chesterfield City Hall

The next League meeting will be held at 7:30 pm on Thursday, April 26 at the Chesterfield City Hall, 690 Chesterfield Parkway West. (Directions: from Highway 40/I-64, exit at Chesterfield Parkway West, which is just past the Olive/Clarkson exit. At the top of the exit ramp go right onto the Parkway. Turn left at the first stoplight and City Hall will be on the right.)

The report of the Nominating Committee will be sent out prior to the meeting.

Program: St. Louis County is preparing to update its strategic plan. Darin Cline, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs for County Executive Charlie Dooley, will provide an overview of trends in the County and potential new directions.

phone gross receipts taxes.

Municipal attorneys have been meeting with legal counsel for the cell phone companies to try to reach an agreement to settle the current lawsuits and clarify future taxes. In late March, drafts of a compromise were exchanged outlining these major issues.

We will update the membership on what is included in the agreement should it be finalized.

The main item of business will be the election of officers and board members for the 2007-08

Also on the program will be an update on the negotiations regarding the issue of cell

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Newly Elected Officials Seminar - April 30

The League will hold its Annual Seminar for Newly Elected Officials at 4:30 pm on Monday, April 30 at the Sheraton Plaza Tower Hotel (not the chalet) at Westport Plaza in Maryland Heights. The cost is \$50, which includes materials and a buffet dinner.

new elected officials will join us for an informative introduction to municipal government presented by Municipal Attorneys Kevin O'Keefe, Ken Heinz, and Stephanie Karr from the Curtis, Heinz, Garrett and O'Keefe law firm.

officials, experienced officials are welcome as well. The deadline for reservations is Friday, April 27.

Invitations and registration materials have been mailed to all newly elected League members and to all municipal clerks.

We hope all of our designed for new offi-

**March Meeting Synopsis**

At the March meeting the membership heard a presentation from Warren Wood of the Missouri Public Service Commission. He had been invited to discuss the PSC report on Ameren power outages related to the summer storms.

Mr. Wood noted that Missouri statutes give the PSC broad authority to ensure that public utilities maintain and operate plants and equipment in a manner that promotes the safety of its employees, customers and the public. The PSC also reviews and make determinations on reasonable rates for public utilities.

In regard to the July 2006 storms, Mr. Wood said that PSC staff reviewed Ameren's storm outage planning and restoration efforts, noting that 2006 marked

the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year Ameren has experienced significant outages due to storms.

The report notes that trimming of limbs that are very close to wires is too low of a standard. Higher branches that can fall on wires may need to be removed and trees along important lines must be checked more often.

The PSC listed numerous issues in its report on the storms. Some of the major recommendations are:

- Work to eliminate the tree trimming backlog, with the budgeted amount increasing from \$32 million to \$45 million;
- Implementing vegetation management programs that include more substantial removal of trees near power

- lines and within easements;
- Working with cities and counties to develop neighborhood watch programs to help vulnerable individuals in the event of an outage.

The PSC is preparing a new rule for consideration to provide more reliable electric service

The membership also approved a Bylaws change related to the Nominating Committee. The amendment would prohibit members of the Committee from being nominated by the Committee or from the floor for a vacancy on the Board.

Thanks to Chairman Patricia Snider and the officials and employees of Bel-Ridge who hosted the meeting in their impressive new Village Hall.

**League Staff Changes**

Two new members have recently joined the League staff. Margaret Goodman will serve as a staff associate and intern.

She is currently working on a Master's of Public Administration at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville. Margaret worked for the Illinois Campaign Disclosure Unit and A.G. Edwards & Sons, Inc. before returning to school and seeking a job more related to her studies. She will be taking on several of Cody Hawkins' duties and some special projects.

Clare Gates is a recent graduate of St. Louis University and will also be a part-time staff associate, focusing on solid waste issues to help cities with recycling efforts.

They will be taking the place of Cody Hawkins, who has joined the City of Shrewsbury as Assistant City Administrator and City Clerk. Cody worked for the League for over 3 years. We appreciate his service and wish him well in his new job.

**Mark Your Calendar**

The League's Annual Installation Dinner will be held on Saturday, May 19 at the Norwood Hills Country Club.

Also, the League's Annual Golf Tournament is scheduled for noon, Thursday, June 7, at the Golf Club of Florissant.

Reservation information for both events will be mailed to city halls soon.

**Ameren Offers Community Development Corporation Grants**

The Ameren Community Development Corporation has applications for the 2007 Ameren CDC economic development grant program for applicants in

Ameren's Missouri service area. Funds will be distributed based on each applicant's ability to stimulate community and economic development and job creation.

Program information and the application are available at [www.ameren.com/ECONOMIC\\_DEVL/ADC\\_ED\\_AmerenCDC.asp](http://www.ameren.com/ECONOMIC_DEVL/ADC_ED_AmerenCDC.asp). The deadline is May 1.

## Legislative Update

Floor action has begun in earnest in both chambers and a number of important bills are moving quickly through the legislature. The League will continue sending weekly email and fax updates on legislative actions. Please contact our office if you would like to be added to the email list.

The major bills for local governments are:

AT&T Video: SB 284 has passed both chambers and was signed by the Governor. It will be effective on August 28, 2007. The bill strips cities of control over cable TV and replaces that authority with weak PSC oversight. Some of the main provisions are:

State Video Franchise - pre-empts nearly all municipal licensing authority. A competitive video service provider merely needs to file an application with the Public Service Commission and notify affected political subdivisions.

Build Out - AT&T must provide access to 25% of the households in its entire telecommunication service area in the state (not any one jurisdiction) within 3 years;

Pre-emption of Cable Franchises - no existing franchise shall be renewed beyond its expiration date. A cable company may continue to provide service under an existing franchise; it can apply for video service authorization; or it can convert the franchise into a state-issued video service authorization once there is a competitive provider.

PEG - the incumbent cable operator only needs to provide

monetary and other support for PEG access facilities if it is in a franchise and only until the end of the term of the franchise or until January 1, 2012, whichever is earlier.

Fees - a city may continue to collect up to a 5% gross revenue fee.

Regulation of boxes - Cities may require landscaping, notifying property owners of construction, alternate placement of the boxes for safety reasons and relocation to accommodate public works projects.

Overtime Provisions: SCS SB 255 (Loudon) clarifies that the 2006 system for overtime for police/fire/EMS is lawful for use in the future. The bill passed the Senate but House leaders propose lowering the wages for waiters and removing cost of living increases in the minimum wage. The bill appears dead. (Support)

Cities may wish to consider reducing the base salary and applying the savings towards overtime so every employee is kept whole and city liability is reduced.

Telecommunications Taxes: HB 165 (S. Cooper) has passed the House. The main provisions are:

- A prohibition on class action lawsuits against telecoms;
- Dismisses current lawsuits and 9 years of back taxes;
- Allows DOR to modify gross receipts tax rates. (Oppose)

MML Attorneys, County League staff and industry attorneys may be nearing a compromise after several months of meetings.

HJR 21 (S. Cooper) is a joint resolution (constitutional amendment) that would limit all phone taxes (cell and landline) to rates no higher than local business license taxes. Business license taxes are

typically higher on utilities which use the right-of-way, because they do not then have to buy land for their wires. It is at the top of the House Calendar. (Oppose)

TIF Restrictions: SB 20 (Griesheimer) requires a super majority for residential TIFs in greenfields, requires voter approval or super majority for TIFs opposed by the TIF commission, allows a referendum on TIF projects and prohibits greenfield TIFs. It is on the Informal Calendar.

Primary Seat Belt Law: HB 90 (St. Onge) would allow drivers to be stopped and ticketed for not wearing a seat belt. Current law allows a ticket only if the driver is stopped for another violation. It has been debated in the House with substantial opposition and numerous amendments pending. (Support)

4th Class City Mayor's Term: SB 638 (Bray) authorizes mayor's term of 2, 3 or 4 years in 4th class cities. Currently, mayors serve 2 or 4 year terms. It has passed the Senate.

Red Light Cameras: SB 239 (Stouffer) was amended by Senator Gross to send the fines to schools. It has passed the Senate. (Oppose)

Tax Payers Bill of Rights - HJR 20 (Bearden) is another constitutional amendment that would severely limit state revenues. A similar amendment in Colorado was modified by voters after state services and school aid were slashed. HJR 20 is on the perfection calendar. (Oppose)

St. Louis County Municipal League  
121 S. Meramec Ave.  
Clayton, MO 63105

The April 26 League meeting will be held at the Chesterfield City Hall.

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## Cities Can Work With Ameren to Reduce Power Outages

In recent years, the City of Eureka took an aggressive stance in working to reduce the number of power outages and limit the length of those that may occur.

Eureka is unique in St. Louis County as it is the only City that provides water and sewer service, necessitating backup generators to maintain service at these facilities when electric power is out.

But Eureka officials have also worked with their Ameren area representative.

The City identified areas with repeated outages and asked Ameren to inspect the equipment. This led to needed repairs and replacements that have provided greater reliability to the affected subdivisions. In another area,

Ameren installed equipment to split the main feed into two sections. This reduced the number of homes and businesses without power during recent storms. This also leads to faster repairs to those who may lose power.

A problem throughout the County relates to large trees. Continued discussions with the area representative led to more aggressive tree trimming and clearing by Ameren.

Ameren has also upgraded portions of its substations in Eureka which allows customer loads to be switched if one of the power supplies or transformers fails.

Creve Coeur recently established a citizen task force which has collected comments from residents and met with Ameren repre-

sentatives at various trouble spots in the City.

Ameren officials have expressed an interest in working with local officials. The League recommends that each city contact Ameren and develop a plan similar to those in Eureka or Creve Coeur so outages are minimized.

If you are interested in a direct contact number for an AmerenUE representative that serves your community, contact Otie Cowan, Community Relations Manager at 314-554-4740 or [ocowan@ameren.com](mailto:ocowan@ameren.com) to arrange for an AmerenUE Division map that includes your community and the name and contact information that's specific to your city or village.