

PRAIRIE PULSE

September 2023



Spotlight on Water Utilities

Water Utilities employees have been working wonders this summer to keep Grand Prairie's water system working.

What's Inside

Open Enrollment for Benefits

Begins Oct. 23, 2023

Hassle Free Virtual Care

24/7 Availability

Clean Prairie Volunteer Event

September 23

Bill Hills Named City Manager

Bill Hills has been named City Manager in Grand Prairie, Texas. Hills steps into the position vacated by retiring City Manager Steve Dye. Hills most recently was a Grand Prairie Deputy City Manager overseeing Housing and Neighborhood Services, Planning and Development, Economic Development, Engineering, Transportation, Public Works, Public Health and Environmental Quality, Solid Waste, and Municipal Court. These positions, as well as Fire and Police, will continue to report to Hills.



"I am honored to step into this new role for a city and an employee family I love," said Hills. "We have a wonderful team, great executive leadership, and a supportive City Council. I look forward to contributing to Grand Prairie's momentum in this new capacity."

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Upcoming Events

Saturdays

Farmers Market
8 a.m.-1 p.m.
120 W. Main St.
GrandFunGP.com

Monday, Sept. 4

City Holiday
Administrative Offices Closed
[More info.](#)

Tuesday, Sept. 5 and Sept. 19

City Council Meeting
6:30 p.m.
City Hall, 300 W. Main St.

Thursday, Sept. 7

Council Member Ezeonu
Town Hall Meeting
6-8 p.m.
Dalworth Recreation Center
2012 Spikes St. [More Info.](#)

Thursday, Sept. 7

Music On Main Concert Series
Jade Flores
7-8:30 p.m.
City Hall, 300 W. Main St.
Outdoor Fountain
Free
Visit: gptx.org/downtown

Saturday, Sept. 16-Sunday, Sept. 17

Epic Art & Music Festival
A weekend of creativity, art and music.
2961 SH 161
[More Information](#)

Saturday, Sept. 16

Grand Fiestas Patrias Festival and Parade
9 a.m.-1 p.m.
Farmers Market, 120 W. Main St.
[More Information](#)

ANNUAL ENROLLMENT

SAVE THE DATE

ENROLLMENT OPENS: 10.23.23

MUST BE COMPLETED BY: 11.03.23

HOW TO PREPARE FOR ENROLLMENT:

- 1. Ensure you are able to log into Lawson**
 - Contact IT at x8001 if you need login assistance
- 2. Access Lawson Employee Self Service (ESS) through Raving Fans**
- 3. Contact Information**
 - Go to "Life Events" and select the "Move" option
 - Update address and phone number
- 4. Emergency Contacts**
 - Go to "Personal Information" and select the "Emergency" option
- 5. Dependents**
 - Go to "Personal Information" and select the "Dependents" option
 - Contact HR if you need to remove a dependent
- 6. Beneficiaries**
 - Go to "Benefits" and select "Beneficiary"
 - If you update your beneficiary in Lawson ESS, be sure to update your TMRS and 457 plan beneficiaries directly through their portal

CONTACT YOUR HR BENEFITS TEAM WITH ENROLLMENT QUESTIONS
benefits@gptx.org | 972-237-8192

Good to Know Info...

Stage 2 Water Restrictions

As of Sept. 1, 2023, the City of Grand Prairie remains on Stage 2 Water Restrictions to help manage the use of our water supply. Residents and businesses must follow these restrictions:

- No watering on Tues., Wed., Thurs., Sat. and Sun.
- Even numbered addresses water on Mondays
- Odd numbered addresses water on Fridays
- On your watering day, avoid watering between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.
- Foundations and new plantings may be watered using handheld and soaker hoses for up to two hours any day.

For more information, visit gptx.org/waterwise

Garbage and Recycling Collection Change

Beginning Oct. 2, 2023, garbage pick up days in GP will be:
Area 1 (North of Warrior Trail) - garbage days: Tuesday, Friday
Area 2 (South of Warrior Trail) - garbage days: Monday, Thursday

Beginning Oct. 2, 2023, recycling collection day for the entire city will on Wednesday. Visit gptx.org for more information.

Department Spotlight: Water Utilities

Human Resources had the opportunity to visit Water Utilities to learn more about the important work they do for our city. We appreciate Superintendent Rene Luna for his hospitality and showing us what a day in the life of a Water Utilities employee looks like.

We look forward to visiting many other departments and divisions to share the hard work you all do for our great city.



Fast, Hassle-Free Virtual Care

If you're feeling sick, call your doctor. You may be able to schedule a visit by phone or online. Avoid delays in seeking care by accessing Virtual Visits, available by phone, computer or mobile app. Virtual Visit doctors are specially trained to diagnose and treat many common illnesses. You will pay for each Virtual Visit according to your BCBSTX plan copay or coinsurance amount.

Here are just a few things Virtual Visits can do for you:

- Care from the safety and comfort of home – avoid exposure to viruses and germs
- Less time waiting – Speak with a doctor in less than 15 minutes. Appointments are required to see a behavioral health therapist (this may take up to 7 days)
- 24/7 Availability – Virtual Visit doctors are available nights, weekends, and holidays
- Top quality physicians – board certified doctors have an average of 15 years of experience and are specially trained in virtual care
- Prescription – Your Virtual Visit provider can send prescriptions to your preferred pharmacy and refill existing medications

Download the MDLIVE app today and set up your account for easy access! Or call 800-400-6354. You will need your medical insurance information to create an account or to speak with a provider. Visit mdlive.com for more information.

Join Prairie Trotters

Join Prairie Trotters walking/running club and take a Grand Prairie Animal Service shelter dog out on one of three approved trails. These trails range in length from 1 mile to 2.2 miles and are designated by color. By signing up, you'll not only stay active but also provide much-needed companionship for furry friends in need. Participants must be 18 or older. Membership is a minimum of \$10. To get started, fill out the form at gptx.org/trotters.



Grand Prairie Libraries EBranch

Browse books online at gptx.org/library, request items for pickup at the library, put books on hold, pay fines, extend loan periods, and download eBooks, eAudiobooks, music and streaming media. Apply for your free library card online, or at any library location. Adults will need a government issued ID and children's cards must be obtained by a parent.

Your Bed is for Sleeping

Don't bring your laptop there, and put that cell phone away! This will create association between bed and sleep. If you can't nod off within 20 minutes, get up and do something relaxing in low light in another room, then go back to bed when you're drowsy enough to fall asleep. – Raj Dasgupta, M.D., pulmonology and sleep specialist at the University of Southern California.



Hills Named City Manager

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“If anyone can fill the big shoes left by city managers Tom Hart and Steve Dye, it is Bill,” said Mayor Ron Jensen. “He knows the city, its residents and businesses, our employees, and the City Council. Bill excels at building work families, being innovative, and empowering people.”

“I am so pleased to be able to leave the city and its leadership in a great position as I retire as City Manager to return to policing,” said Dye, who was the city’s Police Chief from 2011-2020, the last two years doubling as a Deputy City Manager. “I’ve learned from and loved my five years in city management and will take that knowledge with me as I return to policing, which is my calling.”

Hills began his career with the City of Grand Prairie as a Code Compliance Manager in 1989. He became Housing and Neighborhood Services Director in 1993, and Deputy City Manager in 2020. Prior to Grand Prairie, Bill worked for the city of Fort Worth as a code enforcement officer (1979), then as Assistant Superintendent of Code Enforcement. Hills is a founder of and served as the first president of the Code Enforcement Association of Texas and the American Association of Code Enforcement. He is a current or former member of the Coalition of Minority Public Administrators, National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, Texas Housing Association, and National Forum of Black Public Administrators. He is a certified NAHRO Public Housing Manager and State of Texas registered and certified Code Enforcement Officer. Hills has served on numerous city of Grand Prairie employee and internal process improvement committees. Hills is also a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Omicron Gamma Gamma Chapter, serving the mid-cities community.

Hills has a degree in Public Administration, having attended the University of Texas at Austin, with completion of coursework at Kensington University. Hills is a husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather.

Volunteer for Fall Sweep

Saturday, Sept. 23 Begins at 8 a.m.
Meet at Veterans Park, 925 Conover Dr.

Calling all community volunteers, business groups, friends and family to join Clean Prairie and help us make GP litter free at the Clean Prairie Fall Sweep. Registration will be available through Monday, Sept. 18 at gptx.org/cleanprairie.



Upcoming Events

Saturday, Sept. 16

Grand Prairie Animal Shelter
Birthday Bash
10 a.m.-6 p.m.
Vendors, food trucks, pet resources and more.
Grand Prairie Animal Services
2222 W. Warrior Tr.

Saturday, Sept. 16

Fall Vegetable Gardening Class
3-4 p.m.
Free
Warmack Library, 760 Bardin Rd.
To register email: jrudd@gptx.org

Thursday, Sept. 21

Cyclin' with the Mayor
Mountain Creek Ride and
Community Fair
Free hot dogs, chips, Kona Ice,
games and more!
Meet at 6 p.m.
Ride begins at 6:30 p.m.
Mi Familia Park, 2402 Cardiff

Saturday, Sept. 23

Clean Prairie Fall Sweep
Register [here](#) by Sept. 18 for this
volunteer clean up opportunity
For info., contact: 972-237-4546

Sept. 23- Sept. 24

Epic Waters Flowapalooza
Noon- 8 p.m.
Epic Waters, 2970 Epic Place
Enjoy family-friendly fun.
[More info.](#)

Saturday, Sept. 23

National Night Out Kickoff Party
6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.
Free
EpicCentral, 2961 S. SH 161
Food trucks, booths, lawn
games, music and entertain-
ment. [More info.](#)