



**Growing from River to Ridge**

**NEW RESIDENTS  
HANDBOOK**

# Welcome to the City of La Crescent

## Apple Capital of Minnesota

It is our pleasure to provide you with an information source about your community. This guidebook was designed to assist new residents of the community in becoming familiar with the City of La Crescent. As you page through this guide, you will find information about the City of La Crescent's history, government, services, parks, ordinances and other pertinent information that will help you fully benefit from and participate in your community. Don't hesitate to call City Hall at (507) 895-2595 if we can answer a question for you or provide further information, or visit our website at [www.cityoflacrescent-mn.gov](http://www.cityoflacrescent-mn.gov)

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### HISTORY OF LA CRESCENT

Sitting on the banks of the Mississippi River, La Crescent, Minnesota is surrounded by beautiful bluffs with spectacular views of the river. It's no wonder then that humans have inhabited this area, abundant with wildlife, for thousands of years. The most recent inhabitants before the White settlers were the Dakota Indians, who were a branch of the Sioux, and the Winnebago.

Following the 1803 Louisiana Purchase, Nathan Boone, youngest son of Daniel Boone, was among the early surveyors of this area. The various Indian tribes who had lived here were moved out in the 1840's to accommodate White settlement.

La Crescent was founded in 1851 by Peter Cameron and was originally called, "Cameron's". Peter and his wife, Emma, were two of the town's most colorful characters. Peter tried to dig a canal to change the flow closer to La Crescent and bypass La Crosse, Wisconsin, across the river. He died 10 weeks before its scheduled completion in 1857, and the canal was never finished, although the canal can still be seen in aerial photographs of the city.

The second name of La Crescent was "Manton", named by William and Harvey Gillett, after they cleared the downtown area for settlement for Peter Cameron. In quick succession, the name of the town was changed again by the somewhat unscrupulous Kentucky Land Company, which was a land speculation company.

They wanted a more romantic sounding name for the town to attract settlers and came up with "La Crescent", after the bend or "crescent" shape of the Mississippi River around the town. La Crescent incorporated in 1857.

John S. Harris arrived in La Crescent in 1856 and soon gave the town its identity of "Apple Capital of Minnesota", a title that the city copyrighted in 2002. Despite the belief by "99 out of 100" people that "apples could not grow in Minnesota", Harris planted his first apple trees here in 1857 and experimented with them until he grew trees hardy enough to withstand the severe Minnesota winters. He planted thousands of apple trees and hundreds of varieties, a full half of which he said were complete and total failures. Harris became known as "Father of the Orchardists" in Minnesota and was also a founding member of the Minnesota State Horticultural Society. Since 1947 La Crescent has celebrated this apple heritage annually with a weekend festival known as Applefest.

La Crescent has entertained a number of businesses throughout its history, but the one that has endured the longest is the apple industry. Around the 1940's La Crescent had about 40 small orchards in and around the city. Although the number of orchards has dwindled to less than a dozen, the acreage is about the same, as the orchards have been expanded in the bluffs farther away from the city. La Crescent grows gourmet apple varieties not found in most other places. Eighty percent of its apples are sold in Minnesota, although they are also exported to surrounding states and Canada. Meanwhile, people continue to flock to the beauty of La Crescent.

Topics listed in alphabetical order

## ANIMAL LICENSING

507-895-2595



All dogs and cats over the age of 4 months must be registered with the City. Licenses are available for purchase at La Crescent City Hall. A current certificate of rabies vaccination will need to be presented. Licenses run from January 1 to December 31 of each year with a \$15.00 penalty if delinquent. Licenses go on sale in November of each year and are due by January 15. A new resident has 14 days within moving to the City to license their pet(s). The same time frame applies to acquiring a new pet.

When taking pets off their property for a walk, owners must have them leashed and will need to have with them something to pick up any dog and cat excrement immediately and dispose of it in a trash receptacle located on the pet owner's property. Cats are not allowed to roam free within City limits, leash laws apply.

Pet owners with 3 or more of any single type of domestic animal over the age of 4 months need to obtain a special "multiple pet permit".

### License fees per year are:

Per pet	\$12.00
Multi-Pet Permit	\$25.00 (required if you have three or more of once species, plus the per pet licenses)
Replacement tag	\$1.00

## APPLEFEST

The annual Applefest celebration is held the third full weekend of September each year. Events include:

Parade, carnival rides, flea market and craft fair as well as activities for all age groups at various locations throughout the City. Detailed information can be found on their website:

[www.applefestusa.com](http://www.applefestusa.com) or Facebook page.



## BICYCLES

You may register your bicycle at La Crescent City Hall by bringing in a description, color, and serial number of the bike. This is free of charge. Here are several reminders about the rules of the road for bicycling:

- ◆ Bicycle riders must ride **with** traffic.
- ◆ Ride in single file on the edge of the road, within the marked bike route if there is one.
- ◆ Obey motorist traffic laws, such as stopping at stop signs and signals, looking for traffic before changing lanes or crossing, signaling for a turn and not weaving through or across auto traffic.
- ◆ Secure your bike against theft.
- ◆ Wear a bike helmet.
- ◆ No person shall ride a bicycle upon a sidewalk within a business district, nor shall a rider use the roadway when a useable path for bicycles has been provided adjacent to such roadway.

## BURNING

There is no open burning within the City. Outdoor fireplaces used for cooking, warmth or recreational purposes are allowed. No burning of paper or garbage - use hard woods or charcoal only. Commercially manufactured wood burning appliances are allowed provided the appliance is equipped with a spark arresting screen.

## BUILDING & ZONING DEPARTMENT

(507) 895-4409 or (507) 895-8636



The Building and Zoning Department issues building permits, plumbing permits, sign permits, and regulates the zoning ordinances of the City. All permits are applied for online at

[www.cityoflacrescent-mn.gov](http://www.cityoflacrescent-mn.gov) under the 'administration' tab. The Department enforces the Uniform Building Code and related City ordinances. Please check with the building official before you begin your project to insure you are in compliance with City code.

## CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

507-895-2800

(Fax) 507-895-2619

111 S. Walnut St., Suite B

## CHURCHES

*Church of the Crucifixion*

407 S. 2nd St.

507-895-4720

*First Evangelical Lutheran Church*

414 Main St.

507-895-4775

*Immanuel Lutheran Church*

4810 CTY 25  
507-895-6740

*La Crescent Evangelical Free Church*

1675 CTY 6  
507-895-3733

*La Crescent United Methodist Church*

520 N. Elm St.  
507-895-2373

*Messiah Lutheran Church*

825 Jonathan Lane  
507-895-5673

*Prince of Peace Lutheran Church*

21 N. Hill St.  
507-895-4440

*South Ridge United Methodist Church*

1781 Chicken Ridge Rd.  
507-895-2298

**CITY HALL**

Monday-Friday 7:30 am - 4:00 pm

315 Main Street  
La Crescent, MN 55947  
(507) 895-2595  
(507) 895-8694 Fax



**City Staff:**

- City Administrator:** Cassie Hanan
- Administrative Assistant:** Chris Fortsch
- Attorney:** Skip Wieser
- Accountant:** Amy Jore
- Bookkeeper:** Danae Forman
- Building Inspector:** Josh Tarrence
- Building Official:** Shawn Wetterlin
- City Clerk:** Angie Boettcher
- Finance Director:** Kara Tarrence
- Fire Chief:** Josh Tarrence (Interim)
- Library Director:** Jess Witkins
- Motor Vehicle Deputy Registrar:** Mary Loeffler/  
Kim Voshart
- Police Chief:** Luke Ahlschlager
- Police Secretary:** Lisa Olson
- Public Works Director:** Tyler Benish
- Utility Supervisor:** Jay Gillette
- WWTP Operator:** Jay Gillette

Building	(507) 895-4409
Zoning	(507) 895-8636
Fire	(507) 895-2083 - Office <b>911—emergency</b>
Maintenance	(507) 895-2037
Motor Vehicle	(507) 895-4627
Police	(507) 895-4414 - Office <b>911—emergency</b>
Public Works	(507) 895-4971
Aquatic Center	(507) 895-8712

**COMMUNITY BUILDING**

336 S. 1st Street

The Community Building accommodates 175 and is used by non-profit, civic organizations. For further information about the use of this building contact City Hall at (507) 895-2595.

**COMMUNITY ICE ARENA**

520 S. 14th Street (507) 895-4160

The La Crescent Community Ice Arena is home to ice hockey teams and tournaments.

**COMPOST & RECYCLING**



The City Compost Site (located East of Hwy 14/61 on Main St. just past Classic Rock). This area is for depositing trees, leaves, and grass.

**Summer Hours (April - September):**

Monday: 2:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Saturday: 8:00 am - 3:00 pm

**Fall Hours (October - November):**

Monday: 2:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Thursday: 2:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Saturday: 8:00 am - 3:00 pm

**Winter Hours (December - March)**

Saturday only: 8:00 am - 3:00 pm



**HOUSTON COUNTY RECYCLING CENTER**

(507) 725-5800

The Recycling Center is operated by Houston County (located East of Hwy 14/61 160 S. 3rd St. This area is for depositing large household items, textiles and tires. They also buy aluminum cans at competitive prices.

For a complete list of items accepted and charges visit: [co.houston.mn.us/?mdocs-file=2777](http://co.houston.mn.us/?mdocs-file=2777)

**Year-round Hours:**

Thursday: 10:00 am - 6:00 pm

Saturday: 8:00 am - 3:00pm

**CURFEW FOR MINORS**

Curfew hours for minors are as follows:

**Youths 15 through 17**

Sunday through Thursday: 11:00 pm

Friday and Saturday: 12:30 am

Summer (June 1 through August 31): 12:30 am every night

**Youths 12 through 14**

Sunday through Thursday: 10:00 pm

Friday and Saturday: 11:00 pm

Summer (June 1 through August 31): 11:00 pm every night

**Youths 11 and under**

Weekdays and weekends: 10:00 pm

**DOOR TO DOOR SALES**

While the City requires registration of all parties conducting door-to-door sales, you as residents still have a right to your privacy. Any resident who wishes to exclude peddlers or solicitors from his/her premises may place a printed placard near the usual entrance bearing the following notice:

**PEDDLERS AND SOLICITORS  
PROHIBITED**

This sign must measure at least 3 3/4in. by 3 3/4in.

If you post the notice clearly and a peddler/solicitor violates the City Code, you may call the police at (507) 895-4414.

All registered solicitors are required to display the identification badge issued by the City. If approached by a peddler or solicitor who does not have this identification or who refuses to leave when requested, call the police department emergency number 911.



**EMERGENCY NUMBERS**

Ambulance: 911

Cable (Charter): 800-581-0081

(AcenTek): 1811

Electric Utility (Xcel): 800-895-4999

Fire: 911

Gas Utility: (MN Energy Resources)  
800-889-9508

Police: 911

Refuse (Hilltoppers): 608-783-6727

**FIRE DEPARTMENT**

336 South 1st Street

Non-Emergency: 895-2083

Emergency: 911

The La Crescent Fire Department is staffed by paid on-call EMS/firefighters under the direction of a part-time fire chief.

**GOLF COURSE**

Pine Creek Golf Course

3815 North Pine Creek Road

507-895-2410



The City-owned golf course is a 9-hole scenic par 35. Call for rates.



**GOPHER STATE ONE  
CALL**

800-252-1166

Residents planning to dig to install fences/shepherd’s hook or decks, do landscaping or gardening, or otherwise disturb or excavate the soil greater than 12” in depth, are required to call Gopher State One Call at least 48 hours prior to beginning work. This is necessary to prevent damage to underground wires, pipes, etc. and for personal safety. Failure to call could result in civil court action.

**GOVERNMENT**

MAYOR: Mike Poellinger

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Cherryl Jostad

Chris Langen

Teresa O’Donnell-Ebner

Dale Williams

La Crescent is a city of just over 5,000 people. The Mayor and four council members make up La Crescent’s elected City Council. The mayor serves a two-year term and the council members serve four – year staggered terms. Local elections take place in November of even numbered years. Terms of office become effective in January following the election.

The Council meets the second and fourth Mondays of each month at 5:00 pm at the La Crescent Community Room. Meetings are open to the public.

Agendas for City Council and commission meetings are available at City Hall on Friday’s prior to each meeting and on the city’s website: [www.cityoflacrescent-mn.gov](http://www.cityoflacrescent-mn.gov)

Minutes of City Council meetings are available on the website the Tuesday following each Council meeting.

The City is also served by advisory groups and various ad-hoc commissions that are charged with reviewing and advising council and staff on issues within the City. These commissions include: Planning, Golf, Park and Recreation, Historic Bluff Country, GreenStep, and La Crosse Area Planning. For specific information on these committees or to be considered for an appointment, contact City Hall at (507) 895-2595.

**HOSPITALS/CLINICS**

La Crescent is fortunate to have two major hospitals within 10 minutes driving distance:

**Mayo Health System:**

700 West Ave. S., La Crosse, WI 54601  
608-785-0940

**Gundersen Health System:**

1910 South Ave., La Crosse, WI 54601  
608-782-7300

One hospital facility has a clinic located in La Crescent:

**Gundersen Health System:**

226 N. 2nd, La Crescent, MN 55947  
507-895-6610

**HOTEL AND EVENT CENTER**

Best Western Plus: located at 509 N. Chestnut St., La Crescent, MN (507) 895-1001

La Crescent Area Event Center: Located at 595 Veterans Way, La Crescent, MN (right next to the Best Western Plus). To book an event, call(507) 895-0595.

**HOUSE NUMBERS**

All properties are required to have their street address, visible from the public way, for each dwelling unit. These are to be no less than 4-inch numbers written in Arabic type. Emergency services need to be able to locate you to serve you.

**HYDRANT**

**FLUSHING**



As part of its on-going maintenance, the Public Works Department flushes fire hydrants several times from April to October. During this time, the normal flow of the water supply is increased and residents may experience some temporary discoloration of the drinking water. Be assured that the water is safe to drink and by allowing your cold water to run a few minutes, the discoloration will disappear.

**LEAVES**

It is against City ordinance to rake or blow leaves into the street. Leaves may be taken to the compost site (see “Compost and Recycling”). During the fall of the year the compost site is open an extra day, Thursday, from 2:00 pm until 7:00 pm.





## **LIBRARY**

321 Main Street

507-895-4047

### Hours:

Monday: 10 am - 6 pm

Tuesday: 10 am - 6 pm

Wednesday: 10 am - 6 pm

Thursday: 10 am - 6 pm

Friday: 10 am - 6 pm

Saturday: 10 am - 2 pm

ON-LINE ACCESS: [www.selco.info](http://www.selco.info)

Access the SELCO on-line catalog and informational databases to request or renew books. You will need your 13-digit library number to login and a password assigned by the library.

La Crescent Library's website: [www.lacrescent.lib.mn.us](http://www.lacrescent.lib.mn.us)

## **MOTOR VEHICLE DEPARTMENT**

315 Main Street

507-895-4627

Monday - Friday: 7:30 am to 4:00 pm

Services available are: vehicle registration, license plate renewal, drivers license renewal (call to schedule an appt), DNR licensing: watercraft, snowmobile, and ATV. **Please arrive no later than 3:30 for title work.**

Behind the Wheel testing and written tests: Contact the City of Winona to schedule (507) 312-2670.

New residents must change their license within 60 days after moving to Minnesota from another state (a written test must be taken) or 30 days after a change of address within the state.

## **NEWSPAPER**

The *Houston County News*, the official City newspaper that carries public notices, is published weekly and distributed to all households free of charge. The *Houston County News* is part of the *La Crosse Tribune - La Crosse, WI*.

## **PARKS**

Frank Kistler Memorial Park: located at 608 South 7th Street. The park is equipped with play equipment & summer aquatic center.



Parks cont'd

The Aquatic Center typically opens Memorial Day weekend and closes at the end of August. Swimming lessons, log rolling lessons, open swim, family swim and adult swim times are available (fees apply).

Old Hickory Park: located on the north end of town between Jonathan & Red Apple Streets. The park is equipped with play equipment, soccer and baseball fields, basketball and volleyball courts. Two shelter houses are also available for rental (to rent, call city hall at (507) 895-2595).

Valley Lane Park: located in the Crescent Valley Addition off of County Hwy 6. This park has play structures.

Valley South Park: located on Juniper Street. This park has play structures and is used in the winter for sliding.

Veteran's Park: located off North Chestnut Street behind the Best Western Hotel and La Crescent Area Event Center. The park consists of play equipment, skate park and baseball field.

Wieser Park: located on County Hwy 6. This park has pickleball courts, playground, year-round Pavilion available to rent for events.

## **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

315 Main Street

507-895-4414 (office/non-emergency)

Emergency - 911

The police department is fully staffed to provide 24-hour police protection.

## **POST OFFICE**

230 Main Street

507-895-2233

## **PUBLIC WORKS**

315 Main Street

507-895-4971

The Public Works Department maintains the water and sewer utilities as well as the maintenance of the streets.

During normal business hours emergencies may be reported by calling (507) 895-2595. During other times, emergencies can be reported by calling the Police Department (507) 895-4414. The police will contact one of the City's public work employees to respond to the problem.

### Water

The City of La Crescent is served by a city-owned and operated water utility. The water supply comes from wells, with a total pumping capacity of about 2690 gallons per minute. The City has 2 reservoirs. The water is chlorinated and fluoridated daily. The water hardness is 19 grains.

### Sewer Backups

If your sanitary sewer backs up, call the maintenance department during normal business hours (507) 895-2037. After hours, call the Police Department at (507) 895-4414 and they will contact the utility worker on call.

The main sewer line will be investigated and the necessary action taken. If, however, the problem exists in the sanitary sewer service, which connects the structure to the main sewer line, it would be the property owner's responsibility to have the problem corrected.

Note: many homeowners' insurance policies exclude sewer backups so homeowners are encouraged to talk to their agent about protection. The City is only liable if the backup was caused by the City's negligence.

### RECREATION

315 Main Street  
507-895-2595

The City offers an extensive summer recreation program including swimming lessons, log rolling, baseball, softball, basketball, volleyball, golfing & tennis. Bulletins are available at City Hall in April and are also distributed to students at their school.

### REFUSE AND RECYCLING COLLECTION

Refuse is collected each Wednesday. You do not need to contact anyone to begin service. Simply purchase specially marked "City of La Crescent" bags (found at City Hall, Quillins, Kwik Trips, and Pump 4 less) and place them on the curb/alley for pickup.

The City has an extensive recycling program, which cuts the costs associated with refuse. If a recycling cart was not left at your new place of residence or you have a newly constructed home, please contact City Hall at (507) 895-2595. Information sheets explain the recycling process as well as a calendar (**recycling is picked up every other Wednesday**) are available at City Hall or on our website:

[www.cityoflacrescent-mn.gov](http://www.cityoflacrescent-mn.gov)

### SCHOOLS

- La Crescent - Hokah Public Elementary School  
504 S. Oak Street, (507) 895-4428
- La Crescent - Hokah Senior High/Middle School  
1301 Lancer Blvd., (507) 895-4474
- Early Childhood and Family Education Office  
703 S. 11th Street  
(507) 895-8731
- Community Education  
703 S. 11th Street  
(507) 895-5150
- La Crescent Montessori Academy  
1116 S. Oak St.  
(507) 895-4054
- Crucifixion Catholic Elementary School  
420 S. 2nd St.  
(507) 895-4402

### SENIOR DINING

Community Center  
331 S. 1st Street  
(507) 895-6585

La Crescent Senior Dining is served Monday - Friday at 11:15 a.m. Everyone 60 and over is welcome. Call one day in advance for reservations between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

### TRANSPORTATION

The La Crosse MTU provides public bus transportation. Bus schedules are available at City Hall or you can call the MTU office at (608) 789-7350. Bus service connects with La Crosse, WI.



### UTILITIES

**Cable:** Charter Communications - (866) 874-2389  
Acentek - (888) 404-4940

**Electricity:** Xcel Energy - (800) 895-4999

**Gas:** MN Energy Resources - (888) 404-9508

Utilities cont'd

**Telephone:** AcenTek - (888) 404-4940

**Water:** City of La Crescent - (507) 895-2595

### UTILITY BILLS

Water meters are read and water and sewer is billed quarterly based on usage. For your convenience, a drop box is located on the right side of the wall by the front door of City Hall for payment any time of the week. You may also pay online with (PSN) Payment Service Network. For more information on PSN visit our website: [www.cityoflacrescent-mn.gov](http://www.cityoflacrescent-mn.gov) and select the 'Pay My Bill' tab.

### VOTING

Pre-registration for those who are not currently registered voters in La Crescent closes 20 day prior to any election, pursuant to law. You may register to vote up to 20 days before and election by filling out a registration card, available at City Hall, which you will then mail to the Houston County Courthouse. Online registration can be done by visiting the MN Secretary of State website.

Eligible voters may register and vote on Election Day if they have the proper identification. Only the following items can be accepted as sufficient identification for election-day registration:

- Valid Minnesota driver's license or receipt
- Minnesota identification card
- Student identification card showing valid address
- Ineffective registration card
- A witness, from your precinct, who will vouch for you
- Prior registration in the precinct



Registration is permanent, provided the voter votes at least once every four years and does not change residence or name.

Qualification for voting and voter registration:

- You must be at least 18 years of age by the date of the next election
- You must be a citizen of the United States
- You must be a resident of Minnesota for 20 days

The following persons must also register to qualify for voting:

Voting cont'd

- Persons who have not voted or registered in La Crescent during the past four years
- Persons who have changed their last name since registering
- Persons who have changed their address since last registering.

La Crescent has four precincts. To determine your polling place, please call City Hall, (507) 895-2595 or visit the MN Secretary of State website for the 'Precinct Locator'.

La Crescent is in the following districts:

Congressional District - 1

State Legislative District 31A and 31B

For more information on all of the topics in this booklet, please visit our website: [www.cityoflacrescent-mn.gov](http://www.cityoflacrescent-mn.gov)

*Once again,  
WELCOME  
TO  
LA CRESCENT!!*



*View from Stoney Point*