# CITY OF LA CRESCENT

## NEW RESIDENT'S HANDBOOK

# Welcome to the City of La Crescent – Apple Capital of Minnesota

It is our pleasure to provide you with A CLOSER LOOK, an information source about your City. 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 if we can answer a question for you or provide further information.

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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, "Camerons". Peter and his wife, Emma, were two of the town's most colorful characters. Peter tried to dig a canal to change the flow of the Mississippi River so it would 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 Capitol 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 know 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 per cent 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.

## AMBULANCE

Call 911

LACRESCENT
ANIMAL RESCUE
507-895-2066

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 $10.00 penalty if delinquent on renewal after February. Licenses go on sale in November of each year.

When taking pets off their property for a walk, owners 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.

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:

| | |
|---|---|
| Spayed/neutered | $ 7.50 |
| Not spayed or neutered | $10.00 |
| Multi-Pet Permit | $25.00 plus license tag for each animal |
| Replacement tag | $ 1.00 |

## APPLEFEST

The annual Applefest celebration is held the third 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 in a September issue of the *Houston County News*.

## 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 – hard woods or charcoal only. Commercially manufactured wood burning appliances are allowed provided the appliance is equipped with a spark-arresting screen.

## BUILDING AND ZONING

315 Main St.
895-4409

The Building and Zoning Department issues building permits, plumbing permits, sign permits and regulates the zoning ordinances of the City. 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
507-895-2619 (FAX)
109 SO WALNUT ST STE 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
507-895-2373

Messiah Lutheran Church
507-895-5673
825 Jonathan Ln

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
21 N. Hill
507-895-4440

South Ridge United Methodist Church
1781 Chicken Ridge Rd.
507-895-2298

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## CITY HALL

Monday-Friday
8:00 - 5:00

Motor Vehicle Department
8:00 – 5
Mon,Tue,Thurs & Fri
8-1 2 – 5:00 p.m. Wed

315 Main Street, La Crescent, MN 55947
Phone: City Hall (507) 895-2595
Mtr veh (507) 895-4627
Fax: 507-895-3045
E-Mail: mloeffler@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov

City Staff:

Administrator: Bill Waller
Attorney: Skip Wieser
Bookkeeper: Patty Nedegaard
Building Inspector: Shawn Wetterlin
Finance Director: Debbie Shimshak
Fire Chief: John Meyer
Library Director: LaVonne Beach
Motor Vehicle Clerk: Mary Loeffler/Tammy Ferrier
Office Assistant: Angie Boettcher
Police Chief: Doug Stavenau
Police Secretary: Lisa Olson
Utility Supervisor: Jay Gillette
WWTP Operator: Jay Gillette

## CITY OFFICES:

| | |
|---|---|
| Building/Zoning | 895-4409 |
| Fire | 895-2083 – office<br>**911 - emergency** |
| Maintenance | 895-2595 |
| Motor Vehicle | 895-4627 |
| Police | 895-4414 – office<br>**911 - emergency** |
| Public Works | 895-2595 |
| Swimming Pool | 895-8712 |

## COMMUNITY BUILDING

336 S. 1st

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

## COMMUNITY ICE ARENA

507-895-4160
520 S. 14th

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

## COMPOST AND RECYCLING CENTERS

*CITY OF LA CRESCENT COMPOST SITE*
507-895-2595

Summer Hrs:
Mon 2 -7 Saturdays 8 – 3
April - September
Fall Hrs: Mon 2-7, Thrs 2-7 & Sat 8-3
October - November
Winter Hrs: Saturdays only 8-3pm
December – March

This area is for depositing trees, leaves and grass. **Location**: After lights, heading north on Highway 14/61, turn at first right and then left and then right (the car wash will be to your left) -cross the railroad tracks (Classic Rock will be on your right) and follow the road to the compost site. Compost is free at site.

HOUSTON COUNTY RECYCLING CENTER
507-725-5800
Open Thursdays 10:00 – 6:00 and Saturdays 8:00 - 3:00

This area is for depositing large household items, textiles and tires free of charge. They also buy aluminum cans at competitive prices. Demolition material will be charged per pound.

**Location**: Located east of Highway 14/61, turn right and continue south until you pass the Flea Market. At the southerly end of the Building, you turn left into parking lot, cross the railroad tracks into the county drop-off site.

## 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 each 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 each 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 ¾ by 3 ¾.

If you post the notice clearly and a peddler/solicitor violates the City Code, you may call the police.

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
(Ace) - 1811
Electric Utility (Xcel) - 800-422-0782
Fire – 911
Gas Utility (Aquila) - 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. Rates are:

Call for Rates.

## GOPHER ONE CALL

800-252-1166.

Residents planning to dig to install fences/shepard'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: DALE WILLIAMS, RYAN HUTCHINSON, BRIAN KRENZ AND BERNIE BUEHLER

La Crescent is a city of approximately 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 5:30 pm at City Hall. Meetings are open to the public.

Agendas for City Council and commission meetings are available at City Hall on Fridays prior to each meeting and on the city's Web site: cityoflacrescent@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov

Minutes of City Council meetings are available on the web 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 and La Crosse Area Planning. For specific information on these committees or to be considered for an appointment, contact City Hall.

## HOSPITALS/CLINICS

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

Franciscan Skemp Mayo Health System
700 West Ave. S., La Crosse, WI 54601
608-785-0940

Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center
1910 South Ave., La Crosse WI 54601
608-782-7300

Both hospital facilities have clinics located in La Crescent:

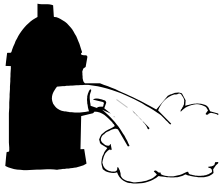
Franciscan Skemp-Mayo Clinic
524 N. Elm, La Crescent, MN 55947
507-895-6600

Gundersen Lutheran Clinic
226 No 2nd, La Crescent, MN 55947
507-895-6610

## 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 then 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 each Tuesday 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 Centers"). During the fall of the year the compost site is open an extra day, Thursday, from 2:00 until 7:00

## LIBRARY

321 Main Street
507-895-4047

Hours

| | |
|---|---|
| Sunday | Closed |
| Monday | 10 am – 6 pm |
| Tuesday | 10 am – 6 pm |
| Wednesday | 10 am – 7 pm |
| Thursday | 10 am – 7 pm |
| Friday | 10 am – 6 pm |
| Saturday | 10 am - 2 pm |

ON-LINE ACCESS:

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

La Crescent Library's web site:
www.lacrescent.lib.mn.us

## MOTOR VEHICLE DEPARTMENT

315 Main Street
507-895-4627
Mon, Tues, Thrs, Fri
8-5pm
Wed 8:00-1 & 2- 5:00pm.

Services available are: vehicle registration, license plate renewal drive's license renewal, DNR licensing: - watercraft, snowmobile and all terrain.

**Behind the wheel** testing is conducted on the 4th Thursday of each month (except for November) at City Hall from 8:30 am to 11:15 am and 1:00 pm to 4:15 pm. To make an appointment for the behind the wheel driver's test; please call Winona Monday - Wednesday at (507) 453-2935. The **written test** to obtain your instructional permit or coming in from out of state can be taken at City Hall on the 4th Thursday of each month from 8:15 – 11:15 am and requires no appointment. Manuals to study for the test can be obtained only by getting online at mndriveinfo.org

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 by subscription. The Houston County News is part of the La Crosse Tribune – La Crosse WI

## PARKS

Frank Kistler Memorial Park: located on the corner of South 7th and Hill Street. The park is equipped with play equipment & summer aquatic center (fee required).

Old Hickory Park: located on north end of town between Jonathan & Red Apple streets. The park is equipped with play equipment, soccer and baseball fields, a basketball court and two shelter houses (to rent call city hall at 895-2595)

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

Veteran's Park is located off North Chestnut Street behind the American Legion. The park consists of play equipment and 3 shelters, which are available to rent for $25.00 per shelter.

## POLICE DEPARTMENT

315 Main Street
507-895-4414 (Office)
Emergency – 911

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

## POST OFFICE

(Listed in the phone book under "United States")

230 Main Street
507-895-2233

## PUBLIC WORKS

315 Main Street
507-895-2595

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 895-2595. During other times, emergencies can be reported by calling the Police Department 895-4414. The police will contact one of the City's public works 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 8-5. After these hours call the Police Department 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

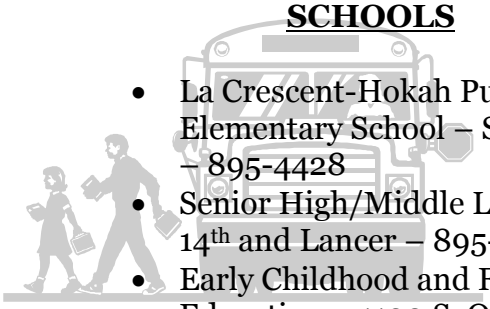
The City offers an extensive summer recreation program including swimming lessons, log rolling, baseball, softball, basketball, volleyball, golfing & tennis. Bulletins are available at City Hall the second Monday of April and are distributed to the schools.

## 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 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 green recycling bin was not left at your new place of residence or you have a newly constructed home, you can pick up your free bin at City Hall. Information sheets explaining the recycling process are also available at City Hall.

## SCHOOLS



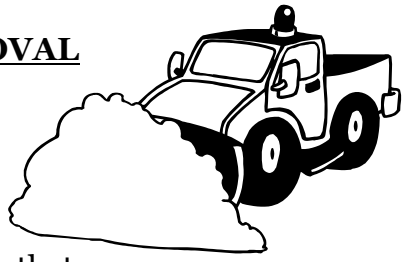
- La Crescent-Hokah Public Elementary School – S. 4th & Oak – 895-4428
- Senior High/Middle Level – S. 14th and Lancer – 895-5021
- Early Childhood and Family Education – 1120 S. Oak St. – 895-8731
- Community Education – 703 S. 11th – 895-5150
- La Crescent Montessori Academy – 1116 S. Oak St. – 895-4054
- Crucifixion Catholic Elementary School – 420 S. 2nd St. – 895-4402

## SENIOR DINING

Community Center
331 S. 1st Street
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 and 12:30 pm.

## SNOW REMOVAL



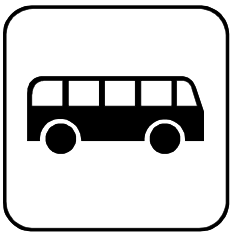
La Crescent **does not** have parking restrictions during the winter. We do ask, however, that after a heavy snowfall you move your vehicle from the street to accommodate the snowplows.

## AQUATIC CENTER

608 S. 7th
507-895-8712

Open June through August. Provides swimming lessons, log rolling lessons, as well as open swim, family swim and adult swim times. Consult the recreation bulletin for a schedule or call the pool.

## TRANSPORTATION



The La Crosse MTU provides public bus transportation. Bus schedules are available at City Hall or you can call

the MTU office at 789-7350. Bus service connects with La Crosse, WI.

**UTILITIES**

**Cable** –
Charter Communications
608-783-5255
or
Ace Telephone
888-404-4940

**Electricity** –
Excel Energy - 800-422-0782

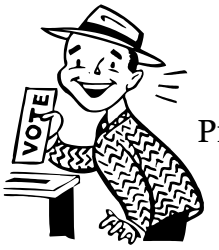
**Gas** –
MN Energy Resources – 800-889-9508

**Telephone** –
Ace Telephone – 888-404-4940

**Water** –
City of La Crescent – 507-895-2595

## ULITITY 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.




## VOTING

Pre-registration for those who are not currently registered voters in La Crescent closes 20 days prior to any election, pursuant to law. You may register to vote up to 20 days before an election by filling out a registration card, available at City Hall, which you will then mail to the Houston County Courthouse.

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; or
- Minnesota identification card; or
- Student identification card showing valid address; or
- Ineffective registration card; or
- A witness, from your precinct, who will vouch for you; or
- 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:

- 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, 895-2595.

La Crescent is in the following districts:
Congressional District – 1
State Legislative District 31A and 31B

## WEB SITE

www.cityoflacrescent-mn.gov

VIEW OF LA CRESCENT FROM APPLE BLOSSOM DRIVE

02/06/12

Pamphlet revised: 12/18/14