

Dear Residents,

Many of you may have watched the recent story on the news regarding the “out of service” fire hydrants in the City of St. Louis. I am happy to report that the City of Ladue Fire Department does inspect all 520+ fire hydrants located within our City on an annual basis. Hydrants are checked to make sure that we can remove all of the caps without difficulty, that we can actually open the hydrant to flow water and then finally flushed to remove any debris. We typically do these hydrant inspections around March and April of each year. Periodically, we find a fire hydrant that is need of some sort of minor maintenance. In those cases we make Missouri American Water aware of the issue that was found. The biggest problems that we encounter are trees and shrubs that are overgrown that make accessing the fire hydrant difficult and its visibility reduced. For example, last year we encountered one fire hydrant in which the resident stacked tree limbs in front of it making it next to impossible to spot.

All of our hydrant records were recently updated into a new reporting system. In addition, we had all of the fire hydrants located with GPS coordinates in 2015. What does this mean? It means that the laptops mounted into all of our fire equipment now have up to date locations (within 12 inches) in our mapping system. This helps us tremendously when responding on incidents to know exactly where the fire hydrant is located. We are also working with Missouri American Water to update all of our hydrant flow records with the most current information on how many gallons per minute each fire hydrant will flow. This information is used when establishing a water supply on large incidents and for pre-planning purposes.

As a resident, you can help us by maintaining a 3-foot clearance around fire hydrants. Below is how the fire code reads:

International Fire Code 508.5.4 Obstruction:

Posts, fences, vehicles, growth, trash, storage and other materials or objects shall not be placed or kept near fire hydrants, fire department inlet connections or fire protection system control valves in a manner that would prevent such equipment or fire hydrants from being immediately discernible. The fire department shall not be deterred or hindered from gaining immediate access to fire protection equipment or fire hydrants.

The fire department always tries to limit any damage to mulch and planted areas around fire hydrants however every fire hydrant will have water flowed from it. The fire department cannot be responsible for any damage to plantings and landscape that are placed too close to a fire hydrant. We will always make every attempt to flow water towards the street or the area of the yard that will be least affected.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding any fire hydrants in the City of Ladue please feel free to contact the fire department at: 314-993-0181

Assistant Chief Jeff Johnson