

UPDATE **St. Lucie**



A monthly update from the St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners

January 2018

Pepper Park Closure

Sections of Pepper Park Beach will be closed Monday, Jan. 8 through Friday, Jan. 12 as St. Lucie County's Parks and Recreation staff perform maintenance at the park.

Crews will be using large machinery and heavy equipment to trim vegetation around the parking lot and roadways leading into the beach park. For safety reason, crews will be closing sections of the park, including various entrances during this time. Signage will be placed at the entrance and around the park, notifying visitors where work is taking place.

Pepper Park Beach is located at 3302 North A1A and is the county's largest beach park with 52 acres of oceanfront property with showers, restrooms, playgrounds, tennis courts, a basketball court and picnic facilities.

Second Change Provides Financial Assistance to IRSC

If you have been denied financial aid, St. Lucie County's Community Services Department's Second Chance program may be able to help. This program is available to St. Lucie County residents who are in need of 10 classes or less to either graduate or to reinstate their financial aid.

Applicants must meet Florida residency requirements as established by Indian River State College. Income eligibility is based on household size. All applicants must have applied and been denied financial aid. All inquiries for assistance must be made two weeks prior to the start of the semester and assistance is based on available funding.

St. Lucie County residents interested in receiving assistance to complete their secondary education at Indian River State College should contact the Community Services staff at 772-462-1777 to set up a pre-screening interview.

Reminder: Tethering Dogs Isn't Allowed Under County Code

The St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners reminds pet owners that there is an ordinance in place prohibiting animals from being "tethered" outside without supervision.

Two years ago, Commissioners approved a variety of changes to the county's Animal Ordinance to provide better protection for household pets. Major changes included:

- The restriction of unsupervised tethering of animals;
- Animals kept outside in fenced enclosures must have a covered shelter, which is at least six inches above the ground;
- Keeping unattended animals outside is prohibited during extreme weather conditions such as tropical storms, hurricanes and when temperatures are colder than 40 degrees or when then heat index is 100 or hotter.

The changes to the St. Lucie County Animal Ordinance only apply to residents and businesses residing in the unincorporated areas of the county. The cities of Fort Pierce and Port St. Lucie have their own animal ordinances. Residents in violation of these rules are subject to fines. For questions or concerns about St. Lucie County's Animal Ordinance call 772-462-8120. The full ordinance can be found online at <http://stlucieco.gov/departments-services/a-z/public-safety/animal-control>.

Calendar Events

St. Lucie County Offices and attractions will be closed Monday, Jan. 15 for the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday.

QUICK STATS

Building Permits:

Overall building permit activity for October saw a huge increase – most likely thanks to Hurricane Irma: 959 permits were issued or a 53% increase from September. Revenue for that same time also increased by 69% bringing in more than \$299,000 for the month of October.

Home Sales:

The housing market was up and down for October. According to the Florida Realtors Association, the average median home sale price in October was \$212,000 – up 17% from last year, while condo sales were down 3% with the average price at roughly \$145,000.

Tourism Tax Collection:

St. Lucie County's bed tax collection kicked off the new budget year in the right direction. For the seventh month in a row - revenue increased with October coming in 13 percent higher than the previous year.

Unemployment Rate:

St. Lucie's unemployment rate continued to drop with October at 4 percent compared to September's 4.1%, and down from last year's 5.7%. Statewide the unemployment dropped to 3.6%. There were 5,300 more jobs on the Treasure Coast compared to last year with the largest gains in Education & Health Services and Professional Services both tied with 1,800 jobs and Retail with 1,100 and Manufacturing with 700.