

Stimulus money will assist City ratepayers

NO MIDDAY WATERING — 11 AM to 7 PM

Merced City Council

Mayor Ellie Wooten
Mayor Pro Tem John Carlisle
Joe Cortez
Michele Gabriault-Acosta
Noah Lor
Jim Sanders
Bill Spriggs

Contact the City Council by email at Citycouncil@cityofmerced.org, by calling 385-6834. Write to Council members at the Civic Center address listed below.

Council meetings

The Council usually meets on the first and third Monday of the month at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers in the Civic Center. In September the Council will meet Tuesday, Sept. 8, due to the holiday. Go to www.CityofMerced.org for the agenda.

Holiday

City offices will be closed Monday, Sept. 7 for the Labor Day holiday. Refuse collection will not be affected.

Contacting us

The Web site, www.CityofMerced.org, contains City Council information, the Municipal Code, General Plan and other information. Contact the Newsletter at newsletter@CityofMerced.org, call the Public Information Office at 385-6232 or write:

Merced Civic Center
678 W. 18th St.
Merced CA 95340

The Civic Center is open Monday-Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., except holidays.

Call us

City Council	385-6834
City Manager.....	385-6834
City Attorney	385-6868
City Clerk.....	388-7100
Airport.....	385-6873
Code Enforcement.....	385-6861
Finance	388-7900
Inspection Services.....	385-6861
Personnel.....	388-7100
Planning Department	385-6858
Public Works (7:30-4:30) ...	385-6800
After hours	385-6905
Recreation/Parks	385-6855

IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL 911

Fire Department.....	385-6891
Police Department	385-6912

Ask the City: Beware of the bugs, and spiders

Ask the City is an ongoing column answering questions that have been submitted to us by mail, email or phone. Readers can submit questions to the addresses below.

I've noticed some spiders that have been trying to live on the handles of my garbage cans. I am concerned that someone might get bitten and wanted to know if there is anything the City could do to warn people about the potential problem.

G.P.

Spiders can be scary little critters in science fiction, and in real life. Spider bites have been known to do nasty, ghastly things to people, including kill them.

Now for the good news: Most spiders don't bite, and most spider bites don't cause anything more than a mild sting or itch.

Some simple precautions will protect you. Look before you stick your hands any-

where, including the handles of a garbage can. If it's dark and you can't see, wear gloves.

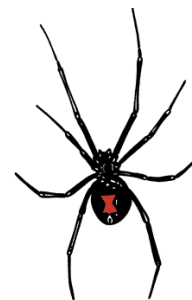
Prevent the spiders from hanging out where you don't want them.

Sweep the webs away or vacuum them off the walls, eaves and corners.

Don't rely on pesticides to eliminate them. Unless you spray the spider directly, odds are the pesticide will pose a greater risk to you and your pets than the bugs.

The bottom line, there are few fatalities from spider bites. The California Poison Control System says there hasn't been a death from a black widow spider (shown above) in the U.S. in over 10 years.

Just be careful out there.



Downtown SummerFest

The Downtown Merced SummerFest continues from 5 to 8 p.m. Thursdays through August 20.

The street faire, food festival, fun-a-thon will feature artisans, crafts, farm-fresh produce, music, food booths and kids' stuff.

It takes place on Main and Canal streets, and Bob Hart Square.

Low-interest loans available

The City of Merced Housing Division has low interest loan funding available for homeowners who reside within the city limits.

The loans, at 3 percent interest, could be used for minor repairs or the replacement of items such as carpet and vinyl flooring, roof, windows and air conditioning. The loans also can be used

for minor plumbing and minor electrical work.

Loan eligibility is based on U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development income guidelines.

To find out if you qualify for assistance, call the City Housing Division at 385-6863, or visit the office on the first floor of the Merced Civic Center at 678 West 18th Street.

Think Green

Summertime is a green time, too

- ✓ Setting your air conditioner 5 degrees higher will save up to 20 percent on cooling costs.
- ✓ Use fans to make indoor temperatures feel cooler, most ceiling fans use less energy than a light bulb.
- ✓ Have your air conditioning unit serviced to cut 15 percent of cooling costs.
- ✓ Don't try to cool the great outdoors — Seal cracks, gaps, leaks and add insulation to save up to 20 percent on home cooling costs.
- ✓ Keep windows and doors shut and shades closed during the day, to keep your house cool and reduce air conditioning needs.
- ✓ Have your heating and cooling ducts professionally sealed to save up to \$190 per year.
- ✓ Install a programmable thermostat and only cool the house when you're home — It can save up to \$160 per year and pays for itself in 6-9 months.
- ✓ Replace incandescent light bulbs with CFLs to save on lighting and cooling bills. 90 percent of the energy used by incandescent bulbs produces heat, not light.
- ✓ If your old air conditioner breaks down, consider a high efficiency replacement. Replacing a 10-year-old central AC unit with an Energy Star qualified model can cut up to 40 percent of cooling costs.