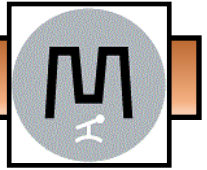


## City Council Message



August 2019



**Brett Hales**

Just a few short weeks until the last holiday of the summer! Yes, Memorial Day and Labor Day are often considered the bookends of the warm, lazy days of summer. What we associate with carefree vacations, amusement parks, outdoor concerts, art festivals, hiking, and biking ends abruptly as back-to-school sales begin again. The Labor Day weekend represents the final opportunity for a quick getaway before reality sets in – early mornings, carpools, school clothes, and the endless activities that dot our calendars.

What does Labor Day really stand for?

The first celebration was September 5, 1882 – yes, more than 135 years ago – in New York City when 10,000 citizens marched down the streets of Manhattan for labor rights. There are a couple of theories on the origination of the holiday, however, both focus on the Central Labor Union, the American Federation of Labor, and a holiday for the working classes. A parade for public demonstration of organized labor's solidarity and strength was followed by a picnic and frequently, speeches by prominent labor leaders. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, six-day work weeks and 12-hour days were common.

Oregon, in 1887, was the first state to officially set-aside the first Monday in September as a public holiday, afterwards, thirty states followed suit. The first official federal Labor Day was celebrated in 1894 after Grover Cleveland signed the act establishing the holiday.

Canada celebrates Labor Day the same as in the USA, however, more than 80 countries celebrate International Workers Day on May 1 – the traditional European May Day festival.

While Labor Day is the unofficial end of summer, it also signifies the end of hot dog season. The National Hot Dog and Sausage Council says Americans eat seven billion hot dogs between Memorial Day and Labor Day. It is also the end of outdoor swimming in most areas, and in fashion circles, dating back to the Victorian era, it is the last day when it is considered acceptable to wear white clothing. Unfortunately, it is the end of three-day weekends until November.

Some beginnings are associated with Labor Day - the holiday symbolizes the opening of college football and the NFL season, and, of course, back to school for many.

Labor Day is notorious for retail sales, meaning store employees must work on a day specifically set-aside to recognize labor appreciation. Other notable professionals are also expected to work - public safety officers, fire fighters, nurses, and more. Be sure to thank them for their service!

Let me take this opportunity to caution you to take extra care in driving over the holiday. Risk factors include fatigue, impaired driving, long distance travel, speeding and unfamiliar roadways. According to the Utah Department of Public Safety, highway death counts increase over three-day weekends and in 2017, Labor Day death tallies ranked third, behind 4<sup>th</sup> of July and Thanksgiving.

So, this year, on Labor Day eat a hot dog, go swimming, have a picnic, shop a sale and return home safely at the end of this final summer sojourn.