

# CITY SOURCE



Your source for City news and information



## Snow removal policies

Winter is upon us. Given mid-Missouri’s winter weather track record, we could see no snow or ice or we could see a lot. Regardless, as we mentioned in last month’s Street Talk, the City of Columbia is prepared to respond.

It’s likely a good time to review the policies, vetted by the City Council, which Public Works operates under when winter weather does strike.

### For snow events with less than 4 inches of snow

- City crews will plow and treat first and second priority streets to a passable condition, utilizing overtime if necessary
- Crews will plow and treat residential streets to a passable condition during regular working hours only (M-F 8-5)

### For snow events with more than 4 inches of snow

- City crews will plow and treat first and second priority streets to a passable condition, utilizing overtime if necessary, and then;
- Crews will plow and treat residential streets to a passable condition utilizing overtime if necessary

The City defines streets as passable, that although the road may still be snow packed, at least one travel lane is accessible for a front wheel drive vehicle at speeds and driving conditions below the normal posted speed limits. Your vehicle’s condition and your driving skills also determine your ability to navigate roads defined as passable.

While each winter weather event is slightly different, City policy allows staff to ramp up or down as needed to meet the challenges.

## Pet safety in the winter



The Columbia/Boone County Department of Public Health and Human Services wants to protect all citizens during the winter months—even the furry ones. Winter weather requires a little extra attention to keep pets safe and warm. Follow these tips to ensure your pal stays healthy this winter.

- Check your pet’s water regularly to make sure it’s not frozen.
- Provide a dry space for your pet—a doghouse works perfectly. Put straw or blankets inside so your pet can snuggle in.
- Bang loudly on the hood of your vehicle before you start the engine. Cats like to get up in the engine of a vehicle where it is warm. Banging loudly gives these animals a chance to escape before you get moving.

As always, if you think someone isn’t providing adequate care for a pet, contact Animal Control at 573-449-1888.

Stay connected with Nixle alerts to receive information about when to move your vehicle from priority snow routes.

Stay connected ...  
Free Nixle alerts from Columbia Public Works let you know when to move your vehicle(s) from Priority Snow Routes. It's easy and it's free.  
Text COLUMBIAPW to 888777 to sign up

Powered by nixle

## Scam watch 2016

Every year, thousands of people lose money to scams. From phone scams to Internet scams, Columbia residents have undoubtedly fallen victim to them, especially in 2015. Nearly 914 fraud reports were taken through November 2015 by Columbia Police Department officers; that is approximately 164 more fraud reports than that time in 2014. From a few dollars to an entire life's savings—gone in an instant. Scammers will say anything to cheat people out of money.

One of the more popular scams Columbia residents experienced last year was the warrant phone scam. Scammers would manipulate caller ID to make the number appear to come from CPD or the Boone County Sheriff's Department. The scammer told the potential victim there was a warrant out for their, or a family member's, arrest and advised the victim they could pay a fine over the phone to adjudicate the warrant. Victims wired money through MoneyGrams and bought prepaid credit cards, providing the information to the scammer. The concept of this scam was also seen with City services such as utility billing. Residents are reminded you would never be asked to make telephone payments on warrants or utility bills.

Seemingly, scammers were not defeated and only improvised tactics. Columbia saw scams in which residents responded to online ads for help wanted. The scammer provided the potential victim an "advance payment" check. The check would be for greater than the agreed upon amount and the scammer would ask the victim to deposit it and then wire the excess back to them. Days after being deposited, victims would be notified by their bank that the check was fraudulent.

Scams do not stop with the start of the new year. The examples given were only two of hundreds of scams residents need to watch for in 2016. Be aware—CPD regularly disseminates information regarding scams circulating the area on social media sites. Prevention tips are available on our website at [GoColumbiaMo.com/Police](http://GoColumbiaMo.com/Police), or you can call the Public Relations Unit at 573-817-5049 for more information.

## Expanded plastics recycling



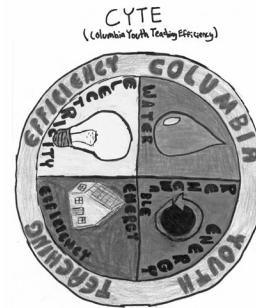
**OTHER**  
Other Plastics

Columbia Public Works now accepts #1 through #7 plastic containers in our recycling stream. You can now place more plastics in your blue bag for curbside pick-up or in the bins at the drop off locations across town. This month, we'll focus on #7 plastic containers. Common examples of #7 plastic containers include: three and five gallon water bottles, certain food containers and DVD cases. #7 plastics are commonly recycled into: plastic lumber and custom made products.

## Columbia Youth Teaching Efficiency

Last year, middle school students teamed up with Columbia Water & Light to help market energy efficiency. The goal with this project is to present efficiency marketing messages in a fun way that showcases our youth's creativity. It also teaches future problem-solvers to think about energy efficiency and incorporate it into their own lives.

As part of the contest, students submitted haikus. Here are some samples that help save energy during the winter on heating costs.



Winter is a war  
Replace your windows and doors  
Don't let winter win  
Sydney Livingston

I'm curled up freezing  
Longing for insulation  
Should've planned ahead  
Garrett Roach

Call us for help if  
A penguin enters your house  
Through holes in the wall  
Connor McNamee

Cold, brisk, feeling blue,  
Air sealing was discovered,  
Now, warm and happy  
Grace Dyer

Brrr feel the cold air  
Coming right through the window  
Switch to double pane  
Audrey Shively

## Turn down your thermostat while you're away to **SAVE** money.

You can easily save energy in the winter by setting the thermostat to 68 degrees while you're awake and setting it lower while you're asleep or away from home. By turning your thermostat back 10 degrees to 15 degrees for 8 hours, you can save 5 percent to 15 percent a year on your heating bill.



[comoenergychallenge.com](http://comoenergychallenge.com)  
Brought to you by the CoMo Energy Challenge. Competing for \$5 million and change.

## Budget breakdown—electric utility

Columbia Water & Light is a municipally owned utility that is run as a separate business within the City of Columbia. The electric utility does not use tax funds and income generated through rates stays within the utility's budget. Expenses of Columbia Water & Light are paid through money collected from customers for their electric service. The rates are established by what it costs to serve a customer. Each month customers pay for the electricity they use, the system that brings the electricity to them and administrative costs like customer billing. Almost 50 percent of the expenditures for the electric utility go to paying for the power supply while personnel account for less than 10 percent of the budget. More details about the City's budget can be found at [GoColumbiaMo.com](http://GoColumbiaMo.com). Use the search words "2016 budget" to see the status of the electric utility's financial state.

## Low Cost Energy Efficiency Tips

You don't have to spend a lot of money to be energy efficient. Many of the items on the list below are free. Other efficiency measures listed require a very small investment and are easy do-it-yourself projects.

### Heating

- ✓ Wear layers of clothing and use extra blankets.
- ✓ Replace the heating system's filter every three months or when dirty.
- ✓ Set thermostat settings at 68 degrees or as low as possible while you're home. Set thermostats to 60 degrees when you're away from home, or install a programmable thermostat to do it automatically.
- ✓ If you have a heat pump, do not make a lot of changes in the thermostat temperature during heating season unless you are going to be away for several days. Otherwise the auxiliary heat will come on which makes the system more costly. If you are going to be gone for several days, set the programmable thermostat so the house gradually warms up before you return home.

### Windows/Doors

- ✓ For windows that receive direct sunlight, keep shades open during the day and close them at night.
- ✓ Caulk window and door frames on the exterior.
- ✓ Replace weather stripping on exterior doors as needed.
- ✓ Replace missing window putty or glazing as needed. Close storm windows.

### Air Sealing

- ✓ Close fireplace damper when not in use.
- ✓ Install foam gaskets behind light switches or outlets located on exterior walls.
- ✓ Seal holes in the exterior walls, crawl space or basement where air conditioning and plumbing pipes penetrate.
- ✓ Install weather stripping around the perimeter of attic access hatches and pull down stairs.
- ✓ Magnetic kitchen exhaust fan covers can keep air from leaking when fan is not running.

### Ductwork and Air Distribution

- ✓ Don't block vents and/or radiators with furniture, curtains or rugs.
- ✓ Seal leaky duct connections with duct sealing mastic. Do not use duct tape, as it will dry out and come loose.

Looking for some help or want to make some larger energy efficiency improvements?

### Contact Columbia Water & Light

ColumbiaPowerPartners.com  
info@ColumbiaPowerPartners.com  
573-874-7325



## Parks & Recreation Calendar

Call 573-874-7460 for more information.

### February

2	Black History Month African-American film and discussion, "72%" Armory, 7 p.m., FREE
18	Black History Month Talent Show, Douglass High School, 7 p.m., FREE
23	Black History Month African American panel discussion: 2016 Election, Armory, 7 p.m., FREE
28	Black History Month Gospel Explosion and Soul Food Dinner, St. Luke UMC, 3 p.m., FREE
28	Boy/Girl Scout Day, Hickman Pool, 1-3 p.m., pre-register, \$3 per child

## Recycling Ambassadors make an impact

The City and the Downtown Business District have partnered to increase recycling in the District. Fiber and container bins have been placed throughout the District. Trained volunteer Recycling Ambassadors are educating owners, managers and employees on bin locations and proper recycling. The Recycling Ambassadors made a tremendous contribution visiting over 200 businesses. The District and volunteers are doing their part to reach Columbia's waste recovery goal of 34 percent.

The City's Volunteer Program is looking for new Recycling Ambassadors to promote recycling and waste reduction throughout our community. Additional training sessions will be scheduled in early 2016. For more information contact us at volunteer@gocolumbiamo.com or 573-874-6271.

## Code Corner—carbon monoxide detectors

The Fire Code requires carbon monoxide (CO) detectors in residential units that have attached garages or a fuel-burning appliance including a gas furnace or water heater. CO alarms should be located outside of each sleeping unit in the immediate vicinity of the bedroom and on every occupiable level of a dwelling. Neighborhood Services checks the installation and function of CO alarms during rental housing inspections; homeowners are encouraged to have working CO alarms as well. If you have a code concern for where you live, please contact Neighborhood Services at 573-817-5050 or [neighborhood@GoColumbiaMo.com](mailto:neighborhood@GoColumbiaMo.com).

## Volunteer of the Month—CHiRP Volunteers



CHiRP volunteers have worked to clear invasive species from the MKT corridor. The group is led by Cheryl Hardy, Jan Weaver, Gary Fennewald and Brenda Peculis.

In 2015, two volunteers approached City staff with an idea. They wanted to develop a program that would allow volunteers, including University of Missouri faculty and staff, to remove invasive plants from the MKT Trail corridor. From that idea CHiRP—Columbia Habitat Improvement and Restoration Project was born.

Jan Weaver and Brenda Peculis founded CHiRP and were joined by other community volunteers. Cheryl Hardy and Gary Fennewald are two key volunteers in the program. Volunteers shared more than 285 hours

of hard work in the City's 2015 fiscal year removing honeysuckle and other invasive plants along the trail between Providence Road and Stadium Boulevard. By improving the plant community, CHiRP volunteers hope to improve the habitat for birds and other animals.

MU Director of Landscape Services Pete Millier appreciates the work of CHiRP. "We hope that this is the first of many collaborations to get a handle on the bush honeysuckle and other invaders along the trails," he said.

The City of Columbia thanks and recognizes Jan, Brenda, Cheryl, Gary and the many other volunteers who have worked to improve the trail corridor through their work with CHiRP.

To learn more about volunteering with CHiRP and in other City opportunities, contact Volunteer Programs at 573-874-7499 or [volunteer@GoColumbiaMo.com](mailto:volunteer@GoColumbiaMo.com).

## Understanding your utility bill—sewer rates

Utility Customer Service (UCS) often gets questions about how sewer rates are determined. Sewer charges are based on residential water consumption during the winter months. This time period provides a true picture of interior water use when water consumption is not impacted by outdoor usage such as filling swimming pools and lawn-watering. Sewer rates are reset every spring based on water consumption during the months of November through March. The highest and lowest months are dropped and the remaining three are averaged. This is your Winter Quarter Average, or WQA.

Each April, sewer charges are reset based on WQA. The sewer charge on utility bills includes a base charge (\$11.01 for most residential customers) plus \$2.27 per CCF of water, as determined by WQA. If your WQA is two, for example, your sewer charge would be \$11.01 + \$4.54, for a total charge of \$15.55.

If you have any additional questions about this or any other charges on your bill, please call UCS at 573-874-7380.

## Get your flu vaccine

There's still time to get a flu shot. If you are aged six months or older, stop by the Columbia/Boone County Department of Public Health and Human Services for an annual flu vaccination. Vaccine is available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at 1005 West Worley. No appointment is needed; walk-ins are welcome.

Thanks to generous support from University of Missouri Women and Children's Hospital and the David B. Lichtenstein Foundation, free seasonal flu vaccine is available to all children age six months through 18 years. For adults age 19 and older, cost of the vaccine is \$25. We accept cash, checks and a variety of insurance plans. Learn more at: [GoColumbiaMo.com/health/clinical-services/immunizations/flu-season/](http://GoColumbiaMo.com/health/clinical-services/immunizations/flu-season/).

The flu shot is the **best** way to protect yourself and family from the flu.



## Boards & commissions

The City is accepting applications for the following:

*Application deadline: Feb. 5 at 5 p.m.*

- Commission on Human Rights
- Public Transit Advisory Commission
- Youth Advisory Council

Applications and information about current vacancies are available online at [GoColumbiaMo.com](http://GoColumbiaMo.com) or at the City Clerk's Office. Call 573-874-7208 for more information.

### Web did you know?

Keep up with the latest winter weather road conditions and Public Works Operations plus much more at [COMOSnow.com](http://COMOSnow.com).

The City does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, marital status, disability, familial status, sexual orientation or gender identity.

City of Columbia  
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**MAYOR**  
Bob McDavid

### CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

<i>First Ward</i>	<b>Clyde Ruffin</b>
<i>Second Ward</i>	<b>Michael Trapp</b>
<i>Third Ward</i>	<b>Karl Skala</b>
<i>Fourth Ward</i>	<b>Ian Thomas</b>
<i>Fifth Ward</i>	<b>Laura Nauser</b>
<i>Sixth Ward</i>	<b>Betsy Peters</b>
<i>City Manager</i>	<b>Mike Matthes</b>



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