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Bond sale brings City closer to Water Treatment Plant upgrades

At the Sept. 18 meeting, the Columbia City Council authorized the sale of the second round of bonds from the voter-approved 2018 Water Ballot Initiative.

The sale of the bond will result in an adjustment on the base water charge scheduled to go into effect with the first billing cycle in November 2023. Residential customers will see a \$2 per month base charge increase from \$10 to \$12. Commercial customers' rates increase proportionally based on the customer's water meter size. A comparison of the current charge and the new charge can be found at

[CoMo.gov/utilities/utility-rates](https://www.columbiamo.gov/utilities/utility-rates).

City of Columbia Water & Light and the Finance department expect the sale to be finalized in October, which would mean the Utility can move forward with the much-anticipated McBaine Water Treatment Plant improvement project.

This project will restore the plant's capacity to treat 32 million gallons of water per day and will include rehabilitation and replacement projects that will enhance the performance and extend the life of this critical facility. The project will benefit the community by:

- Continuing to meet customer expectations of reliable, safe and affordable water service.
- Enhancing water treatment and distribution operational controls and efficiency.
- Improving finished water quality using existing treatment processes.
- Establishing long-range water-quality goals informed by treatment costs and benefits.

HDR, a consultant for the City, has completed the scope of design, and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources has approved the permit application.

Water & Light is prepared to begin accepting construction bids for the project upon the sale of the bond.

Other projects that will benefit from the bonds include water main replacement and relocation, pump station upgrades and well platform improvements.

For customers seeking assistance to pay utility bills, Columbia/Boone County Public Health & Human Services offers the Utility Assistance Program for eligible electric and water customers. For more information call 573.817.6430 or visit

[CoMo.gov/health/human-services](https://www.columbiamo.gov/health/human-services).

For more information on the water bond funding or Water Treatment Plant improvement project, visit [BeHeard.CoMo.gov](https://www.behheard.com). If you have any questions please contact the City at 573.874.CITY (2489).



Trees in the right-of-way



A large tree on Highridge Drive growing within the right-of-way. Contact the City whenever street trees need attention.

Street trees not only give our City charm and character, but also provide residents with essential benefits like shade and clean air. Like all living things, trees require care and attention.

If you ever notice a tree in or near the right-of-way that is overgrown, damaged, or in need of removal, please reach out to the City for assistance. The right-of-way is the area up to 10 feet from the curb where sidewalks and utilities can often be found. The City takes responsibility for the maintenance of any trees within the right-of-way.

If you notice low-hanging branches obstructing sidewalks or encroaching

upon the street, please call the City at 573.874.CITY (2489). Leave your contact details for the City's arborist, who will return your call to discuss recommended options and provide guidance.

By taking action early, we can prevent property damage and ensure the safety of pedestrians and motorists. It's essential to remember that attempting to cut down a tree within the right-of-way yourself can be very risky. Tree removal requires expertise, specialized equipment and possibly street and sidewalk closures. When you contact the City arborist first, you help ensure the safety of everyone involved and protect yourself, your neighbors and their property.

If a tree in the right-of-way needs to be maintained or removed due to safety concerns, rely on the City to help take care of the process. Where possible, the City arborist may also replace these trees, contributing to the ongoing beauty of our cityscape.



Keeping stormwater drains clear

Blowing leaves into the street gets them out of your yard, but they eventually end up somewhere. It's usually in the stormwater drain for municipal streets where they clog pipes and result in street flooding. In extreme cases, water can back up into homes. The City asks residents to monitor the stormwater inlets near their home and ensure they are free of leaves and other materials, especially after fall yard maintenance.

For more information contact Sewer or Stormwater Utility at 573.441.5530. To report a storm drainage problem visit [CoMo.gov](https://www.co.mo.gov)

The Columbia Fire Department awards two community members the "Citizen Lifesaving Award"

Monday, June 12, 2023, began as many Mondays do at Auto-Owners Insurance Company in Columbia. Staff had gathered in a conference room for a morning meeting when a co-worker suddenly collapsed. Staff rushed to her side to find her unconscious and not breathing. Without hesitation, two coworkers, Ashley McCarter and Ashley Walker, initiated CPR and used an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED).

As the "Ashleys" continued care, Columbia Police Officers Tanner Branson, John Hoff, Matthew Kempfer and Chad-Rick Malsy arrived to lend a hand. They took over CPR until Columbia Firefighters Michael McCord, Kaden Hoover, Chris Blackwell and Josh Card arrived and continued care.

As the patient care was being transferred to paramedics from Boone Hospital Center, crews detected a pulse. Due in large part to the quick actions of her coworkers, the patient survived the event and has been released from the hospital.

For their prompt, decisive, and selfless act of courage resulting in saving the life of a co-worker on June 12, 2023, the Columbia Fire Department presented the distinguished Citizen Lifesaving Award to Ashley McCarter and Ashley Walker during the Sept. 5 City Council meeting.

The citizens of Columbia, as well as the men and women of the Columbia Fire Department, thank both for their extraordinary efforts.

Protect yourself against the influenza virus

Columbia/Boone County Public Health and Human Services (PHHS) is now administering flu vaccinations.

The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat and sometimes the lungs. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. The best way to prevent the flu is by getting a flu vaccination annually.

PHHS offers the injectable flu shot for residents age six months and older, by appointment, Monday through Friday, at the clinic, 1005 W. Worley St. Appointments can be scheduled by calling 573.874.7249.

New electric rate adjustment helps Water & Light recover power purchase costs

City of Columbia Water & Light customers will notice a slight adjustment to their electric bills this month.

The City of Columbia has adopted a Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) that has gone into effect Oct. 1. A PCA is a common tool used by electric utilities to ensure rate stability and avoid the need for large reactionary rate increases in the future.

The City's cost to buy or generate electricity is in a consistent state of fluctuation. Because of the City's diverse energy portfolio, many factors – including extreme weather changes, equipment outages and the demand for electricity – can cause the City's cost of power supply to swing wildly from year to year.

In order for Water & Light to continue providing safe, reliable power without draining our reserve funds or necessitating higher rate increases, a PCA will be applied to every kilowatt hour sold across all rate classes.

A PCA can have two major benefits for Water & Light customers. First, if power costs are low, customers will see a credit applied to their bills. Second, if power costs are high, the added charge now helps prevent larger rate increases later.

The PCA accommodates monthly fluctuations in power costs by making adjustments that reflect the true cost of power each month.

Under the Electric section on the back of their bill, customers will find a line item designated PCA-Residential or PCA-Commercial. This line displays the PCA rate for the month along with the customer's net kilowatt hour usage.

The updated monthly values for the PCA and an explanation on how the PCA is calculated can be found at [CoMo.gov/utilities/utility-rates](https://www.columbia.mo.gov/utilities/utility-rates).

Fire Prevention Week safety message

The Columbia Fire Department is partnering with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) for Fire Prevention Week. The theme of this year's week, Oct. 8-14, is "Cooking safety starts with YOU. Pay attention to fire prevention." The campaign educates everyone about simple but important actions they can take when cooking to keep themselves and those around them safe.

According to NFPA, cooking is the leading cause of home fires and home fire injuries in the U.S. Unattended cooking is the leading cause of cooking fires and deaths.

The Columbia Fire Department offers these key safety tips to help reduce the risk of a cooking fire.

- Watch what you heat. Always keep a close eye on what you are cooking. Set a timer to remind you that you are cooking.
- Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove. Always keep a lid nearby when cooking. If a small grease fire starts, slide the lid over the pan and turn off the burner.
- Have a "kid- and pet-free zone" of at least 3 feet around the stove or grill and any where else hot food or drink is prepared or carried.

Don't forget to change your smoke and carbon monoxide detector batteries and test their operation when you change your clocks for daylight savings on Nov. 5. Working smoke and CO detectors save lives!



Let's get to zero: Buckle Up Phone Down



As part of Vision Zero, the City of Columbia has a goal of eliminating traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2030. Friday, Oct. 20 is *Buckle Up Phone Down* day across Missouri.

Recognizing this

day is an important reminder for everyone to fasten their seatbelt every time they get into a vehicle and for drivers to put their phones down or even turn them off when they're driving.

On Aug. 28, the Siddens Bening Hands-Free Law went into effect in Missouri. This law makes it illegal to drive while holding a phone. Although full enforcement will not start until 2025, any driver stopped by law enforcement with a phone in their hand will receive a warning. The law's name pays tribute to Randall Siddens of Columbia and Michael Bening of Raymore, who tragically lost their lives in crashes involving distracted driving. Both were on foot and were killed by a distracted driver.

If we work together, we can achieve our goal of zero deaths and serious injuries on our roads.

Board and Commission vacancies

Boards and Commissions are a way for residents to be involved in local government and to represent the voices of their fellow community members.

The City is accepting applications for the following boards, commissions or task forces:

- Airport Advisory Board
- Climate and Environment Commission
- Community Land Trust Organization
- Mayor's Council on Physical Fitness and Health

Application deadline is Friday, Nov. 3 at 5 p.m. Applications and information about current vacancies are available at [CoMo.gov](https://www.columbia.mo.gov). Call 573.874.7208 for more information.

Jasmine and Jorgan Hudson – October featured volunteers



Thank you Jasmine and Jorgan for being such dedicated volunteers. We are so thankful for your service!

Jasmine and Jorgan Hudson are a dynamic sister and brother duo who regularly volunteer at Household Hazardous Waste Collections. The teens arrive early to help with the setup, work multiple paint consolidation volunteer shifts and stay until tear down is complete. Volunteer Program Specialist Jody Cook stated, “They have a refreshing work ethic, are great at taking initiative and are well liked by fellow volunteers.”

When fellow volunteers were asked about Jorgan and Jasmine, their work ethic and dedication were a common theme. Fellow volunteer Linda noted that

one time Jorgan came to volunteer after a surgery to fix his broken arm, keeping his cast covered by a sweatshirt.

Volunteers Terri, Columbia and Jeremy also expressed their gratitude for Jorgan and Jazz with kind words. “Many local heroes go unnoticed. It is our honor to have volunteered with two of these heroes for two years at HHW. Jorgan and Jasmine bring into this service project a youthful spirit and energy. They have proven to be reliable and willing to jump in to do whatever is needed to get the job done. In addition, they have a positive attitude, teamwork mentality and are respectful of others. They both have potential to do great things and look forward to volunteering with them in the future.”

Jasmine and Jorgan’s commitment to service, community and the team are admired and appreciated, and we thank them for all that they do! To find out how you can volunteer with the City, visit [CoMo.gov](https://columbiago.gov) or call 573.874.7499.



OUR VISION

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OUR MISSION

To serve the public equitably through democratic, transparent and efficient government.

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CITY OF COLUMBIA

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