

# Altoona Life

APRIL  
2016



*Providing a healthy dose of Altoona Attitude!*

## 2015 EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

### WHAT'S NEW?

P1... 2016 Employee of the Year/Spring Clean-up

P2... City Reminders

P4... MWA Grant Project

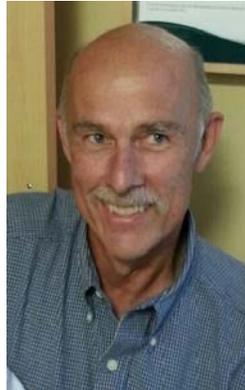
P6... 2015 Employees of the Quarters

### TRASH DELAY

Reminder trash pick up will be delayed by one (1) day the week of Memorial Day

### CITY WIDE CLEANUP & TIRE DROP-OFF

Saturday, April 30th



Randy Ulery has been employed with the City of Altoona Streets Department since 2008. He began his career with Altoona as the part-time street sweeper. We recognized the gem of an employee that we had and offered Randy a full-time position in 2012. Randy assists with all facets of Street maintenance, including keeping the streets looking wonderful.

Randy has three children and enjoys his eight grandchildren with an additional grandchild being added in August! Randy enjoys fixing up his old farmstead and classic cars in his spare time.

Randy has great ability to be flexible on a daily basis for the variety of tasks he is asked to complete. Randy is always to work early. He never complains and is highly regarded as a standout employee by not only his peers but also by his supervisor. The City of Altoona is a better place to work and live because of Randy's dedication, work ethic and attitude about life.

***Congratulations, Randy!***

## SPRING CLEAN UP – SATURDAY, APRIL 30<sup>th</sup>

Mark Your Calendar, Saturday, April 30th is Spring Cleanup! Is that ugly, green chair from the '90s still taking up space in your basement? If you haven't made that trip to the landfill, or if you keep forgetting to buy a Large Item sticker at the grocery store, then you're in luck! Spring Cleanup is right around the corner, on Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup>.

To ensure collection, all small items must be contained in a bag or box.

The following items are examples of items **NOT** accepted:

- Appliances
- Tires – ***see below for option on recycling***
- Vehicles or major auto parts
- Building materials
- Concrete (any size)
- Hazardous Waste



**What to do with NOT accepted items?**

Appliances – Purchase Large Item Stickers from participating stores or City Hall and schedule a curbside pick-up with your hauler Waste Management – 244-7336.

Hazardous Waste – Visit the Metro Hazardous Waste Drop-Off in Bondurant or attend a West Side Hazardous Waste Drop-Off event. For more information about either option, visit [www.WhereItShouldGo.com/dropoffevents](http://www.WhereItShouldGo.com/dropoffevents).

For additional information about how to properly dispose of items, visit [www.WhereItShouldGo.com](http://www.WhereItShouldGo.com), and then select the Recycling Guide.

# ALTOONA REMINDERS



## Park Shelter Reservations

Please contact City Hall at  
515-967-5136  
to make a reservation.

### Enclosed Shelters:

Lions Park Shelter

#### \*1/2 Day Rates

\$75 – residents

\$125 – non – residents

\$100 – deposit for residents & non-residents

#### \*Full Day Rates

\$150 – residents

\$250 – non-residents

\$100 – deposit for residents & non-residents

### Open Air Shelters:

Haines Park Shelter

Haines Park Performance Stage

Haines Park Rose Garden Gazebo

Enabling Garden Shelter

Village Park Shelter

#### \*1/2 Day Rates

\$50 – residents

\$60 – non – residents

\$50 deposit for residents

\$60 deposit for non-residents

#### \*Full Day Rates

\$100 – residents

\$120 – non-residents

\$50 – deposit for residents

\$60 – deposit for non-residents

### Rental Schedule:

Morning (1/2 day) 7:00am – 3:00pm

Afternoon (1/2 day) 4:00pm – 10:00pm

Full Day 7:00am – 10:00pm

## -SEWER RATE INCREASE -

The sewer rate per 1,000 gallons from \$6.71 to \$6.98 effective January 1, 2016. This increase was planned to cover debt service costs related to the WRA and the City's capital projects planned. This is our first increase since 2011.

## PAY YOUR WATER BILL ONLINE

The City of Altoona is pleased to announce the availability of paying your utility bills online. We have partnered with Municipal Online Payments to bring this option to our residents. You may access the online payments website from our website [www.altoona-iowa.com](http://www.altoona-iowa.com). You may also access the website directly at <https://www.municipalonlinepayments.com/altoonaia>.

Once you have accessed the website, you can make a one-time payment (called Quick Pay), or set up a Member Account with a unique user name and password. For either option, you will need to know your utility account number (with the dashes) that is found on your bill, AND your last payment amount. If you choose to set up a Member Account, you can view past consumption and payment history, and store your credit card information on the secure site for future payments. You only need to put in your utility account number and last payment amount the first time you set up a Member Account, but you will need it each time if you choose the Quick Pay option.

Our online service provider will assess a separate charge of \$1.25 for each online transaction that is made. This fee is retained by the service provider, and is not paid to the City of Altoona.

If you have any questions regarding online payments, please call 515-967-5136.

## ANNUAL TREE SALE



Northern Pin Oak



Northway Spruce



Kentucky Coffeetree



Tulip Tree

In recognition of Arbor Day, the City of Altoona is selling a limited supply of trees to residents - limit 2 per household. The trees will be 3/4" caliper in a 5 gallon pot. The cost is \$25 per tree. Pre-sale of the trees began March 7 at Altoona City Hall, 407 8th St. SE. Trees will be available for pick up during the Arbor Day Celebration on Saturday, April 30, 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. at the Enabling Garden which is located just south of Hy-Vee on 1st Avenue S. **No Guarantee.**

**SPONSORED BY THE CITY OF ALTOONA, GREAT PLAINS GARDEN CENTER & TIMBERPINE, INC.**



## SATURDAY, APRIL 30<sup>TH</sup> 8AM – 12PM

The City of Altoona will have a tire drop off at the Street Department, also, on Saturday, April 30th. Residents of Altoona can drop off their used tires at 406 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW (across from Altoona Elementary playground) be-

tween 8:00am and 12:00pm. **Please present your driver's license to verify your residency.**

### Rules

Each household can drop off a maximum of five tires with the rims removed. In special situations where a household may have more than five tires, please contact Metro Waste Authority to be considered for an exemption.

*This program does **NOT ACCEPT** the following types of tires at the collection site:*

- Tires generated businesses
- Farm or tractor tires
- Solid tires (lawnmower, forklift or golf cart tires)
- Bicycle tires

## SIGNS SIGNS SIGNS SIGNS



As the garage sale season approaches, please be aware of where signs can be placed. As a general rule, signs cannot be placed on the street side of the sidewalk.

They also cannot be attached to utility poles or road signs. Signs can only be placed on the property being sold or where the garage sale is taking place. Signs placed on City right-of-way are illegal and subject to removal. This includes real estate, garage sale and any other non-public sign. Please help keep Altoona's streets free of these signs. Thank you.

### A SEASON OF LEARNING—2016 Hosted by Polk County Master Gardeners

#### ENABLING GARDEN—1050 1st. Ave. S

- April 30th—11:00am Arbor Day Celebration
- May 24th—7:00pm Container Vegetable Gardening
- June 21—7:00pm Bonsai Basics
- June 28—6:00pm Nature Art in the Children's Garden
- July 19—6:00pm Children's Art in the Garden
- August 23—6:00pm Using Herbs from your Garden
- September 11—1:00pm Garden Gathering

ALL EVENTS ARE FREE

For more information visit [www.enablinggardenpcmg.org](http://www.enablinggardenpcmg.org)

## CITY BRUSH DROP OFF

The entrance to the City of Altoona brush pile has moved. Residents wishing to deposit brush can enter through the gate north of the Altoona Aquatics Park and south of the Altoona Skate Park. Altoona Aquatics Park is located at 1200 Venbury Drive.

Please have information identifying you as a City of Altoona resident ready when you drop off brush. The brush pile is open from 8:00am – 12:00pm on the following dates:

- Saturday, May 7
- Saturday, June 4
- Saturday, July 9
- Saturday, August 6
- Saturday, September 10
- Saturday, October 1



### BAG & STICKER PROGRAM

#### Compost it! Bags

\$8.00 for a bundle of five (5) bags. Sold at city halls, grocery stores and hardware stores.

#### Compost it! Stickers

\$1.25 per sticker. Sold at many city halls, grocery stores and hardware stores. These must be attached to generic or store-brand compost bags. Attach a Compost It! Sticker to each brush bundle and place it next to cars or bags. Bundles cannot exceed 18 inches in diameter or four feet in length.

### BEFORE DIGGING

Please take the time to call Iowa One Call at 1-800-292-8989. Iowa One Call will mark your utility lines on your property. This service is provided for free and provides a very important safety measure. Avoid digging and planting where the utilities are marked.



Please contact the Building Department with any questions or concerns at 515-967-5138.

### DRIVEWAY PARKING

Please remember to avoid parking where the sidewalk crosses your driveway. It becomes difficult and dangerous to maneuver around vehicles, especially if you are a small child on a bike or a person who has mobility limitations.

## **METRO WASTE AUTHORITY GRANT HELPS RESTORE LITTLE FOUR MILE CREEK**



Picture above: before improvements



Picture above: after improvements

Since 2004, Metro Waste Authority (MWA) has funded projects that improve the local environment and align with one or more of six focus areas: recycling/composting; pollution prevention; energy efficiency; environmental education; water quality protection and improvement and cleanup events. MWA's grant program provides a total of \$50,000 annually.

The City of Altoona received a grant of \$2,500 from Metro Waste Authority (MWA) in 2015 to re-establish 250 feet of stream bank along Little Four Mile Creek. The intent of project is to improve water quality and protect both the public and private property investment along the creek which was being undermined by the erosion of the stream bank. The City removed non-native or invasive tree life and vegetation. City crews removed old rap from along the bank. A contractor reshaped the bank and install rip-rap along the bank. The grant received from MWA

was used toward the purchase of a portion of the rip-rap material. Staff installed rip-rap armoring. City staff was able to complete the project in January 2016 when the foliage was off the trees and the creek was at low flow.

We appreciate MWA for helping to provide a way to improve water quality and stabilize part of the bank along Little Four Mile Creek.

### **Sidewalk and Tree Inspection**

Just a reminder the City of Altoona will begin its annual sidewalk and tree measuring inspection soon. Sidewalks that have settled  $\frac{1}{2}$ " below existing sidewalks, or have cracks more than 1" wide, spalling or excessive sloping will be marked.

Tree limbs that overhang on your sidewalk need to be a least 8' above the sidewalk. Any bushes, shrubs, evergreens, etc., need to be trimmed back so they do not protrude across the sidewalk path.

Marked sidewalks are the responsibility of the homeowner. The sidewalk is to be repaired by the homeowner, or they may have the City do the repairs for them at a set cost. This cost will be determined when all sidewalks have been marked and the project is bid out. Any repairs made by the owner or contractor must be inspected and approved. Only Portland concrete is acceptable and patching is not allowed. According to our City Code, the homeowner is responsible for the care and maintenance of the sidewalk area that abuts their property. Copies of the sidewalk and tree ordinance are available at the Building Department.

### **CITY OF ALTOONA—SELLING SURPLUS INVENTORY**

The City of Altoona is selling surplus inventory on the internet.

For great bargains visit: [www.publicsurplus.com](http://www.publicsurplus.com)

FREE access for the public. Only public institutions sell their items on this site.

### **Hydrant Meters**

With warm weather approaching, there is a need for filling swimming pools, construction, new homes and settling foundations. Hydrant meters are available for that purpose. They rent for \$50.00 for residential and \$100.00 for commercial, each calendar month. You rent the meter, plus \$6.01 per 1000 gallons used.

### **Irrigation Meters**

An irrigation meter is a separate meter that measures the amount of water used for items such as lawns, washing exterior surfaces, washing vehicles, filling pools, etc. By having the irrigation meter installed the sanitary sewer rate fee is not assessed for water usage in the "irrigation system", which would include outside faucets. A separate meter is the only way to accurately measure the water used exclusively from outside faucets.

*According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the typical single-family suburban household uses at least 30 percent of their water for irrigation. Of the 26 billion gallons of water consumed daily in the United States, approximately 7.8 billion gallons, or 30 percent, is devoted to outdoor uses. The majority of this is used for irrigation. In the summer, the amount of water used outdoors by a household can exceed the amount used for all other purposes in the entire year.*

The cost of the meter is \$130.00 plus plumbing permit fee and is installed by a City employee after the plumbing has been completed. The homeowner may do the plumbing if a plumbing permit is issued. You can find information on irrigation meters at [www.altoona-iowa.com](http://www.altoona-iowa.com) under the water department tab.

## IS IT TREATED?

There is a common misconception about the municipal storm drain system. There are two underground pipe systems that carry water away. The first is the sanitary sewer for waste that is sent to a treatment facility, cleaned to meet strict EPA standards and released back to the water supply system. The second is the storm drain that collects runoff and sends it directly to receiving water without being treated. Thus, storm drains carry large amounts of pollution away from urbanized areas.

The major concerns with this type of runoff is an excess of fertilizers and pesticides, motor vehicle fluids and sediment that accumulate on driveways, parking lots and streets. These pollutants are then carried along with the rainfall runoff and move as storm water through underground pipes directly to streams. These contaminants can severely pollute and impair our local waterways.

What can you do to change this situation? There are a number of key things that you can do with your own property. The starting point is to road up as much of the rainfall on your property as you can, so that it doesn't runoff into the street.

Here are a few suggestions:

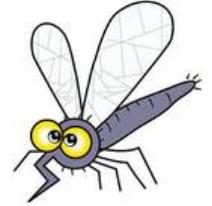
- Install a rain garden to capture rooftop rain, rain barrels will do the trick too.
- Restore the health of your lawn by aerating and then apply a thin (1/4" – 1/2") layer of compost and seed.
- Use fertilizers containing "0" phosphorus (the middle number on the fertilizer bag indicates the quantity of phosphorus). Sweep up any fertilizer that is spread only sidewalks, driveways or streets and spread it back on the lawn.
- Use native landscaping and native turf grass in your yard.
- Keep grass clippings out of the gutter.

We all need to protect and improve the water quality in our streams and lakes. Please think about doing your part!

Visit [www.iowastormwater.org](http://www.iowastormwater.org) to learn more about the storm water.

## PROTECTING AGAINST MOSQUITOES

Mosquitoes can be dangerous with their threat of transmitting diseases, such as encephalitis to humans and heartworms to pets.



The City of Altoona periodically sprays mosquitoes starting in April until sometime in October, depending on mosquito count and weather conditions. The City uses Kontrol 30-30 Concentrate and ULV Karrier Green. Altoona also uses an ultra-low volume cold aerosol insecticide generator/sprayer that targets mosquitoes. Mosquito control and your safety are important. That is why we use chemicals and techniques that meet EPA standards.

There are breeding sites that are created by standing water, which may be found in street catch-basins, subdivision drains, roadside ditches, flood channels, ravines and other public right-of-ways. The City routinely performs larviciding, will keep these areas mosquito free.

***Please contact City Hall at 967-5136 if you do not want the City to spray your area for mosquitoes, or you want to be contacted prior to the city spraying in your area.***

### ***What to Do If You See a Pet in a Parked Car***



#### **It takes only minutes to save a life**

Leaving pets locked in cars is never safe. But when the weather gets warmer, it can be deadly. High temperatures can cause irreparable organ damage and even death.

#### **How to help a pet left in a hot car**

- Take down the car's make, model and license plate number.
- If there are businesses nearby, notify their managers or security guards and ask them to make an announcement to find the car's owner.
- If the owner can't be found, call the police and wait by the car for them to arrive.

## **OUTSIDE WARNING DEVICES**

The outside warning devices (sirens) are activated by the Polk County Dispatch after there is confirmation from the National Weather Service (NWS). When activated, the tone last 3-5 minutes and it is resounded every 10-15 minutes for the duration of the warning period. There is not an 'all clear signal' from the outdoor warning sirens.

The outdoor warning devices are designed to be heard outside so you can take cover for something that is dangerously approaching. While inside your home you should

be monitoring the local media or NOAA (weather) radio for updates on the storm. Outside warning devices shall be activated once per warning period determined by the NWS. If a warning period is extended by the NWS, the sirens will be activated again to notify that conditions will continue.

Sirens are tested the first Saturday of each month at noon. If a siren in your area is malfunctioning, please call the Fire Department at 967-2216.

# 2015 EMPLOYEES OF THE QUARTERS



Pictured above (left to right): Brian Hovenga, Tony Chambers, Amy Hill, Jenny Goulden

## **Tony Chambers—1st Quarter**

We nominate Officer Tony Chambers for Employee of the Quarter. Ofc. Chambers has been an Altoona Police Officer since 2009. He was assigned to the school/community liaison position late last year. That assignment is responsible for the school programs and crime prevention duties, as well as the investigation of juvenile crimes. He has enhanced the community policing programs by introducing technology and improving content. He is an excellent representative of the police department and city of Altoona in this highly visible position.

## **Brian Hovenga—2nd Quarter**

Brian has been employed with the City since 2005. He was hired to work with the City's Maintenance Department on fleet and equipment maintenance. Brian is instrumental in keeping the City's fleet up and running which includes all departments (Parks, Streets, Maintenance, Utilities, Building, Engineering, City Hall, Police and Fire). Brian is knowledgeable on the equipment that he is asked to service whether it is a chainsaw or ambulance. Brian is the go-to guy when something needs to be fixed. Brian also participates when needed in upkeep issues at City facilities and helps with snow removal. Brian is very dependable and hardworking! He is thought of highly by his co-workers and city staff.



## **MUSIC IN THE PARK**

Bring a chair, blanket or grab a bench to enjoy *MU-SIC IN THE PARK* at Haines Park.

Sunday, June 27th @ 7:00pm  
Sunday, July 25th @ 7:00pm  
Sunday, August 28th @ 7:00pm  
Sunday, September 25th @ 2:00pm

## **Jenny Goulden—3rd Quarter**

The job advertisement asked for someone dynamic, enthusiastic, and motivated who wanted serve a community with passion and creativity, and we got it! Jenny has been with the City for 3 years and in that time doubled participation in programs. She has become a go-to person in the state for inspiration and advice on serving children. Jenny took a department that didn't leave the building to daily visiting throughout town and the school district to reach as many citizens as possible. She is a pro at interacting with the public, provides energy and inspiration to the rest of the team. She comes to us from Illinois via South Carolina, earning her Master's degree from the University of South Carolina. She is known throughout town as Miss Jenny!

## **Amy Hill—4th Quarter**

One of Amy's many duties includes the administration of the City's workers compensation insurance and our property/liability insurance. The City experience mod was very high when Amy began her duties as the Administrative Assistant in 2005. The goal is to be below 1 point and with lower ratings comes lower premiums. Amy took on the responsibility to oversee the City's newly formed Safety Committee. Under her leadership, the City's safety record began to improve. The recommendations and training promoted by the safety committee over the years resulted in fewer work place injuries. The City's mod factor for the 2016-2017 fiscal year is at 0.76. Amy's efforts has saved the city thousands of dollars each year and tens of thousands. While saving money is great in and of itself, the real value is in knowing her efforts have made the City of Altoona a safer place for our employees to work.



## **Altoona Public Library Hours**

Monday—Thursday 9am—9pm;  
Friday & Saturday 9am—5:30pm;  
Sunday 2pm—5:30pm

## **Glass Fusion Class**

Presented by Kil'n Time (<http://www.kilntime4fun.com>). Cost is \$10 per participant (in studio cost is \$40). Cash or check (made out to the Altoona Public Library).

**Date:** Thursday, May 5, 2016  
**Time:** 6:30—8:30pm  
**Location:** Meeting Room  
**Category:** Adult

**CHECK OUT MORE  
ABOUT THE  
LIBRARY AT  
[www.altoona.lib.ia.us/](http://www.altoona.lib.ia.us/)**