



CityScene

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<http://www.independencemo.org>
City of Independence, Mo.



Good News For Shoppers...

Parking on the Historic Independence Square has improved. The lot at the corner of Lexington and Osage has been redesigned and construction completed on a \$135,000 project. Landscaping added includes trees and decorative concrete paver bricks.

Water Department Wins 2nd Guardian Award

As a result of the Water Department's efforts in community education, the Groundwater Foundation has named the City of Independence a Groundwater Guardian Community for the second straight year.



The City of Independence is one of about 150 entities in the nation to

earn the designation, and one of only four in Missouri. The Groundwater Guardian program is an international program that supports, recognizes and connects communities working to protect groundwater.

To be eligible for the designation, communities must have an active groundwater team and plan and implement a result-oriented activity designed to educate the community about groundwater protection. The Water Department submitted its annual school tour program for 5th grade students as its result-oriented activity.

"Being designated a Groundwater Guardian Community is a great honor for the City," Water Department Director, Randy Vest said. "This award underscores our commitment to protect the source of our water supply and to educate our young consumers, who will be responsible for our water in the future."

Employment Application Hours Change for City

The City Human Resources Department has changed the hours it will accept employment applications. Applications are now accepted from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday on the third floor of the Police Building, 223 N. Memorial Drive, Independence, MO.

For more information call Human Resources Department at 325-7389.

Council District Lines Realigned

The City Council has adopted an ordinance redistricting the City of Independence. The change was necessary because of a population disparity between some of the council districts.

With the redrawn district lines the population for each district is: District 1 - 28,470; District 2 - 28,430; District 3 - 28,493; and District 4 - 28,544.

The actual areas of change are as follows:

District 3 to District 4: The area bounded by Interstate 70 on the south, Phelps on the west, 35th Street on the north, Haden Drive on the east, 39th Street from Haden to Lee's Summit Road on the

northeast and Lee's Summit Road on the east as well as the area bounded by Noland Road, 32nd Street, Hocker Avenue and 35th Street.

District 2 to District 1: The area bounded by Pacific on the south, Noland on the west, Walnut and Kansas on the North and Hocker on the east, as well as one block on the west side of Hocker, between Lexington and Truman Road.

District lines and populations are evaluated every four years, six months after the mayoral election.

For more information call the City Clerk's office at 325-7013.

IPL Asking for Accurate Phone Numbers

One of the problems Independence Power & Light (IPL) faced during the power outages caused by the ice storm last February was incorrect customer phone numbers in their files.

"If we don't have correct customer phone numbers in our database, it will not match up with a street address in our system," George Morrow, IPL Director said. "If we can't find the proper address, then we don't know the outage location."

Morrow explained why having an accurate phone number is so important.

During a major power outage, the vol-

ume of customers calling IPL is usually too high for utility staff to take each call personally. When this occurs, an automated high volume call answering system is activated to take information.

The answering system asks the caller for a seven-digit phone number. Once the phone number is given by the caller, the system matches it with a street address. The information is then used by IPL staff to identify the power outage location and to restore power as quickly as possible.

If the phone number can't be matched

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IPD Canine Unit Receives Donations, Trains New Dogs

Thanks to two gifts, the Independence Police Department (IPD) K-9 Unit has replaced two dogs it lost last summer and is in the process of training the dogs at the department's new training facility located at 21101 E. M-78 Highway.



Officer Mike Onka & Nux

American Legion Post 21 Ladies Auxiliary, 16701 E. 40 Highway, donated about \$7,000 and Mrs. Jan Huntsinger, widow of the late IPD Capt. (retired) Don Huntsinger, donated \$3,000.

"These generous donations have helped the IPD K-9 Unit to replace and train two police dogs in the unit, as well as underwriting improvements at the IPD canine training facility," Chief

Fred Mills said. "Upon completion of the training facility, it will become one of only 13 certified police canine training facilities in the nation, and will train police canine teams from around the mid-west."

Of the four canines in the unit, Kemo, a six-year-old German Shepherd, had to be put to rest recently due to a rare form of cancer; and Larry, a seven-year-old German Shepherd, was retired after a long career. K-9 Larry has assumed limited duties representing the K-9 Unit at public demonstrations.

The new dogs, who will spend 16 weeks in training, are Nux and Hondo.



Sgt. John Bullard & Hondo

Nux is two years old and is assigned to Officer Mike Onka. Hondo, assigned to Sgt. John Bullard, is 20 months old. Both are being trained by Officer Paul Thompson and will be certified for patrol and drug detection.

Other dogs serving in the K-9 Unit are Haas, a two-year-old German Shepherd whose handler is Officer Thompson, and Rex, a six-year-old Belgian Malinois whose handler is Officer Frank Bunney.

These donations are part of an ongoing, community-backed donation program for the K-9 Unit and substantially supplements the cost of dogs and equipment. About 50 groups, businesses and individuals have donated money, materials or services to the unit.

Donations can be sent to the "Friends of the Independence Police Department K-9 Program" in care of the Truman Heartland Community Foundation, 300 North Osage, Independence, MO 64050.

For more information contact Sgt. Bullard at 325-7872.

Health Department Offers Holiday Tips

Christmas shopping will soon be a major focus for all of us. For many of us, trying to decide what to get for everyone on our list can be mind-boggling! When it comes to shopping for children, not only is there the worry about whether or not they'll like their gift, but also whether or not it's safe for them.

Parents, relatives and friends can use these guidelines when shopping for toys for young children's holiday gifts.

First, look for toys that are age-appropriate. Age recommendations printed on toy packages reflect the safety of a toy based on four categories. These include the safety aspects of the toy and any possible choking hazards; the physical ability of the child to play with the toy; the ability of a child to understand how to use a toy; and the needs and interests at various levels of a child's development. These recommendations are based on general developmental levels of each age group.

Health Department Maternal Child

Health Nurse Robin Neill recommends that shoppers "think large when it comes to buying toys. Make sure all toys and parts are larger than the child's mouth to avoid choking."

Another tip is to avoid toys that make loud or shrill noises to help protect the child's hearing. Neill states, "Ask to try the toys in the store before buying."

Finally, look for sturdy construction of all toys to ensure that parts don't fall off or seams don't come loose. Because if that happens, not only will the child be unhappy, but small parts, stuffing, string, etc. can be hazardous to children.

Before You Dig, Call!

Power & Light	325-7550
Water	325-7658
Sewer	325-7727

Mayor's Prayer Breakfast

Archie Dunham, chairman of the board of ConocoPhillips, will be the speaker at the 28th Annual Mayor's Prayer Breakfast at 6:30 a.m. Friday, November 22 at the Laurel Club, lower level of the Community of Christ Auditorium. To make a reservation call Helen Matson in the Mayor's Office at 325-7026.

I Share

UTILITY ASSISTANCE

254-4100

City 7

- Inside Independence: Fridays, Saturdays & Sundays at 7 p.m. & Mondays at 10 a.m.
- City Council: Mondays at 6 p.m.; Tuesdays at 10 a.m.; Wednesdays at 7 p.m.; Sundays at 2 p.m.
- Planning Commission: 2nd & 4th Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.; Wednesdays at 10 a.m.; Thursdays at 7 p.m.

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You're all SET

Phone Numbers From Page 1

with the street address in the IPL call answering system, then the power outage location being reported by the caller is unknown. This can slow restoration efforts to that location. IPL customers can help make sure this doesn't happen by checking that their phone number is in the IPL system.

Customers can call 325-SERV and enter the six-digit account access code which appears on their utility bill. A series of messages is given regarding the utility account. At the end of the messages, customers are given a menu of options. The fourth option allows customers to review the telephone number in the system. If the phone number is wrong, follow the instructions to enter the correct telephone number.

"During major power outages, IPL employees work long hours to restore power," Morrow said. "Accurate information helps us respond more efficiently and quickly in getting power restored."

New Clear Area Height For Trees at Intersections

The City Council has approved an ordinance changing the clear area for trees growing in the public right of way from nine to 15 feet.

The ordinance requires limbs to be trimmed so that they "do not extend lower than 15 feet above the level of the street in a triangular area, the lateral sides of which are 25 feet in length measured from the point of the intersection of the abutting property lines."

The change was recommended by the Fire and Public Works Departments. The nine foot clearance was not sufficient to allow safe passage of large emergency vehicles.

The ordinance also prohibits any object from obstructing the view at an intersection. It is now unlawful for such objects (fence, hedge, etc.) to exceed 30 inches above pavement level within the triangle defined by the point of intersection of the right-of-way and 25 feet along the right-of-way in both directions.

Palma Wins Block Service Award

Independence Code Compliance Officer Brenda Palma is recipient of the 2002 Susan Paxton Block Distinguished Service Award. She received the award during the City Council meeting September 23 at City Hall.

Palma was one of five applicants nominated. The award is named for Susan Block, who represented the third council district from 1992 until her death November 11, 1996. Bill Paxton, Block's father, established the award to honor her memory.

Palma was selected by a committee of local service organizations led by the Junior Service League of Independence. Block was a member of the Junior Service League.

"Susie Block was devoted to improving the quality of life in Independence and making City government more customer responsive and effective," said Mayor Ron Stewart in remembering his colleague and friend. "She welcomed citizen comment and met often with citizens to find solutions to difficult issues. She exhibited courage, forthrightness and a positive, motivating attitude. She provided leadership in the community and City government. This award honors her commitment to that public service.

"Even now, almost six years after her death, Susie's friends here in her home

town still miss her," he said. "But, we are grateful for the opportunity to commemorate her in such a meaningful way."

The award is given each year to a City employee or volunteer who demonstrates the same dedication to excellence in conducting City business that Susan Block did.

The award is \$1,000 plus a sterling silver medallion and a sterling silver lapel pin. The proceeds come from the memorial fund established by Paxton to honor his daughter.

Palma was nominated by residents of the Spring Avenue neighborhood for her "positive attitude and genuine concern" in working with them to improve the area. Palma, who was born and grew up in Independence, is a graduate of Truman High School. She has been a code enforcement officer 10 years for the City of Independence. She is a member of the American Association of Code Enforcement and the Missouri Association of Code Enforcement. She has two daughters and two step-sons.



Brenda Palma

IPL Upgrade Policy Changes

Improved power reliability. Greater safety. These are two of the reasons behind a new policy for electric service upgrades which went into effect November 1. Under the new policy, Power & Light customers who either upgrade their electric service or build a new home are required to place their electric service power line underground.

Placing electric service lines underground provides a benefit to homeowners and the utility by reducing the likelihood of downed power lines and lengthy power outages. Safety of utility workers and area residents is enhanced since the potential

danger from downed overhead electric service lines is eliminated.

Placing overhead electric service lines underground has been a trend in the utility industry for several years. Independence Power & Light has been a leader in this area. For years, commercial customers and new residential developments placed their electric lines underground. Now this policy includes upgrades to electric service in existing residences.

For questions regarding the new policy, call Independence Power & Light at 325-7568 or 325-7453.

Christmas Season Packed With Fun

Independence residents will soon be humming carols and searching the sky for signs of reindeer as the holiday season draws near.

The season will kick off November 8 through 10 with the Holiday Open House on Historic Independence Square, as merchants invite you into their decorated shops. Enjoy carolers, seasonal music, sleigh rides and more.

Make sure to return for the lighting ceremony November 23, when the switch will be thrown to light the grounds of the Queen City Christmas Tree and surrounding areas. Later that evening, the 86th Messiah Performance is at the Community of Christ Auditorium.

For those who love the festive decorations in the cozy setting of beautiful homes, don't forget two home tours. The Spirit of Christmas Past Heritage Homes Tour includes the historic Vaile Victorian Mansion, the Bingham-Waggoner Estate and the Marshal's Home, open for touring between November 29 and December 30. Special activities at these homes are scheduled for the December 15 Twilight Tour. Contemporary homes are also decorated and opened for viewing December 5 in the Holly and Mistletoe Homes Tour.

December 6 offers two other special activities: The Christmas Lighting Extravaganza at the Mormon Visitors Center, with the official opening of the annual gingerbread display and "Holiday Sacred Traditions," a concert by the Independence Symphony Orchestra at the Community of Christ Temple.

History buffs will delight in three holiday trips back in time. On December 7,



Missouri Town 1855 hosts the daytime "Christmas Celebration" and the evening twilight "Windows on the Past," sharing ethnic traditions lit by luminary pathways. Or take part in a historic re-enactment at the 1859 Jail, which will present "A Christmas Tale" focused on the kidnapping and ransom of Independence socialite Mrs. McCoy.

Children will delight in the games, contests and activities found at the Holiday Christmas Carnival December 7 in the Sermon Center and their parents will watch with pride as the youth sing in the annual Community Christmas Concert December 8 in the Community of Christ Auditorium.

For more details, call for the Christmas Brochure from Independence Tourism, 816-325-7111, or visit the web site, www.visitindependencemo.org.



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CITY COUNCIL

*Mayor Ron Stewart	325-7026
*City Council Office	325-7021
*Councilmember Don Reimal	District 1
*Councilmember John Perkins	District 2
*Councilmember Renee Paluka	District 3
*Councilmember Charlie Rich	District 4
*Councilmember Jim Schultz	At Large
*Councilmember Jason White	At Large

*City Manager Larry N. Blick	325-7170

New Web Site Offers More for Utility Customers www.independencemo.org/pl

Residential customers will find many new helpful features when they visit Independence Power & Light (IPL) on the newly designed web site.

More detailed descriptions of IPL web site services are accompanied by on-line applications that can be downloaded. This time-saving feature is just one of the many enhancements.



Other new features include:

- ✓ an expanded energy education section for kids with links to sites that teach electric safety and energy conservation;
- ✓ a new section on information relating to power outages;
- ✓ easy to use e-mail to IPL to request publications;
- ✓ enhanced section and links on saving energy; and
- ✓ access to on-line billing information and payment capability.

The web site is loaded with new content and features. The enhancements are designed to provide residents with high quality customer service.

Hot Line Directory

Crime Stoppers Tips	474-8477
Drugs	325-6272
Potholes	325-7624
Street Lights	325-7535
Drop-Off Trash	325-7623