

INSIDE GARDNER

W.O.W. initiative helps reduce water usage and saves homeowners money



With warmer weather around the corner, the increase in water consumption is inevitable. That's why the City is reminding citizens to think W.O.W. — Wise Outdoor Watering—to help them conserve water and save money.

“Between 40 and 70 percent of the water delivered to households is used for lawn and landscape watering during the summer months,” Utilities Director Gonzalo Garcia said. “By applying some cost-saving steps, residents can save money on their water bills and use less water.”

City recommends homeowners use the following tips to conserve water usage:

Plant native trees and shrubs. Native species are hardier and more resistant to drought, and are better adapted to surviving under normal rainfall conditions.

Condition the soil. Improving the soil composition of a lawn through improved mowing, composting, and mulching techniques will loosen the soil and increase its ability to hold water; it will also help to insulate plants and prevent evaporation.

Mulch shrub borders and flowerbeds, and around the base of trees. A good mulch conserves moisture, keeps weeds under control, and maintains a cool soil – all of which help save water in the gardens.

Avoid watering during the heat of the day. When it's hot outside, it's best to water your lawn between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. because less water will be lost to evaporation.

Limit lawn fertilizer application rates. This helps avoid excessive water requirements and keeps mowing to a minimum.

Don't waste water. Too much water is not only wasteful but also harmful to the turf. The best way to determine whether a lawn needs water is to step on the grass. If you leave a footprint, the grass needs to be watered.

Allow your grass clippings to decompose on your lawn. Grass clippings are about 90 percent water, so they shrink and decompose readily and are a great source of nutrients to the lawn. Letting the grass clippings fall will return almost 25 percent of the fertilizer to the soil in the form of organic matter. Plus, during the hot summer months, the clippings will help shade the lawn and keep the soil cool.

Select warm-season grasses. Bermuda, zoysia, and buffalo grasses will require less water than cool-season grasses.

Don't water the pavement. Routinely check the sprinkler systems for any misdirected, tilted, low or broken heads. Be sure to fix any problems as soon as they are detected to avoid wasting water on sidewalks and streets.

Program the irrigation controller. If there is a lawn irrigation system, the key to watering efficiently is to use a controller that can handle diverse landscape and weather situations, and then program it properly.

For more tips on both indoor and outdoor conservation, visit www.h2ouse.org.



Accessibility survey remains open to gain more public feedback

The City of Gardner will keep its accessibility survey open until March 15 to give the public additional time to provide feedback on city access for people with disabilities.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Committee initiated this survey to understand the public's access to services, facilities and community activities for people with disabilities.

“Addressing the needs of our disabled community is very important to the city,” said Public Works Director Michael Kramer. “That's why we are extending the survey to allow more people to respond.”

The online survey, located at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GardnerADASurvey>, must be completed by 11:45 p.m. on Wednesday, March 15. Hard copies of the survey are also available at City Hall and the Gardner Senior Center. They will need to be returned to the Public Works counter at City Hall by 5 p.m. on March 15.

“We hope providing this additional time will encourage more people to participate in the survey,” Kramer said. “The input will help the city prioritize efforts aimed at making Gardner more accessible for all.”

Johnson County cuts fares on four major RideKC express routes

Johnson County has reduced fares on four major RideKC express routes: 519 Olathe Express, 563 Shawnee Express, 569 South OP Express, and the 595 Gardner-OP Express.

On March 1, the fares for these routes were reduced to \$1.50, a 75 cent reduction from the previous fare of \$2.25.

The new fare for RideKC express service will be the same as the \$1.50 fare for all local service offered in Johnson County and the rest of the Kansas City region. Additionally, the price for a 31-day express pass will now be \$50, reduced from \$75.60 to account for the lower base fares.

The new \$50 price for a 31-day pass is the same as the price of a 31-day pass for local bus service across the region.

According to the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA) President and CEO Robbie Makinen, the fare reduction is another example of how KCATA and their regional transit partners are breaking down barriers to improve public transportation in the region.

KCATA says the lower fare also provides an added convenience to customers and presents more consistency in their fare structure across the metro area as they strive to create a single,

regional transit system that's friendly to riders on both sides of the state line.

For more information about RideKC's new fare rates or to purchase a pass, visit www.ridekc.org.

Story information provided by KCATA.



A message from **MAYOR CHRIS MORROW**

Greetings fellow citizens,

As winter turns to spring, everyone will soon see signs of new economic development happening all around our city. Groundbreakings will happen for new businesses and ribbon cuttings for existing businesses adding locations. Other projects will break ground soon as well. Some of these projects will be in high-profile, well-trafficked areas, and others may not be as noticeable. The

bottom-line is, in 2017, Gardner will see new jobs moving into town, as well as new shopping, dining, and lodging. I'm glad you're all here as we continue to grow and improve the quality of life for all our residents.

On Groundhog Day, we were told to expect six more weeks of winter, but it has been getting warmer and greener already, and because of that, opportunities to get out and enjoy our community will continue to grow.

If you want to do something for the benefit of your community, I recommend participating in our annual Earth Day/Arbor Day

Celebration (and Greenway clean-up) on April 22.

It is a fun event and is filled with enthusiastic volunteers of all ages, ready to demonstrate their community pride.

Between now and then you will likely want to get busy working in your own yard, or perhaps you can check and see if a plot is still available in the Gardner Community Garden, which is another way to support the community.

This year, for the first time in generations, the month of April will not include local elections. Thanks to our elected officials in Topeka Gardner City Council and USD 231 Board of Education, elections have been moved, by state statute, to the fall—the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. This means this year's elections will be contested on November 7, instead of April 4. I am hopeful, but not expectant, that this will lead to greater voter participation in 2017 and beyond, since that is the reason behind the change.

Enjoy the change of seasons everyone, and enjoy all Gardner has to offer.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Morrow".



Citywide garage sale set for May 6

The annual Citywide Garage Sale will be held on Saturday, May 6.

Those interested in participating can register their garage sale at The UPS Store, located at 814 E. Main St., for \$5.00 or online at the Gardner Edgerton Chamber of Commerce website at www.gardneredgerton.org/ for \$6.00.

Garage sale location maps can be purchased for \$1.00 after May 2. All proceeds will go to the Gardner Multi-Service Center to help those in need locally.

For questions regarding this year's sale, contact Dawn Mercier, of The UPS Store, at 913.856.4501.



Daddy Daughter Ball creates lasting memories

The City of Gardner helped create lasting memories for many who attended their annual Daddy Daughter Ball last month. Fathers dusted off their dancing shoes and their daughters put on their finest dresses to attend this "Sundae Best" themed, fun-filled party.

To accommodate the growing attendance, the city provided two sessions. Nearly 400 dads and daughters packed the commons area of the Gardner-Edgerton High School between the two sessions.

More About the Theme

The Sundae Best theme not only brought out the best dressed, but the best decorations, too. Couples entered the event through an ice cream cone filled walkway, centerpieces shaped like sundaes adorned each table, and guests enjoyed an ice cream sundae bar. To top off the event, each girl was given a sundae-themed party favor as they left the party.

The night also included a photo booth, professional photographer, and of course, music.



DID YOU KNOW?

The City of Gardner will be conducting a Citizen Survey this year to gather information on how well the city is performing and to identify potential improvements and future opportunities. The information is also used by the Governing Body and city staff during the budget process. ETC Institute will again conduct the survey, as they do every two to three years. To view previous survey questions and results, visit www.gardnerkansas.gov.



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Messages may also be left for any Council Member or the Mayor at 913.856.0939

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Mark your calendars



City Council Meetings:

- March 20 at 7 p.m.
- April 3 at 7 p.m.
- April 17 at 7 p.m.
- May 1 at 7 p.m.

*View more meeting dates at www.gardner-kansas.gov

New at the Pool this Year!

Pool passes with photos will now be required for each member. Those who purchase a pass now through May 1 will receive \$20 off a Family Pass, \$10 off an Adult Pass and \$5 off a Youth or Nanny Pass.

Don't forget!

Swimming lessons registration starts April 1

Gardner Parks and Recreation will hold its annual Swimming Lesson Registration on Saturday, April 1, from 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. in the lobby of City Hall. Available swimming lesson sessions include the following dates:

- **Session #1:** June 5 thru June 15
- **Session #2:** June 19 thru June 29
- **Session #3:** July 10 thru July 20
- **Session #4:** July 24 thru August 3

Registration is also available online. Customers are encouraged to set up an online account with ActiveNet prior to the April 1 signup to avoid delays in the process. See ActiveNet instructions at gardnerparks.com.

In-person registration is done on a first-come, first-served basis. Parents can only register their children and each child may only be signed up for one class. Children may be enrolled in an additional class after June 15.

Registration will continue to be available online and in person at City Hall, Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., throughout the spring and summer.



To view the most current calendar of all upcoming Parks and Recreation events, scan the QR code with your phone using a QR scanner app!



UPCOMING GARDNER PARKS AND RECREATION ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

	Date	Registration Deadline	Age/Grade	Costs
Youth Programs				
Kid's Garage Sale	March 25	March 20 or until full	6-16	\$7
Soccer Player Development Program	April 6	March 31	5-12	\$70
Swimming Lesson Sign- Ups	April 1	Until full	18 mo. and up	\$50
Adult/Family Programs				
Scrapbooking	Mar. 31	Thurs. before	Adults/kids 11 & older	\$5
Women's Spring Volleyball	April 4	March 24	18 and older	\$175/per team
Adult Spring Softball	Early April	March 10	18 and older	\$450/per team
Earth Day Celebration	April 22	April 14	All ages	Free
Pool Pass Early Bird Deadline	Now-Until May 1	May 1	Ages 3-61	\$65-140 (Before discount)