



# Inside Gardner Utilities

Official Utility News for the City of Gardner



## Gardner Energy Declares Rate Moratorium

The Gardner City Council approved the City's 2011 Annual Budget on August 16, 2010. The budget for Gardner Energy, which was previously reviewed and approved by the Electric Utility Board, was included. The Gardner Energy Budget was based on several goals and assumptions. These goals and assumptions were developed to position the utility financially to continue to provide competitive rates with superior service response. Since Gardner Energy has not implemented a rate

increase for over eighteen months, Gardner Energy's residential rate is already less than the competition in the area. The 2011 Budget will NOT require a rate increase. In fact, at this time the five year budget which extends thru 2015 did NOT include an increase in rates. This is good news for those Gardner residents who receive electric service from Gardner Energy!

### Here's an energy saving Tip from Gardner Energy...

This has been a long HOT summer and customers are probably wondering what they can do to reduce energy consumption year around. The "Smart" Power Strip is an electronic device that claims to do just that. It can be easily installed by a consumer and starts paying dividends immediately.



Smart Strip monitors power consumption and can sense when your computer, television or other devices plugged into it are switched off. Upon accessing this information and finding out the device is off, it automatically cuts power to these devices to eliminate their "phantom load", eliminating the idle current drawn.

There are a couple of different models and options. They run from \$30 to \$40. The Smart Strip claims it will pay for itself in as little as six weeks. Check your local home improvement or hardware store for various brands and more information.



### Yard Signs cannot be placed in city rights-of-way

During election season, the city usually sees a proliferation of yard signs placed in rights-of-way or other areas that are not approved by city ordinance.

Signs placed illegally or those that exceed the maximum size limits will be removed by city volunteers. Signs may not be placed in rights-of-way, and they must be set back at least 10 feet from the edge of the street. Signs cannot be placed between the sidewalk and the street. Property owners must give permission for sign placement, signs must be self supporting, they cannot obstruct traffic visibility, and they just be removed after 90 days. For more details, visit [www.gardnerkansag.gov](http://www.gardnerkansag.gov).

### Upcoming Town Hall Meetings –Hosted By Mayor Drovetta

Mayor Drovetta will host town hall meetings on **September 18 and October 23, 2010 at 10 a.m. at Gardner City Hall**. Topics for each session will be placed on the website the week of the meeting. Sessions are informal and allow for question and answers related to issues concerning the City. Please consider taking time to join the Mayor to discuss issues affecting Gardner.

### New Parks and Recreation Customer Service Hours

Beginning Monday, August 23 the Gardner Parks and Recreation Customer Service Center located inside Gardner City Hall at 120 E. Main St. will be open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The lobby will be open until 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and there will be a drop box located next to the Parks and Recreation window where registration can be dropped off.



Online registration is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at [www.gardnerkansas.gov](http://www.gardnerkansas.gov).

Providing excellent customer service is very important to us. Please let us know how we can assist you in the future and please contact us if you have any questions or concerns.



### Free soil tests

Knowing the base fertility of the soil is important for proper plant growth. This is especially important as the time for fall lawn reseeding quickly approaches. Soil testing is the only way to know the nutrient levels in your soil. Applying fertilizer without a current soil test is sure to cost you in either over application or under production.

Through a grant provided by Johnson County Stormwater Management, a limited number of free soil tests are available from Johnson County K-State Research and Extension. The free tests are good for a routine soil analysis which tests the pH, phosphorus and potassium levels of the soil. Johnson County homeowners are eligible to receive one free test per household. Johnson County agriculture producers, which includes pastures, row crops and commercial horticulture, are eligible to receive up to five free agriculture soil tests.

The test is available on a first-come basis. Samples need to be brought or mailed to the Johnson County Extension office at 11811 S. Sunset Drive, Suite 1500, Olathe, KS 66061. To take advantage of this opportunity and learn the specific procedures for collecting a proper sample, or to learn of additional tests that are available for a nominal fee, visit [www.johnson.ksu.edu](http://www.johnson.ksu.edu).

### Fall is Tree Planting Season

Planting trees has many benefits to property values as well as energy benefits and enhance the overall appearance of our community. Before planting a tree, the Kansas Forest Service website recommends visiting: [www.treesaregood.com](http://www.treesaregood.com), where you can learn the tip necessary to have a successful planting. Additionally, this site also provides downloaded brochures about a variety of tree maintenance related topics. Here are some of the other topics covered on this site:

- What your tree needs are and why
- Before tree buying and planting...
- Proper tree care techniques
- Pruning your trees
- Tree hazards and treatments

The Kansas Forest Service website also answers a variety of frequently asked questions about trees. Visit [www.kansasforests.org](http://www.kansasforests.org) to learn more.

