



# Inside Gardner Utilities

Official Utility News for the City of Gardner



WITH



**HELP GARDNER  
WIN THE  
TAKE CHARGE  
CHALLENGE!**  
*Time is running out!*

## Pick Up Your FREE Weatherization Kit Today!

You can help keep hot air from leaking into your home during these summer months by making some simple and inexpensive improvements, for example, sealing any cracks or openings around your doors and windows. This can be done by using items such as weatherstripping, caulk or spray foam insulate. During the Take Charge Challenge, the City of Gardner will be offering FREE weatherization kits, which include some of these items, to help our citizens make their homes more energy efficient. Weatherization kits can be picked up at the Utility Billing counter in City Hall on a *first come, first serve basis, while supplies last.*

## Ever Considered an Energy Audit of Your Home or Business?

To help Gardner win the Take Charge Challenge, residents are encouraged to participate in the Efficiency Kansas program, which offers Kansas residents the opportunity for energy audits at a discounted rate. For only \$100 you can receive a complete audit with action steps prioritizing the biggest savings for your hard earned dollars **AND be entered to win one of ten \$1,000 rebates for energy efficient appliances!**

To be eligible for the rebate drawing, you must participate in an energy audit during the Take Charge Challenge before September 1, 2011. Residents and small businesses that have already completed their audit as part of the Take Charge Challenge that began on January 1, 2011, will also be entered into the drawing for one of ten \$1,000 rebates. Names will be provided by the Kansas Energy Office and winners will be announced during the month of September.

A full list of local participating auditors is available at [http://www.encykansas.com/auditors\\_list.php](http://www.encykansas.com/auditors_list.php).

## The Challenge ends September 30, 2011, so visit the Take Charge Challenge Headquarters TODAY!

Take Charge Challenge Headquarters  
29550 W. 191st Street, Suite B  
(191st and Gardner Road—Shell Station)  
For information, please call 913-543-3572

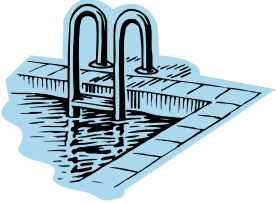
For all of the latest Take Charge Challenge information, please visit [www.gardnerkansas.gov/gardner\\_green](http://www.gardnerkansas.gov/gardner_green).

## FREE Fan for Those in Need



Thanks to the good will of the CenturyLink Gardner Data Center employees, the City of Gardner has fans to give to those in need for the hot days ahead.

Fans are now available at the Utility Billing counter in City Hall for any utility customer over 60 years of age, or any customer listed with a medical frailty on their utility account. **Fans will be distributed on a first come, first serve basis.**



### Draining Swimming Pools

The City staff requests that residents who own swimming pools do not drain them into the sanitary sewer because swimming pool water can damage the Wastewater Treatment Plant. If the chlorine from one or more pools arrives at the plant, it can kill the bacteria used to clean up our waste and shut down the plant until more bacteria can be obtained. The plant uses this bacteria to eat the waste and reduce it to sludge. In that process, the bacteria also kill most of the pathogens in the waste stream and cleans it up. Once cleaned up, it can be further disinfected and discharged to the nearby stream, so the water leaving the plant is as clean as the water already in the stream. The best way to dispose of your swimming pool water is as follows:

1. Irrigate the water onto the grounds around the pool or onto your yard. Be careful not to put too much water on too fast, because you don't want the water to run off your yard too quickly. It will get into the storm sewer/creek system and may kill some of the native plants with the same chlorine. If the water goes through the grass first for at least 100 feet and doesn't visibly flow across the ground, then it will be fine.
2. Discontinue chlorination of the water for 3 to 4 days and then discharge the water across a field/large lawn, etc. and allow the water to slowly make its way to a ditch. Again, keep the flow rate low so that you barely notice any water coming out of the grass.

No matter how you drain the pool, you have to keep in mind that you as the owner of the pool are still responsible for any damage you may cause when you drain it. **If you have any questions about how to responsibly drain your pool, please call the Public Works Department at 913-856-0914.**

### No Scheduled Rate Increase

Gardner Energy has finalized its 2012 Budget. The \$14.8 million dollar budget, which continues to focus on maintaining dependable service reliability and providing superior service response, was approved by the Electric Utility Board at the July 5<sup>th</sup> meeting. There was no rate increase included in the budget. In fact, there was no scheduled rate increase in the five year budget ending December 31, 2016. Gardner Energy, which boasts the lowest electric rates in the area, has not implemented a rate increase for over two and a half years.



### Municipal Utility Ownership Video

Kansas Municipal Utilities (KMU) has produced and distributed a video highlighting the benefits for a municipal to own and operate utilities. The utilities, which are most commonly provided, are water, wastewater and electric. The 15 minute video features comments from representatives of eleven Kansas cities, including Gardner. The content of the video is very powerful and supportive of municipal utility ownership. To view this video, please go to the Gardner Energy website at [www.gardnerkansas.gov/electric](http://www.gardnerkansas.gov/electric) and scroll to the bottom of the page.

### Back To School Safety Tips

With students heading back to the classroom soon, motorists should watch out as they commute through school zones and neighborhoods. Nearly one out of five traffic deaths involve pedestrians under 15 years old, and most of them were killed after school between 3:00 and 4:00 p.m., according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.



#### Some safety tips:

- Do not talk or text on your mobile phone while driving. Texting while driving is now illegal in Kansas.
- Drive slower. A study showed that two-thirds of motorists drove faster than the speed limit in the 30-minute period before and after school, when students are most likely to be out walking.
- Obey traffic signs. The same study found 45 percent of motorists did not come to a complete halt at stop signs in school zones.
- Stop for school buses. Students are at their greatest risk when boarding and stepping off the bus.