

CITY SCENE

City of Columbia City



Hope Springs Eternal

BY MAYOR RYAN L. DANIEL

If you are like me, the end of winter is a time where I start to get reenergized. There are house projects I've been thinking about all winter, flower beds needing planted, and a garage that needs cleared of "snow crud", left from thawing cars. Maybe it's the warmer weather or maybe it's the fact that the majority of snowfall is behind us, but the spring season tends to add some life back into the community. Projects will start gearing up, festivals are right around the corner, and kids will soon refill the parks, playgrounds, and ball fields.

English poet Alexander Pope, in his work "An Essay on Man" stated:

*"Hope Springs Eternal in the human breast;
Man never is, but always to be blest.
The soul, uneasy, and confined from home,
Rests and expatiates in a life to come."*

To put these words in a simpler form, while life is hard, we humans continue to hope for better days ahead. I think this is why spring is a time of renewal. We look forward to what the year has for us. We look forward to breaking out of the confines of our homes and being outside among the blossoms and budding plants.



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Hope Springs Eternal

From Page 1

BY MAYOR RYAN DANIEL

We hear the laughter of children down the street and get excited about hearing live music on our Courthouse square.

In a time of calamity, division, and conflict, I want to encourage you to have hope that springs eternal. There is so much good in our world, despite what social media and the traditional media sources are pumping out each hour of each day. Across our community alone, residents join one another to help the poor and in-need. Businesses open their doors and their wallets to youth sports and community activities. Nonprofit groups collaborate to eliminate societal challenges that reside in every corner of our city. And yes, even local government employees put in the effort each day to make life a little easier for residents. It's easy to get down and see the negativity in our current world. It's easy to vilify others who think differently, look different, act different, or speak differently. The real challenge, however, is to pause and consider the humanity of the other person. The real challenge is to not hit the "send" or "post" or "share" button. The real challenge is to engage in respectful and productive dialogue not to prove someone wrong but to understand why the other person believes what they believe. This is my hope for our community and our society - that we can see each other as human, with dignity, respect, and fellowship. I wish you a hopeful spring and a happy 2026!

Until next time...





Respecting Powerlines

BY SHAWN LICKEY, ELECTRIC SUPERINTENDENT

Spring is a busy season for outdoor work, and it's also a time when accidents involving electric powerlines increase. As homeowners begin trimming trees, repairing roofs, installing fences, or using ladders and long-handled tools, it's critical to stay aware of overhead and underground electrical hazards.

Always look up before starting any project. Powerlines can be closer than they appear, and direct contact or even coming too close can result in serious injury or death. Maintain a safe distance of at least 10 feet from overhead lines when using ladders, scaffolding, or tools. Never attempt to trim trees near powerlines yourself—this work should always be handled by the Columbia City Electric Department staff. Simply contact the Columbia City Utilities Office at 260-248-5100 and request a work order for tree trimming on your property.

Spring landscaping and construction projects also carry underground risks. Before digging for gardens, decks, or fence posts, call Indiana 811 to have buried lines marked. When digging, remember powerlines can be as shallow as twelve inches deep. Striking an underground electric line can cause severe injury, power outages, or fires.

Weather adds another layer of danger. Spring storms can bring down powerlines or hide them under debris or water. Always assume downed lines are energized and stay far away. Report them immediately to the Columbia City Utilities Office.

Staying alert, planning ahead, and respecting powerlines can help ensure a safe and productive spring season for everyone.

Spring Safety & Property Maintenance Reminder

BY GARY PARRETT, CHIEF OF POLICE

As spring approaches, the Columbia City Police Department would like to remind residents of several important safety and property maintenance regulations and seasonal concerns designed to keep our community safe and well maintained.

TALL GRASS AND WEEDS ORDINANCE

Property owners are reminded that grass and weeds must not exceed 8 inches in height. Regular lawn maintenance helps prevent pest issues, improves neighborhood appearance, and ensures compliance with local ordinances.

VEHICLE PARKING REGULATIONS

All vehicles must be parked on approved surfaces only, such as gravel, asphalt, or concrete. Parking vehicles on grass or unapproved areas is not permitted and may result in enforcement action.

VEHICLE SECURITY REMINDER

With warmer weather approaching, vehicle break-ins tend to increase. Residents are encouraged to:

- Remove all valuables from vehicles.
- Lock vehicle doors at all times.
- Avoid leaving items in plain view.

INCREASED OUTDOOR ACTIVITY

Spring brings more pedestrians, cyclists, and children playing outdoors. Drivers are reminded to slow down in residential areas, obey posted speed limits, and remain alert for increased foot and bicycle traffic.

NOISE COMPLAINTS AND GATHERINGS

Warmer weather often leads to more outdoor gatherings. Residents are asked to be mindful of local noise ordinances, especially during evening and overnight hours.

SCAM AND THEFT AWARENESS

Spring can bring an increase in door-to-door scams, construction fraud, and thefts from yards and garages. Verify contractors, secure tools and equipment, and report suspicious activity to police.

The Columbia City Police Department appreciates your cooperation in helping to maintain a safe and orderly community. If you have questions regarding these regulations or safety tips, please contact the Columbia City Police Department.

Stay safe and enjoy the spring season.

“Drivers are reminded to slow down in residential areas, obey posted speed limits, and remain alert for increased foot and bicycle traffic.”





How to Secure your Computer from Malware

BY TERRY WHERRY, IT DIRECTOR

1. KEEP YOUR OPERATING SYSTEM UPDATED

- Install Windows Update / macOS Update / Linux patches promptly.
- Updates fix vulnerabilities that malware often exploits.

2. USE A REPUTABLE ANTIVIRUS OR SECURITY SUITE

- Enable real-time protection.
- Make sure automatic updates are turned on.
- Free antivirus is better than none, but paid suites provide better ransomware and phishing protection.

3. TURN ON A FIREWALL

- Windows and macOS have built-in firewalls — keep them enabled.
- A firewall blocks suspicious incoming/outgoing connections.

4. BE CAREFUL WITH DOWNLOADS

- Only download software from official websites or trusted stores.
- Avoid pirated programs — they are a common malware source.
- Verify file extensions before opening (.exe, .msi, .bat, etc).

5. USE A MODERN, SECURE BROWSER

- Use Chrome, Firefox, Edge, or Safari.
- Enable automatic updates.
- Add privacy/security extensions like uBlock Origin.

6. BE WARY OF EMAIL ATTACHMENTS & LINKS

- Do not open unexpected attachments.
- Hover over links to check the real URL before clicking.
- Beware of messages pretending to be from banks, delivery services, or “support.”

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How to Secure your Computer from Malware

from Page 5

BY TERRY WHERRY, IT DIRECTOR

7. ENABLE RANSOMWARE PROTECTION

- Windows: enable “Controlled Folder Access.”
- Backup important files regularly (see next step).

8. MAKE REGULAR BACKUPS TO PROTECT YOU EVEN IF MALWARE GETS IN

- Use external drives (unplug after backup) or encrypted cloud storage.
- Use versioned backups to recover clean copies.

9. USE STRONG, UNIQUE PASSWORDS

- Use a password manager.
- Enable 2-factor authentication wherever possible.

10. AVOID UNTRUSTED USB DRIVES

- Malware can auto-run from infected removable devices.
- Disable autoplay.

11. DISABLE UNNECESSARY MACROS

- In Microsoft Office, disable macros unless you absolutely trust the document.

12. STAY EDUCATED ABOUT COMMON THREATS. TYPES OF MALWARE

- Viruses – self-replicating programs.
- Trojan horses – disguised as legitimate software.
- Ransomware – encrypts files and demands payment.
- Spyware/keyloggers – steal information.
- Rootkits – hide malicious activity.

Knowing how attacks work makes you far less likely to fall for them.



A Perspective on PFAS

BY MIKE COOK, WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY SUPERINTENDENT

Utilities are often fielding questions and concerns of exposure to per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), also known as “forever chemicals”, from the possibility of small amounts in drinking water to effects of traces in land applied biosolids. Both Columbia City Water and Wastewater utilities have conducted several tests, and the results for PFAS have been below detectable limits. PFAS can be found in numerous consumer products, in far greater concentrations than water and wastewater. PFAS are used in repelling water, stains, grease, and in fighting fires. Manufactures are receiving pressure from consumers to phase out PFAS. There are some practical ways the people can try to avoid them to some extent. Here is a small list of PFAS sources that may surprise you.

Tooth Care – Some dental flosses have a coating that helps it slide between teeth that contain PFAS. Look for flosses that are PFAS-free.

Furniture & Flooring – Stain-resistant coatings containing PFAS can create significant exposure. Stay away from spray-on coatings and look for polyester or plastic-based upholstery fabrics.

Personal Care – Cosmetics, lotions, soap shampoo, shaving cream and other products may contain PFAS. Avoid products that list PTFE, “fluor”, or “perfluor”.

Popcorn – The bags for microwave popcorn have a high amount of PFAS in them. Make popcorn on the stovetop and purchase in glass jars.

Cooking & Food Containers – Avoid Teflon or other nonstick coatings on cookware. Disposable packaging like takeout bags and pizza boxes contain PFAS for grease resistance. Use stainless steel or cast iron for cooking and glass or metal containers for takeout leftovers.

Clothing & Fabrics – Items labeled “water, grease or stain resistant” will likely contain PFAS. Use aftermarket spray-on water or stain proofing that are PFAS-free.

Cleaning – Household dust can contain high levels of PFAS. Use vacuums that include a HEPA filter.

Source – TPO magazine



2026 Limb Pick-up Program

BY KELLY CEARBAUGH, STREET SUPERINTENDENT

The City of Columbia City would like to announce that our limb pick-up program is beginning soon. This program has been initiated to dispose of limbs and branches from storm-related events and small pruning projects. Dates for this year are as follows:

APRIL 6
MAY 4
JUNE 1
JULY 6
AUGUST 3
SEPTEMBER 1
OCTOBER 5

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Limbs are to be placed along the curb in front of your property. Do not place them in the roadway. This is curbside pick-up only. We do not pick up in alleys. The limb-pick up program is limited to city limits only. There will be one pass only in an area. Please have your limbs out and ready to pick up by 7:00 A.M. on the dates listed above so you will not be missed. The City reserves the right to refuse pick-up for those properties it considers not fitting within the guidelines of the program.

ACCEPTABLE:

- Piles that do not exceed a pickup truck size load
- Limbs and branches up to 4" in diameter
- Bushes (without roots)

NOT ACCEPTABLE:

- Piles that exceed a pickup truck size load
- Brush from fencerow clearing
- Whole trees, logs and limbs cut by a contractor or homeowner
- Branches left from contractor-provided tree removal
- Bushes with roots attached
- Grass clippings, leaves, and garden debris
- Alley pick-up
- Branches from businesses

If you have any questions regarding the acceptability of your materials, please contact Kelly Cearbaugh, Street Superintendent at 248-5131 or 248-5115 ext. 2721.

Southeast's New Councilman: Ryan Adamson

BY ASHLEY BUCKLES, MAYOR'S EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT



If you've watched our Common Council meetings this year, you've noticed the City's newest councilman, Ryan Adamson. Ryan was born and raised in Terre Haute but moved to Columbia City in 2023 to start two new business ventures with his wife, Amanda. He quickly fell in love with the "small town feel" and is eager to give back to our community.

As a former police officer, Ryan had a variety of roles. He was a patrolman, detective, canine handler, physical tactic and firearms instructor, and worked on narcotic and explosive detection. Additionally, he was on the Honor Guard and was a sergeant and spokesperson for the department. After spending 20 years as a police officer in Terre Haute, Ryan moved to Columbia City because of not only the "small town feel", but also the safety and cleanliness of the city. Ryan wants others to choose to live here, especially because of our great schools, great leadership, and welcoming community.

Wherever he has lived, Ryan has always volunteered and had a heart for public service, which is what has led him to be a councilman. "If we don't collectively stand up together and work together, we go backwards," he shared. Outside of his role on the council, he runs his own mattresses by appointment business. He also enjoys traveling around the world with his wife and children and spending time with their two goldendoodles.

While Ryan couldn't name one person in particular who has influenced him, he said he has been blessed by a collection of great people in the last several years who are grounded in faith, and he recognizes how blessed he is by them. He emphasized, "I wouldn't be where I am unless people believed in me, went to bat for me, and I don't take that for granted." Ryan would like to give back to others, just as others have given to him.



Ryan shared that his biggest accomplishments in life are being a good father and good husband. He has always tried his hardest and is always growing. Every day when he wakes up, he tries to do the right thing and help out others.

Finally, Ryan shared his advice he has for the next generation. He stressed the importance of putting in the work, not just in your job, but in the way you treat people. His second piece of advice was, "Remember that you are responsible for your outcome. It isn't easy. Do things ethically and right and you're bound to get ahead. It may be slow, but you'll come out ahead."

As the Southeast District's newest councilman, Ryan is available for his constituents. You can contact him at radamson@columbiacity.net and learn more about the Common Council at www.columbiacity.net.

Always Be Notified

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TRAFFIC UPDATES

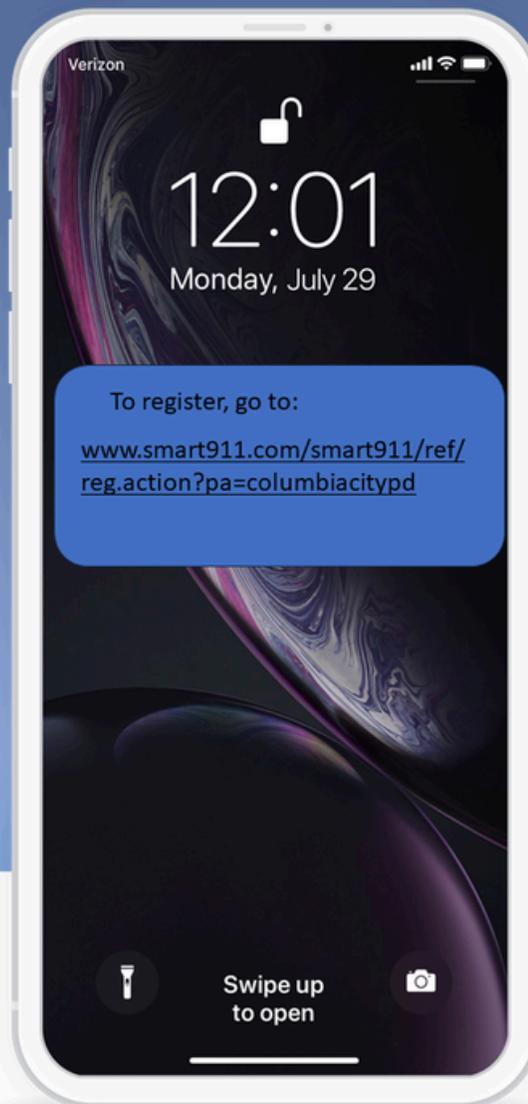


EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS



EVENT REMINDERS

Reminder: you can add or delete notification categories by logging into your account at getrave.com. You choose which type of notifications you want to receive!



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POWERED BY:



MONTHLY CITY MEETINGS

1st Monday of the Month

Plan Commission | 7:00pm
Whitley County Government Center

1st Tuesday of the Month

Arts Commission | 5:00pm
Council Chambers | City Hall

1st Tuesday of the Month

Board of Zoning Appeals | 7:00pm
Whitley County Government Center

2nd Tuesday of the Month

Redevelopment Commission | Noon
Council Chambers | City Hall

2nd & 4th Tuesdays of the Month

Board of Works | 5:00pm
Council Chambers | City Hall

2nd & 4th Tuesdays of the Month

Common Council | 6:00pm
Council Chambers | City Hall

3rd Tuesday of the Month

Housing Authority | 5:00pm
Council Chambers | City Hall

3rd Tuesday of the Month

Tree Board | 6:00pm
Council Chambers | City Hall

4th Monday of the Month

Park Board | 6:00pm
Park Office | Whitley Street

Please check the City of Columbia City's Facebook page or columbiacity.net for meeting changes.

Meetings can be viewed live on YouTube at www.youtube.com/@cityofcolumbiacityindiana