City’s natural gas aggregation now in place

Like the Electrical Aggregation Program, Springdale’s Natural Gas Aggregation Program is now up and running! By this time, Springdale residents with natural gas should have noticed the name of Interstate Gas Supply, Inc (IGS) appearing on their monthly Duke Energy Gas bill. Unless a resident previously signed up with another alternative supplier, Duke bills should identify IGS as the natural gas supplier. The aggregate program went into effect in November with a rate of $4.23 per CCF. This rate of $4.23 is for November only. For comparison purposes, Duke Energy’s natural gas rate for the month of November was $5.239 per CCF.

Due to the fluctuating costs in the natural gas market, the City opted not to lock in a permanent rate. Instead, the aggregate currently has a variable rate. Just like Duke Energy, the rate is set on a monthly basis. The City’s consultant monitors the natural gas market for a favorable rate and, when one is identified, it is then locked in for the next month. So far, the program has been fortunate enough to have chosen a lower rate than Duke Energy during both November and December. Duke Energy’s rate for December is scheduled to be $5.07/ccf. The Springdale Natural Gas Aggregate rate will be $4.83 for the month of December. January and all future months will be determined on a month by month basis, until such time as the City locks in a long term rate.

Residents should be mindful that natural gas rates fluctuate on a monthly basis while adjusting with the market. Electricity rates tend to be more stable and are capable of being locked-in over a longer period of time. As a result of normal market conditions, some months may find the rates for the Natural Gas Aggregate Program higher than Duke Energy. For the majority of the time, the aggregate’s rates should be lower, thus providing a savings to participants.

As was the case with the Electric Aggregation Program, residents who were Duke Energy customers, and had not previously switched to an alternate supplier, should have already received initial opt-out letters from IGS Energy of Dublin, Ohio, and from Duke Energy, informing them that, unless they opt-out, they will be included in the City’s Natural Gas Aggregation Program. The first letter gave residents a 21-day period to return the opt-out form or to call IGS to opt-out. These same customers should also have received a second letter from Duke Energy informing them of the aggregate program and providing them with an additional seven-day period to opt-out of the City’s Aggregation Program.

About the Switching Fee

There was some confusion relative to a $4 switching fee that was mentioned in the Duke letter. Residents, who were Duke customers and who had not previously signed on with an alternate supplier, will NOT be charged a switching fee by Duke Energy. In addition, if a resident has signed on with an alternate supplier, and joins the City’s Natural Gas Aggregation Program later, they will NOT be charged a switching fee by Duke Energy. However, residents who change from one alternate supplier to a different alternate supplier (other than the Springdale Aggregation Program), will be charged the $4 switching fee by Duke Energy. Residents who receive a $4 switching fee from Duke by mistake should be credited for this charge.

Humana RightSource ahead of projections

When Humana RightSource announced last year that it would locate Cincinnati area pharmaceutical operations to the 175,000 square foot Executive Center Office Building on Merchant Street in Springdale, the company expected to have 650 employees in the building by the end of 2012. Projections also added another 550 employees during 2013.

By mid-November, Humana RightSource had far exceeded its initial projections, employing 700 people. The company expects to employ another 200 people by the end of the year and an additional 200 employees by the end of the first quarter of 2013.

The RightSource unit which Humana formed in 2006 provides mail-order pharmacy services to Humana health plan members and to other patients whose employers have hired Humana as their pharmacy benefits manager.

In addition to the sheer number of high wage jobs, the attraction of Humana has allowed the City to diversify its office economic base. Other newly located businesses in Springdale have included First Financial Bank, Cincinnati Bell Technology Solutions and Sugar Creek Packing Company. This diversification helps to create a more stable economic base for the community.

Residents who signed on with an alternate supplier and now wish to join the City’s Aggregate Program can begin the process by contacting their current supplier to ask if there is a cancellation fee. They can then make a determination whether to cancel. After cancelling, they should then contact IGS Energy at 1-800-280-4474 to request to join the Springdale Aggregation. These calls must be made within one billing cycle to avoid the $4 fee by Duke Energy.
Help snow crews this winter!
Prepare now for winter’s wrath

It’s just a matter of time before a fluffy white covering blankets the local landscape. Springdale’s Public Works Department is prepared for winter’s worst with stockpiled road salt and plows ready for action.

Short of climbing behind the wheel of a plow, there’s plenty residents can do to assist snow plow operators in their efforts to safely and efficiently clear the roadways:

- Delay non-essential travel until after the roads have been cleared.
- Park vehicles off the street. Remove items, such as basketball hoops, from the right-of-way. This will enable plow operators to clear the roadway more efficiently. Driving a plow is challenging enough. Imagine having to steer around parked cars on a slippery street.
- Do not deposit snow into the street when using a snow blower or shoveling a driveway. Not only does the snow require attention by road crews on their next pass, a homeowner could face liability issues should their actions cause an accident.
- Never allow children to play in snow piles along the roadway. A plow operator may not see them when approaching in less than optimal weather conditions, or if the children have burrowed into the pile.
- If possible, wait until the plow has passed before shoveling the area of a driveway near the street. Plow operators are simply doing their job by clearing the street. The snow must be pushed to the side of the road, which also — unfortunately — includes driveway entrances.
- Stack snow on the left side of the driveway entrance (when facing the house) in order to minimize the amount of snow that may be pushed into the driveway entrance by a plow. Plows typically clear snow in the direction of normal traffic, so a large snowpile on the left side of a driveway will be pushed away from the drive entrance.
- Do not try to pass a snowplow or salt truck. Stay 100 feet back from salt trucks.
- Every truck has blind spots, so don’t assume the driver can see every area around the truck. Never pull up behind a salt truck.
- The City will not take requests for streets to be plowed. Streets are prioritized based upon traffic volume and terrain. Heaviest traveled streets get first attention so that emergency vehicles can pass. Less traveled streets — like a cul-de-sac or a dead-end street — are plowed last.
- Finally, crews are not superhuman. While they make every effort to clear the streets in an efficient and timely manner, they are limited by the severe weather conditions. Please remain patient during major storm events.

Holiday tree collections
City crews will collect holiday trees left at the curb as part of the City’s regular weekly chipper schedule following the holidays. All holiday decorations should be removed. Trees should not be placed in a plastic bag unless they are intended for trash pick-up.

Holidays to delay trash collection
Since the Christmas and New Year holidays both fall on a Tuesday this season, trash pickups regularly scheduled on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday during those two weeks will be delayed by one day. For example, if trash pickup is normally on Tuesday, it will be on Wednesday. Residents whose trash pick-ups are usually on Friday will have their trash collected on Saturday.

Leaf pick-up ends so crews are snow-ready!
Citywide leaf collection has been completed for 2012. Leaves needing disposal after December 1 should be bagged and left for curbside pick-up with household trash. The early cutoff is needed so crews can be prepared for the possibility of an early snowfall. An early snowfall in 2010 postponed the final leaf collection that season until February 2011.
Adopt a Family program seeks your help

While need exists throughout the year, the holidays are a time that most residents realize how fortunate they may be and take the time to focus attention on the needs of others. For the past several years, the non-profit group Springdale Offering Support has enabled residents to help a family with special needs during the holidays with its annual Adopt a Family program.

Springdale Offering Support is a non-profit organization initiated by the City of Springdale that includes representatives from local agencies, churches, civic organizations and concerned citizens. Its mission is to coordinate community resources and unite individuals and families with elements of help and assistance within Springdale and surrounding areas throughout the year.

The success of the Adopt a Family program relies solely on generous donations, all of which are tax deductible. Every contribution is acknowledged by Springdale Offering Support with a response letter than can be used for tax purposes.

In 2011, the program assisted 61 families. As of early November, 53 families have requested help during the holidays. Residents can “adopt a family” for the holidays in several ways:

- Providing a cash contribution to be used to provide gifts and food to local families in need during the holiday season.
- Adopting a local family to directly provide gifts and food during the holidays.
- Volunteering to assist with the holiday project.

To request help or extend a hand this year, contact Marsha Bemmes-Hoctor at 346-5774 or Barbara Thetford at 346-5725.

It is common knowledge in the real estate business that property values for an entire neighborhood are adversely affected by a single unkempt property. On the other hand, well-maintained properties enhance property values and promote a sense of well being in the neighborhood. The Springdale Property Maintenance and Zoning Codes are tools that the Springdale Building Department uses to enforce the proper use and maintenance of properties.

The Zoning Code protects the community from adverse and incompatible uses. Examples of regulations that affect Springdale residents include:

- Prohibiting unlicensed and inoperable vehicles
- Prohibiting parking on unimproved surfaces
- Limiting the number of pets to 2 dogs, 2 cats or a dog and a cat
- Regulating the size and location of motor homes, trailers and boats.
- Placing limitations on home occupations

The Property Maintenance Code seeks to maintain properties at minimum health and safety standards. Examples of these requirements are:

- Well-maintained gutters, downspouts, roofing and siding
- Painted surfaces free of peeling or flaking paint
- Structures in sound condition
- Proper storage of waste receptacles
- Grass and weeds maintained to not exceed 10 inches

The Building Department attempts to keep these conditions in check through proactive comprehensive enforcement of these codes. Over the past three years, the Building Department has issued an average of 570 Property Maintenance and Zoning Code violation notices per year. The vast majority of the violations were corrected without further action by the Building Department. However, an average of 10 cases annually require legal action to gain compliance.

Most violations are observed by inspectors during routine inspection rounds. To a lesser extent, violations are reported to the Building Department by neighbors.

Residents who have concerns about nearby properties can call the Building Department at 346-5730 or the Property Maintenance and Zoning Hotline at 346-5734 regarding property maintenance or zoning violations.

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Garden Club sets upcoming programs

The Springdale Garden Club has announced its new schedule for the fall, winter and spring seasons. The Club is planning several workshops and will have expert speakers in several areas to broaden the knowledge of inside and outside plants.

The Club’s first fall season project was to clean up the flowerbeds in front of the Community Center prior to the Parks Department mulching the area in preparation for the winter. Another project was the Butterfly Garden at Springdale Elementary School, removing overgrown shrubs and expanding the plantings to the other side of the walk. Since the job was so demanding, Public Works Director Jeff Agricola connected the Club with volunteers of the General Electric Elfin Society. Fifteen of their volunteers helped remove the overgrown bushes, replant new ones, plant new perennials, clean up the area and mulch the beds. As a result, the children’s playground is surrounded by bushes and plants that attract butterflies and hummingbirds. In addition to the visual beauty, teachers now have a place for hands-on plant and science projects.

Upcoming meetings will feature a number of specialists in several areas, including the Rose Society, the African Violet Society, Dr. Michelle Andrews, on how to garden injury free, plus Master Gardener Judy Schlinglaw on “Gardening with your Senses.”

The Springdale Garden Club’s annual High Tea has been planned for Sunday, March 17, from 2:30 to 4:30. Space is limited, so early reservations are recommended by contacting Phyllis Cain at 742-4961, Amy Davis at 674-7504 or Karen Reynolds at 671-5930 (kreyolds1@fuse.net).

The Club meets on the second Tuesday of each month at the Community Center from 6 to 8 p.m. Contact Carolyn Gchantous at 328-4046 (cghantous@comey.com) or Joan Knox at 674-7755 (joanknox99@fuse.net) for information. Guests are always welcome to attend meetings as well as featured programs.

Springdale dentist wins prestigious landscaping award

The Cincinnati Horticultural Society selected the dental clinic of Dr. Mark Onady for its highest award for landscaping of a commercial facility for 2012. The award is significant since it considered properties in the entire Greater Cincinnati region. Dr. Onady and his wife, Master Gardener Kathy Onady, selected and planted many of the trees, flowers and bushes that grace the location. The clinic is located immediately across Kemper Road from the Springdale Elementary School.
It’s okay to wreck HIS holiday...

It’s a busy season for holiday shoppers... and for thieves who thrive on the fact that potential victims are not immediately thinking about their safety. Beware at all times:

A knock at the door
Criminals sometimes pose as couriers delivering gifts. It is not uncommon for people to try to take advantage of others’ generosity during the holidays by going door-to-door for charitable donations. Ask for identification and find out how the funds will be used. Decline a donation if there are any doubts. If there is a question about solicitors, call 9-1-1 to have them checked out.

While shopping
Stay alert and always be aware of what is going on nearby. Park in a well-lighted space and be sure to lock the car. Close windows and hide shopping bags and gifts in the trunk. Avoid carrying large amounts of cash. Pay with a check or credit card whenever possible. Deter pickpockets and purse snatchers by not carrying large volumes of bags and packages. Place extra bags and packages inside the car’s trunk or hidden from view before continuing to shop. Always be mindful of purses and wallets. Carry a purse close to the body, not dangling by the straps. Put a wallet in an inside coat or front pants pocket. Make periodic checks of valuables and purchases to ensure they are still secure. If a wallet/purse/bank card is lost, report it immediately to the police. Those accompanied by children should teach them to go to a store clerk, security guard or police officer if they become separated.

Going home
Survey the parking lot before heading to the car. Stay alert and look around while approaching your car. Look inside the car before unlocking it. Have keys in hand or in your pocket, then place purse, first, in your car. Once inside lock all doors and do not open if someone approaches.

Stats show importance of detectors

The fire statistics from 2011 are astounding. Nationally, 370,000 residential structure fires resulted in 2,520 deaths. Property damage of these fires totalled a cost of $6.9 billion.

Almost half of all residential structure fires started in the kitchen, and the leading cause of the fires was cooking. Cigarette smoking was determined to be the leading cause of the fires which led to the majority of fire deaths.

In 62 percent of residential fires where a death occurred, there were either no smoke alarms or smoke alarms were present and not working. Of all prevention efforts, none are more important than ensuring a working smoke alarm and carbon monoxide detector are in use.

Smoke alarms provide an early warning in case of a fire. Most smoke detectors are good for up to ten years, but batteries should be changed twice a year. The most convenient time to change out batteries is when clocks are re-set with daylight savings time.

While today’s batteries tend to last longer, it is advised that fresh batteries be installed in smoke detectors. If the old batteries are still useful, they should be placed in a toy or other device that is not critical to saving a life. Face it, if a toy car drains the remaining life from a battery, it doesn’t present a life or death situation.

Also important are carbon monoxide detectors. Carbon monoxide is a by-product of fire as well as other fuels that may have a product of incomplete combustion. Even for homes without gas appliances or a fireplace, it’s a good idea to have one installed.

Residents who need assistance or have questions regarding these devices should call the Springdale Fire Department at 346-5580.

City’s healthy programming earns state recognition

Springdale is among nine cities, one township and four counties honored by the Ohio Department of Health’s (ODH) Bureau of Healthy Ohio for promoting good health for their residents. The City’s programs contributing to a healthy community cited in gaining the award included:

- Springdale Farmers Market
- Health screening programs (such as blood pressure and glucose/cholesterol among those listed on the back page)
- Extensive array of health and wellness promoting activities and programs at the Springdale Community Center
- Parks and walking paths

“These communities exemplify Healthy Ohio and the state of living well,” said Cammie Mitrione, Springdale City Health Commissioner. “They are models for what all Ohio communities can be for their residents and visitors.”

Healthy Ohio-Healthy Community awards recognize communities’ outstanding achievements in developing and implementing health-related policies, and providing healthy community environments. The award recognizes communities’ efforts in enabling employees, residents and visitors to make healthy choices including participating in physical activity, eating good, nutritious foods and avoiding tobacco.
Springdale Youth Boosters will accept spring and summer sports sign-ups beginning January 2 through January 31. All participants must have a current Community Center membership to register for spring sports.

Knothole Baseball is open to children who were born between May 1, 1999, and April 30, 2006. Sign-up cost is $40 ($55 after January 31).

Instructional T-Ball is offered to children born between May 1, 2006, and April 30, 2008. Introduce your child to baseball and softball in this T-ball league. Cost is $20 per child ($35 after January 31).

Girls Softball is open to girls who were born between August 1, 1998, and July 31, 2006. The cost is $40 ($55 after January 31).

SAY Spring Soccer is offered to children born between August 1, 1993 and July 31, 2006. Sign-up cost is $40 ($55 after January 31).

Youth Guitar Lessons
Tuesdays • 4:00 - 5:00 pm
The session meets for eight weeks for $96. Class size is limited to 12 students. Call instructor Ed Riley at 671-1760 with questions. Students must provide guitar, small amplifier and headphones.

Teen Fit
January 20 & 27 • 2:00 - 4:00 pm
This class will cover the basics of aerobic exercise, strength training, stretching, and nutrition. Teens must have a current Springdale Community Center membership to take the class. After passing the class, those 13 and older, with a Fitness membership, will be able to use the Fitness Center. Registration required. See Jay in the Fitness Center for more information.

Club Rec is a community based volunteer organization that provides organized activities and events that help fulfill the recreational needs of children in 5th - 8th grade. The purpose of Club Rec is to have fun, organize activities and volunteer in our community. If you are looking for fun activities, a way to meet new friends, and an opportunity to serve the Springdale community, come see what it's about! The cost is $10, which includes a t-shirt.
INSTRUCTIONAL

Guitar & Bass Lessons
Adult Classes:
Tuesday & Thursday • 6:30 - 7:30 pm
Youth Class:
Tuesday • 4:00 - 5:00 pm
Any level. The session meets for eight weeks for $96. Class size is limited to 12 students. Call instructor Ed Riley at 671-1760 with questions. Students must provide guitar, small amplifier, and headphones.

R&B Dance
Wednesday • 6:50 - 7:50 pm
Friday • 2:00 - 3:00 pm
This ain’t your grandma’s dance class! A fun and exciting dance class for adults. Learn the Michael Jackson, the Funki Salsa, and more. This class will get you movin’ and groovin’. Contact Annette for information at 742-4469.

PROGRAMS FOR 55+

AARP Income Tax Help
As 2012 winds down and you are organizing your affairs, remember that we offer AARP Tax Help beginning in January. Call after the first of the year for appointments for this free tax filing service for senior citizens with simple federal and state returns.

Chair Volleyball
Monday • 10:00 - 11:30 am
Wednesday • 12:00 - 1:30 pm
Join this fun activity along with others 55 and older. Some of the differences are that players are seated in chairs, serve rotates, but players don’t, a beach ball is used instead of a volleyball, and there are an unlimited number of hits to return the ball.

Badminton
Tuesday • 10:30 am - Noon
Bring a positive attitude and willingness to learn! All equipment is provided.

Prime Time Diners
These monthly outings visit the area’s great restaurants. The group meets at the restaurant at 6 pm. Call 346-3910 or stop by the Community Center front desk to register.

Investment Club
2nd Friday • 9:30 - 11:30 am
All adult and senior members are invited to join this group and learn about investing and the stock market. For more information, contact Marty Puthoff at 870-9776.

ADULT HEALTH & FITNESS

Blood Pressure Checks
FREE
3rd Tuesday • 10:30 am - 12:30 pm

Bootcamp
Monday • 5:30 - 6:15 pm
Join Drill Sergeant Jay for a day’s worth of training including squats, lunges, pushups and core work. Start at any exercise level and train to the next level all while eliminating fat and creating muscle!

Cardio Kickboxing
Tuesday & Thursday • 5:45 - 6:45 pm
Saturday • 11:00 am - 12:00 pm
A great workout that burns some serious calories. You’ve never sweated this much or burned this many calories. Call instructor Elaine McKay at 825-7443 for information.

Jazzercise/Body Sculpting
Monday & Wednesday • 5:45 - 6:45 pm
Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday • 9:30 - 10:30 am
A sweat inducing, calorie burning aerobic workout. Call Elaine Smith at 575-1620 if you have questions.

Pilates Plus
Monday • 6:50 - 7:50 pm
A unique class of stretching and strengthening exercises. Improves posture, provides flexibility and balance. Enhances athletic performance, effective post-rehabilitation, increased self-confidence and creates a more streamline shape. A great workout for all ages and fitness levels. Contact Nalisa for information at 937-361-9007.

Slimnastics
FREE
Monday, Wednesday & Friday • 9:15 - 10:15 am
Join instructor Sue Smith for this energetic aerobics class for women. Bring a towel and small hand weights if you would like.

Zumba
Tuesday & Thursday • 6:50 - 7:50 pm
Ditch the workout, join the party! Set to Latin and other international music, this workout combines dance and aerobic moves. Through interval training of fast and slow rhythms, Zumba will sculpt and tone your body. For information, contact Debbie at 205-5064.

Corn Hole
Wednesday • Noon - 3:30 pm
If you enjoy playing corn hole stop by the Center’s auxiliary gym for a game or two.

Weekly Card Games
Duplicate Bridge: Monday • 12:15 - 3:30 pm
Contact Lew Chizer at 513-853-2778.
Party Bridge: Tuesday • 12:00 - 3:30 pm
Contact Sue Webster at 825-9103.
Euchre/Pinochle: Friday • Noon - 3:30 pm
Join this spirited group for a fun game. Contact Jo Ann Frech at 671-6663 for more information.
500: Thursday • 9:30 am - Noon
Join your friends a few games of 500. Contact Maria Schottelkotte at 942-2350.

Line Dancing with the Helts
Monday • 1:00 - 2:00 pm
For singles or couples, this class is a great way to exercise and have fun at the same time! If you can stand, walk, move from left to right and enjoy a variety of music, this class is perfect for you! Wear comfortable soft soled shoes and enjoy

2013 Travel Preview
January 31
Community Center
Get ready to pack your bags and attend one or several of the trips we have planned for the year.
Health Department programs are available to residents

**Immunization Clinics:** Immunization clinics for uninsured and underinsured children are available monthly at the Springdale Health Department on the first and third Wednesday mornings. For an appointment, call 346-5725.

**Cholesterol/Glucose Screening:** Cholesterol/Glucose screenings are available from the Springdale Health Department on the third Thursday of each month. The cost is $15. For an appointment, call 346-5725.

**Blood Pressure Checks:** Blood pressure checks are provided at the Springdale Community Center on the third Tuesday of each month from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

**Home Visits:** A Public Health Nurse is available for home visits by calling 346-5725.

**Diabetes Workshop:** Workshops are available for persons with Type 2 diabetes. For information and to register for upcoming sessions, call 346-5725.

**Mammogram Van here March 12**

The harsh reality is that one out of eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer at some point in her life. Early detection is the best defense against the disease, which can be successfully treated if discovered in its early stages.

The Mercy Health Mobile Mammography Van will visit the Springdale Community Center on Tuesday, March 12, from 7 to 11 a.m. To arrange for an appointment, call 686-3300. A minimum of 15 participants is needed. Insurance will be directly billed (Mammography is usually covered, but to be safe, check that Mercy Health is a panel provider with your insurance provider). Financial assistance may be available by calling 686-3306.

**Area eateries win 6-Star status**

Every restaurant in Springdale is held to high standards through regular inspections by the Springdale Health Department. Some have gone above and beyond standards by applying for special recognition and demonstrating achievement in meeting criteria for a 6-Star Award. Applicants must not have needed any follow-up inspections nor received any smoke free violations for their license year. They must also demonstrate that management personnel have successfully completed food safety training. Those receiving the award for 2012 are:

- Beecher Place – MKV
- Chick-Fil-A
- Dave & Busters
- Jimmy John’s
- LuLu’s Rice & Noodles
- Main Street Café - MKV
- Manor House Restaurant

(Editor’s note: Published in the last issue was a list of restaurants earning 6-Star status in 2011.)