Cottonwood Heights
NEWS JOURNAL
www.cottonwoodheights.utah.gov

November 2009

PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES – A JOB FOR ALL TO TACKLE

This issue of the NEWS JOURNAL contains a lot of information about planning for emergencies. The Council Article explains what the city has accomplished to date, what they are doing now, and what the future holds. The article about how the city is organized and what some districts are doing is self explanatory. This article makes recommendation to all residents of the city to begin now to prepare your home, office, family, etc., for a disaster.

The one thing most everyone that deals with emergency planning will agree on is that most people will be on their own during the first 72 hours of any major disaster. The extended power outages we experienced a few years ago, the heavy snowfalls that can confine people to their homes, and, of course, the earthquake we've been expecting for years and could occur any day could all force us to care for ourselves without much outside contact for a few days. In that case we would have to survive using our own devices, including a 72-hour kit, hopefully.

The following suggestions are passed along in an attempt to impress residents that putting together a 72-hour kit should not be an intimidating task. There are, of course, many websites and groups that will provide information about 72–hour kits and what should go in them. The information written here is from the National Preparedness Month (NPM) people who issued this information in September of this year as part of NPM. It is directed at providing basic information about what a 72-hour kit should be.

The most important thing to consider in preparing for a possible emergency is, "What are the basics I must have in order to

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City Council Article
Gordon M. Thomas District #1

PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE OF EMERGENCY PLANNING

Like most other things in life, attempts made in planning for emergencies are more about what have you done lately and what are you going to do next, than what did you do last year, last month, or even last week. Fortunately, Cottonwood Heights' can provide meaningful answers to what's happened in the past, what's happening now, and what's next in the area of Emergency Preparedness Planning.

THE PAST

Recent issues of the Valley Journal and of this NEWS JOURNAL carried stories about an award presented to the city in August by FEMA. This award was the first of its kind and was presented to Cottonwood Heights for excellence in Collaborative Preparedness Planning. Our city beat out San Francisco and two large counties in Michigan and Florida for this award. The award reflected on the success of the City's effort to involve as many stakeholders as possible in the planning process. The result of the planning that has occurred the past couple of years is that our city has one of the better emergency communications systems in the entire country.

Our system is redundant to the point that if a disaster struck that took out both land-line and cell phones (thus making it impossible to contact the individual residences and businesses in the city), along with any computer internet contacts, we could still rely on our radio system. It consists of people throughout the city with hand radio sets that could be used to contact others in the net that are located in the various neighborhoods of the city. With this system, the city would have contact with a captain in all neighborhoods and the captain would then have one-on-one contact with the residents in his designated geographical area. Every neighborhood in the city could be covered and could send and receive information about the emergency situation, the availability of first responders, recommendations for actions to take, etc.

So, what happens if the captains and/or their radios cannot function? In that case, the plan provides another level of HAM operators. The city's HAM organization currently has approximately 40 operators who participate each month in a brief drill to be sure their radios are working and that contact can be maintained (See the ad elsewhere in this paper regarding the need for additional HAM operators).

The entire, communication system would be operated from an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in city hall, or from a Mobile EOC in the event that city hall is not useable. The city also has a fully functional Mobile EOC that was bought and equipped with the use of grant funds acquired from both the state and federal governments.

In addition to this well-planned and "ready-to-activate" communications system, our city is one of the most active in the training of residents as CERT volunteers. Trainees are prepared to work with neighborhood communication specialist in finding and assisting those requiring emergency care which may not be available for up to 72 hours.

It may also be of interest to you to know that the entire city council and many staff members are linked together with a radio system which is tested each month. With this system, the mayor can either become the EOC Director or

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CITY INFORMATION:
City Council Members

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kcullimore@cottonwoodheights.utah.gov

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DIST# 3 - Don J. Antczak
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CITY MANAGER –
Liane Stillman
lstillman@cottonwoodheights.utah.gov

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CALL DIRECT:
City Manager.....944-7010
Deputy City Manager.....944-7011
City Planning.....944-7065
Recorder.....944-7021
Treasurer.....944-7075
Finance Director.....944-7077
Code Enforcement..... 944-7095
Customer Service.....944-7000
Public Information.....502-5068
Police Administration.....944-7100
City Events.....944-7001

To hear the agenda for the next city council meeting call: 944-7003

For the planning commission agenda call 944-7004

For details about the agendas, check our web site:
www.cottonwoodheights.utah.gov

NUMBERS TO KNOW:
Emergency..... 911
Dispatch..... 840-4000
Fire Authority..... 743-7100
Animal Control.....944-7095
Justice Court.....273-9731

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Cottonwood Heights
City between the canyons

Chief's CORNER

"Spreading the Word"

Chief Robby Russo

I'm often asked, "Why is Cottonwood Heights in the news so much; has there been an increase in crime?" The answer "NO", crime has not increased; but there has been a significant increase in the number of crimes solved, the speed with which we respond to calls, and how we are now addressing the city's previously unaddressed quality of life issues.

Cottonwood Heights has a unique relationship with the media. Our Public Information Officer, Detective Beau Babka, serves a variety of functions. He works as a public relations specialist in connecting with our constituents and the media. In addition to news releases, Det. Babka has a radio talk show on 97.1 FM every Friday morning from 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.. This is a fun, lighthearted segment called "Just Ask Beau." It allows listeners to call in with law enforcement related questions. The station reaches over 300,000 listeners and a wide demographic. There is no cost to CHPD; and, along with helping build public trust it showcases some of the exceptional talent at CHPD.

Detective Beau Babka, CHPD PIO

I have been in law enforcement for more than 25 years, and have always believed it is important to foster a mutually trusting relationship with the media. With very few exceptions, the public has a right to know exactly what the police are doing and why. Spreading the word is also a strategy for crime prevention, and the public has been instrumental in helping us solve myriad crimes during our first year of operation.

For instance, we recently investigated a complaint involving a massage therapist who was accused of sexually assaulting female clients. CHPD detectives suspected there were other victims but had no way of identifying them. By securing the assistance of our media contacts, other women saw the story and came forward. Their testimonies resulted in the arrest and filing of three counts of second-degree felony, and forcible sexual abuse against the suspect, Robert Battle.

The Credit Union Robbery

Yes, Cottonwood Heights is in the NEWS more often, not because crime has increased, but because CHPD believes a responsible and effective partnership with the media is vital to our mission. We depend on that partnership - as well as community trust and confidence - in carrying out our responsibilities. This is an effective method of reaching our businesses, increasing compliance with city ordinances, and keeping our citizens informed of our proactive efforts to provide information on crime prevention strategies.

A second example occurred just this month. One of the city's financial institutions was held up by two masked gunmen. After we broadcast a description of the suspect vehicle (a white Jaguar), a viewer tip helped us capture a very violent criminal, recover the money and weapons, and solve another bank robbery in a neighboring jurisdiction, all within a few hours of the crime.

Robert Battle

CQ CQ CQ CQ CQ CQ CQ CQ

Calling all Amateur Radio Operators In Cottonwood Heights

We are looking for new hams to join the 40 active members of our Emergency Communications Service Group. Learn to operate the equipment in our Emergency Center. Check into our Net. Participate in our Emergency Communication drills.

The only requirements are:

- A desire to use your talents to help your community during a disaster.
- An amateur class Technician license or higher.
- A 2 meter radio (can be purchased on eBay for about $50).
- Seven minutes a month to call into the net.

Do a good deed for your neighbors, contact us at cottonwoodheightsradio@gmail.com or 145.55 simplex Thursday nights at 8:00PM. Cottonwood Heights is the winner of the FEMA Citizen Corps Collaborative Preparedness Award for 2009.

PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES – CONT'D PG 1

survive?" The answer is: fresh water, food, clean air, and warmth. Recommended items for a basic emergency supply kit are:

WATER – One gallon per person/per day for at least three days should handle both drinking and sanitation

FOOD – At least a three-day supply of non-perishable food

RADIOS – Either battery-powered or hand cranked and a NOAA weather radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both

FLASHLIGHT - One that provides adequate light and with extra batteries

FIRST-AID KIT

WHISTLE – To signal for help

DUST MASK – To filter contaminated air. Also, plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place

TOWELETTES – Should be moist – Also plastic bags and ties for personal sanitation

WRENCH/PLIERS – To turn off utilities

CAN OPENER

LOCAL MAPS

CELL PHONES - With charger

PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

Once beyond the basics as identified above, one might consider any or all of the following: baby formula and diapers, pet food and extra water, important family documents, cash or traveler's checks, emergency reference material, sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person, change of clothing (consider cold weather), chlorine bleach and a medicine dropper, fire extinguisher, matches, feminine supplies, mess kits, paper and plastic eating utensils, paper and pencil, books, puzzles, games, etc.

Detailed help available at: www.unifiedfire.org.

City Council Article

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can designate someone else who is well trained for that responsibility to take over.

The city is very deserving of the FEMA Award and is recognized by many governmental entities throughout the state for its leadership in emergency planning and preparedness.

THE PRESENT

So, most of you probably think this is interesting, but it's quite a lot of verbiage about planning for something that will likely never happen. We, of course, hope that is true; however, if it does happen, we take comfort in knowing we have thought ahead and done what can be done to plan for a worst-case scenario.

The question now is "What are you doing for us now?" The "now" changes every day. This weekend for example (October 31 and November 1) there will be a statewide communication exercise that is emanating from Cottonwood Heights in recognition of the excellent communication system we have put together (As explained above), The purpose for the exercise is to identify weaknesses in the statewide and local systems. Participants include: state, county, and city emergency preparedness personnel, along with military and other service providers.

This and other exercises and training are relatively common in our city and throughout the county and state. All are designed to test the system and train personnel to hopefully discover weaknesses in the system and to strengthen it. Next time, the exercise will be designed to see that the weaknesses have been corrected and then look for additional weaknesses.

Other "What are you doing now?" events include periodic safety and preparedness fairs that are sponsored by the city and/or by other organizations in the city, such as churches, UFA, scout groups, and the city's Citizen Corps Volunteers. Often, the safety and preparedness fairs include large geographic areas of the city. Cottonwood Heights has been divided into six Emergency Response Divisions (See accompanying map), each with a designated Emergency Planning Director.

As you can see, the answer to the "What are you doing now?" question varies daily; but somewhere in the city, county, or state something is happening to improve the system or correct deficiencies in it.

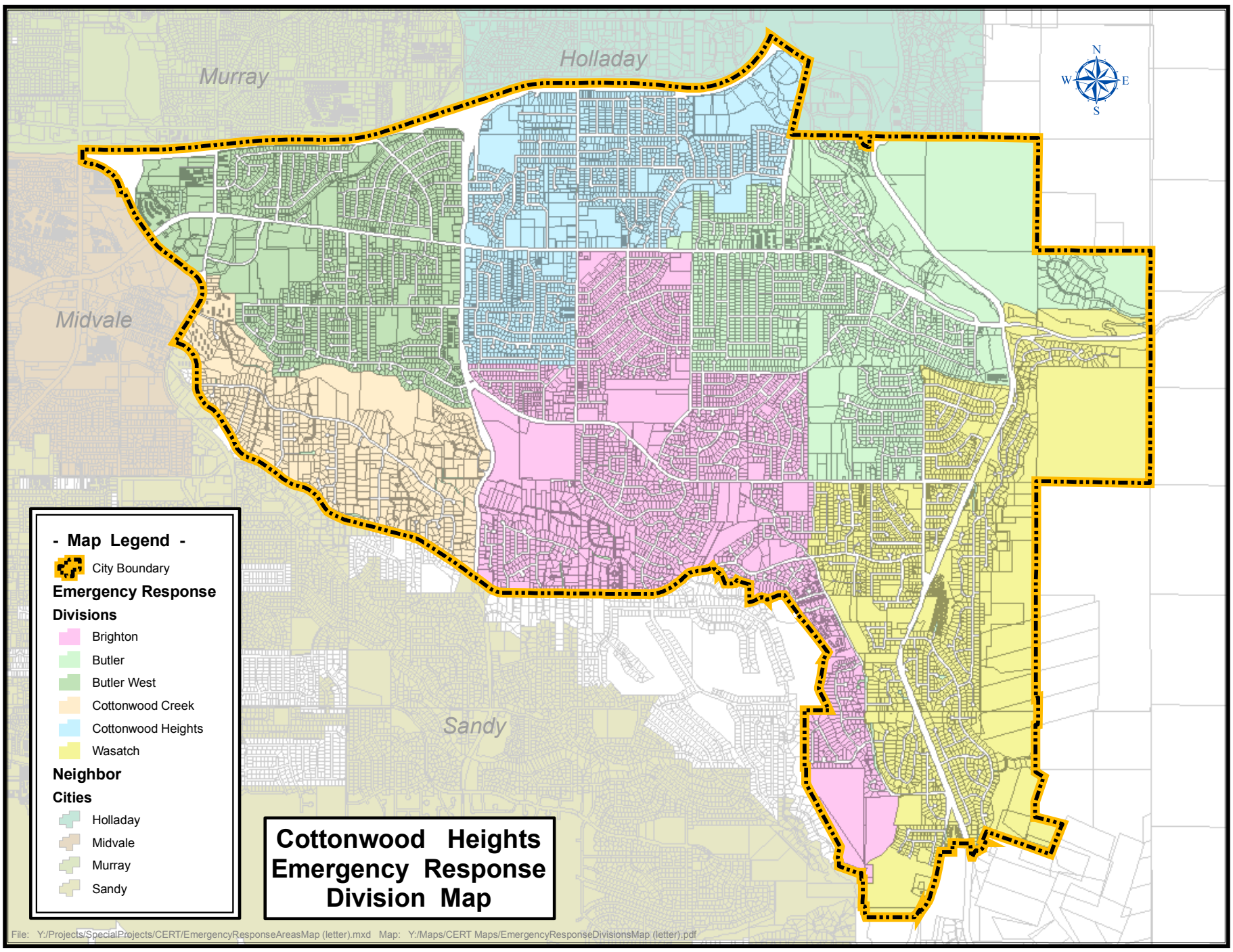
THE FUTURE

The most important question of the three is the last one, "What do I do next?", because this is where you and your neighbors and friends come into the picture. When I read of a disaster in other parts of the world, I wonder what I would be doing if it happened here. Sometimes when I feel the ground shake, for one reason or the other, I wonder if this is "it." That terrible earthquake we always hear about has hit. A few months ago I was awakened in the night by some rumbling and immediately asked, "What do I do now?" I was not very comforted by my answer. Even though we have made plans and discussed our options over the years, I was really not prepared to do anything definitive that would help me and my family or help me to fulfill my city council role. I now know exactly what to do.

Each of us needs to tackle the question of what to do next. If we make the right decisions now; then, when disaster strikes, we will not only know what to do but also have the materials needed to do it. For example, I should:

1. Prepare a 72-hour kit for every member of the household
2. Take a CERT training course
3. Become active in my local division of the Citizens Corps
4. Acquaint myself with how to use the 72-hour kit and what to do during the first 72-hours following a snow-in, extended power outage, or earthquake
5. Prepare my home for an earthquake by securing water heaters, etc.
6. Participate in the next safety and preparedness fair
7. Go to www.unifiedfire.org and find the help available there to start planning for emergencies

The past is gone and all we really have is the present. If we take care of that, the future will take care of itself and we will be ready.



Cottonwood Heights Parks & Recreation

online registration now available at
cottonwoodheights.com

BECOME A MEMBER NOW AND KEEP THOSE HOLIDAY POUNDS OFF

We are a full family fitness and recreation facility with:

Olympic size ice arena
Indoor track
Full basketball court
Seven pools
Indoor jacuzzi
Indoor dry sauna
Water playgrounds
6 racquetball courts
Cardio & weight rooms
Over 80 fitness classes /wk

Come take a free tour and check our facility out today!

FALL SWIMMING LESSONS

These classes help the swimmer learn basic swimming skills with a qualified swim instructor in an enjoyable and non-threatening environment.

Fall Session V
Nov. 9-20
*Sign-ups begin Nov. 4

Fall Session VI
Nov. 30-Dec.11
*Sign-ups begin Nov. 18

Call 801.943.3190 x. 119 for more information or register online.

SPECIAL LEARN TO SKATE WINTER SHOW SESSION

Three week Learn to Skate Session: thirty minutes of class will teach standard skating skills and the last fifteen minutes will be a combined show practice... each skater will learn a number for the CHRC Annual Holiday Extravaganza!

Winter Show Session
Tues., Dec. 1, 8, 15 or
Wed., Dec. 2 & 9 plus Mon., Dec. 14

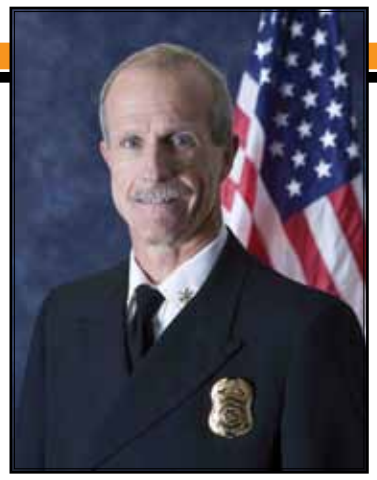
FREE Winter Show!
Dec. 16
5:00 - 6:45 PM

Call 801.943.3190 x. 162 for more information or register online.

801.943.3190
7500 S. 2700 E.
Cottonwood Heights, UT

COTTONWOOD HEIGHTS PARKS & RECREATION

Unified Fire Authority H1N1 Contingency Plan



Assist Chief Mike Watson

Unified Fire Authority (UFA) has developed a Contingency Plan for an anticipated increase in the number of Salt Lake County residents affected by the H1N1 Flu. Under the contingency plan, UFA will continue to provide fire, emergency medical, and other emergency services to the public even in the event that many UFA personnel may be away from their jobs due to influenza.

As the flu's impact increases, UFA will pool response personnel in pre-designated critical areas to allow for on going effective emergency response. This advanced planning will allow for continued response to residents' emergency needs and pre-planning for UFA employee absentee rates.

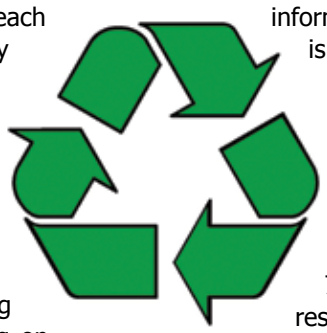
Local government leaders are asking their residents who have questions about H1N1, or think they may have contracted the flu, to call 2-1-1 or go to the SLVHD's internet site at www.slvhealth for detailed information on the flu and its symptoms. On that website, SLVHD also provides information on home treatment and recommendations for when residents should seek treatment from local healthcare providers. This will help alleviate some of the strain on the 9-1-1 system from the anticipated increase in flu calls.

UFA is implementing this plan in accordance with recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and the Department of Home-Land Security.

DISPOSAL/RECYCLING OF WASTE

Residents of Cottonwood Heights are fortunate to belong to the Salt Lake County Sanitation Special Service District #1. Why? Because that organization, headed up by Division Director Pam Roberts, provides many services in addition to the weekly pick-up of household trash (black/brown cans) and the bi-weekly pick-up of recyclable materials (blue cans).

For that service, each household pays only $11 per month, and additional services are available in the event one has "out of the ordinary" waste. For example: the Sanitation District sponsors the Leaf Bag Program which is going on now and allows one to go to the city offices, the rec. center, or the library and pick up a free roll of leaf disposal bags. These bags can then be filled and taken to Bywater Park for free pick-up by District trucks that haul them to the appropriate landfill or other disposal point.



Other services of which residents may be aware include: free Christmas tree disposal; free dump passes, including for bulk waste; and free access to spring clean-up dumpsters that are placed in the neighborhoods for disposal of tree branches, or anything that is not hazardous but is too large to go into the garbage can.

There are even services of which most residents are not aware. Did you know it is possible to get assistance from the Sanitation District with disposal of electronic equipment and hazardous materials? Additional information about these programs is available at: www.recycle.slco.org. Through this website, one can also acquire a guide and phone numbers for the services available through the District.

So far this year (2009), the Sanitation District has collected 7,401 tons of refuse from the residents of Cottonwood Heights. They have also picked up 1,363 tons of recyclable material and 157 tons of green waste.

The mission statement for the Sanitation District says: "Our mission is to provide sustainable quality integrated waste and recycle collection services for the health and safety of our community...because not everything fits in the can." We can help the Sanitation District meet their mission by calling on them whenever waste disposal is the challenge.

2-1-1

Get Connected. Get Answers

With some of the challenges we the citizens of Cottonwood Heights, Salt Lake County, the State of Utah, and in fact the entire country are experiencing, 2-1-1 is a good number to have close at hand. They can answer virtually any question you have, whether it be where to fine H1N1 vaccination, employment services, or substance abuse assistance.

What is 2-1-1 you say? Well, it's a national telephone number, that also has a local (state) component, much like the more familiar 9-1-1. A 2-1-1 call will provide you with direct assistance or referrals for help with any number of personal and family life concerns.

The national 2-1-1 effort was launched in 1997 in Atlanta, where United Way developed the concept. It now reaches into 30 states and D.C. and is funded by United Ways, private foundations, and government grants. An effort is being pursued to secure annual funding from the national government.

In 28 of Utah's 29 counties, 2-1-1 service is sponsored by the Utah Food Bank located in Salt Lake City (Utah County operates separately). The Utah 2-1-1 has been in operation since February of 2002 and now has numerous full time employees working as phone responders. If you call, you will be greeted by one of these responders or by an automated answering service, depending on the call load at the time. If the automated answering service responds you will be placed in a que for a few moments, then a live person will respond to your needs. The responder will ask for some demographic information which you can choose to answer or not. They will then solicit from you an explanation of your need and provide assistance either directly through the Food Bank or by referring you to another agency or entity that can provide the assistance you need.

Do you need confidential help with reporting a scam, surviving a power outage, finding a crisis consultant, quality childcare, daily "are you okay calls" for the homebound, training with how to respond to crisis calls, or any number of other concerns? Call 2-1-1. Or, if you just want to learn more go on line to http://211us.org.

CONTROVERSIAL CANYON DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

Recent articles in the Salt Lake Tribune have chronicled the City's consideration of a new Canyons Resort Residential Zone. This concept is deemed controversial by some who are concerned that greater development at the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon could have detrimental effects.

Specifically, the new Canyons Resort Residential Zone would apply to the Tavaci property at the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon. This is the development serviced by the large bridge road located just east of the water treatment plant. Presently that property is zoned for 43 luxury homes. The new zone contemplates allowing greater density for that development. If adopted, the zone would also be available for other private property owners to consider.

At the present time, the Planning Commission has reviewed the proposed zoning ordinance and recommended its adoption to the City Council. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on this ordinance on August 5, 2009 prior to making its recommendation to the City Council.

Since that time, the City Council has been working to revise provisions of the zone that it found unacceptable. The Council has discussed it in many meetings and will continue to discuss it and take public input prior to considering adopting the ordinance. While allowing for increased density would permit a more practical plan of development at Tavaci, there are several concerns with which the Council is wrestling. Among those concerns are height and visibility of structures, traffic concerns, public safety issues and geo-technical concerns. It is the classic challenge of balancing private property rights against perceived detrimental effects.

If the zoning ordinance is adopted, property owners such as the owners of the Tavaci development could then make application to apply this ordinance to their property. Such a process would require an amendment to the City's General Plan prior to or simultaneously with the application for rezoning. Those processes would allow for additional public comment and input prior to approval. It is anticipated that it would require several months to accommodate a rezoning process, assuming it were approved.

A revised draft of the proposed ordinance is expected to be available for public review by November 24, 2009. Copies will be available on-line at the city's website or hard copies will be available at the city office. The Council anticipates inviting public comment on this proposed zone at a meeting on December 8, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council chambers at 1265 E. Fort Union Blvd., Ste 300.

Questions or concerns regarding the draft CRR zone can be directed to Planning Director Michael Black at 801-944-7066. Written comments can be submitted via email to mblack@cottonwoodheights.utah.gov; hard copies of comments can be mailed to the City offices or hand delivered during normal business hours.

What's with the bike lanes and no center stripe?

Some who travel Banbury Rd., Hollow Mill Rd., and the east end of Fort Union Blvd. have called the city and asked about the "Bike Lanes" painted on those roads with no center stripes. The primary question seems to be can a driver still park on the side of the road where the bike lane is painted. The answer is yes. The purpose for the bike lanes and no center stripe is explained below.

This paint pattern is a well proven "traffic calming" device. Studies and experience show that drivers with an outer boundary over which they will not generally cross will tend to drive more carefully and more slowly when there is not a center lane to keep them on their side of the road.

The bike lanes are painted 20 feet apart and two lane automobile traffic has plenty of room to pass safely while still not crossing into the bike lanes. It is important for drivers and cyclists both to understand, however, that it is not a traffic violation for an automobile to cross into the bicycle lane or to park in that lane. The only exception to that is if there is a bicycle in the lane that the driver wants to move to.

This device is used primarily on class 2 collector roads, those that don't generally have any striping. Adding the bike lane stripes merely tightens the area in which one should drive to 10 feet for each direction.

Cottonwood Heights
City between the canyons

Bicycle Safety Tips

The Cottonwood Heights' Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) offers the following tip for bicycle safety:

- The problem: Occasionally a cyclist will innocently move a little to the left to go around a parked car or some other obstruction in the road and get nailed from behind by a distracted, confused, or unobservant driver.
- How to avoid this collision: Bicyclists should always look to their rear before moving to the left. Do not swerve in and out of the parking lane. CAUTION! If a cyclist is riding without a rear-view mirrorthey place themselves in jeopardy. Cyclists and vehicle operators must be more alert to the dangers inherent in both of them occupying the same roadways. Use common-sense for safety.

LEAF BAGS AND DUMP PASSES AVAILABLE

Fall yard clean-up is coming to a close and the City and County are anxious to assist you with the disposal of collected trash and leaves. You will have to rake the leaves and fill the bags yourselves, but free rolls of large, yellow bags are available for City residents at the city offices, the Recreation Center, and the library. After filling the bags with green waste, they can be delivered to Bywater Park (3300 East Banbury Road (7420 South). Banbury Road runs east from 2700 East, across from the Recreation Center's Tennis Courts.

There are also landfill passes available for those needing to deliver waste to the landfill. These passes will give you free admission to empty your garbage at the appropriate location. They are available at the City offices at no cost and are good through November.

CITY COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE

All City Council business meetings are held in the council chambers, 1265 East Fort Union Blvd., Ste. 300. The work meetings are held in the conference room at the same address but in Ste. 250. The November meeting schedule is as follows:

- **Tuesday, November 3rd (ELECTION DAY)**
  THERE WILL NOT BE A COUNCIL MEETING ON THIS DAY.
- **Tuesday, November 10th**
  6 p.m. Work Meeting *(reconvenes following business meeting)*
  7 p.m. Business Meeting
- **Tuesday, November 17th**
  6 p.m. Work Meeting
- **Tuesday, November 24th**
  6 p.m. Work Meeting *(reconvenes following business meeting)*
  7 p.m. Business Meeting

PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS ARE ON-GOING

Various public works projects that were begun in the summer are being completed as winter approaches. If you like to avoid any semblance of construction work on the roads you travel, make a note of the following possible traffic disruptions:

1. The Big Cottonwood Canyon Trail, between 3000 East and the Old Mill, is being readied for asphalt that should be applied sometime in November. This trail will ultimately run to Wasatch Blvd. There, it will pass under Wasatch and then allow hikers to continue to where they can intersect with the yet to be constructed Bonneville Shoreline Trail.
2. The widening of Wasatch Blvd. for bike lanes, between Ft. Union and Bengal Blvd's., is continuing. This widening will make it safer for vehicles and bicycles on this heavily traveled state highway. All who travel here will testify to the need for this project. Cyclists are drawn to this stretch of road as they ride to and from Little Cottonwood Canyon. Patience is definitely a virtue as we wait for the completion of the bike lanes, and will continue to be a necessity as cyclists and vehicle drivers travel up and down that hillside roadway.
3. Work is also continuing on the 6200 South and 3000 East capacity-enhancement project. That means the roads are being improved to increase the level of service, primarily for those turning left from 3000 East onto 6200 South and for those turning left onto I-215 on the Holladay side of the I-215 bridge. It should also increase the number of lanes available to those exiting I-215 in both directions. These upgrades will hopefully reduce the long queues that are now forming during morning and evening rush hours. .
4. Curb and gutter work on the east side of 2300 East between I-215 and 6660 South is slated for completion by November 30, 2009.
5. Sometime this month electrical service will be run to the island where Union Park Avenue and 1300 East intersect. The power is being installed to light the City's entrance sign and flag poles, and to be available for decorative lighting for various holidays.

The Timberline Trailhead Dedication Ceremony

Mayor Cullimore greets participants

Learning kiosk on trail to amphitheater

Attendees discuss trailhead facilities

Mike Peterson, Rec. Center Director, speaks to group

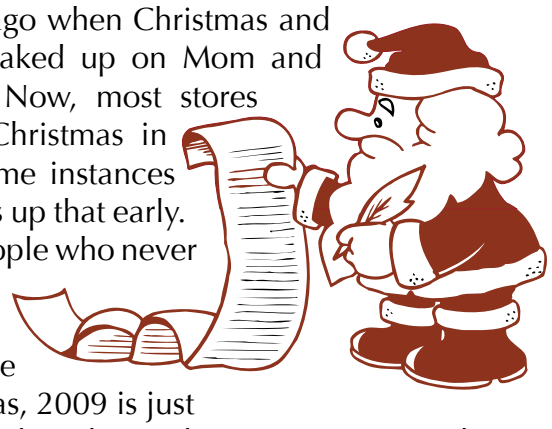
Small group assembles in amphitheater

Mayor, Coiuncilmen Antczak(blue shirt) and Thomas (green shirt)

Ribbon cutting- front row, left to right, Councilman Jones Former Senator Carlene Walker, Mayor, County Comm. Max Burdick, Rec. Center Board member Tyler, Mike Black (City Planning Director) and daughter

View of amphitheater and morning sun from street parking

Making Plans for Santa



I remember some years ago when Christmas and Santa Claus kind of sneaked up on Mom and Dad. Not so anymore. Now, most stores start making plans for Christmas in mid-summer; and, in some instances they even put decorations up that early. Actually, I know some people who never take their decorations down, but leave them up year 'round. Those who don't know Christmas, 2009 is just around the corner, likely don't know there is a new president in the White House either, they just aren't aware of anything. With that in mind, and Christmas only about eight weeks away, it's time to mention some upcoming Santa Claus events in which you may want to participate.

City Sponsored Sub-for-Santa

The 2009 edition of the City's Sub-for-Santa is being sponsored by the Cottonwood Heights' City Employees Association. They hope to help families living in Cottonwood Heights who are experiencing financial difficulties due to work layoff or other challenge that has significantly impacted their income.

Two kinds of volunteers are needed for Sub-for-Santa projects: 1) Contributors of gifts and money are needed. 2) Names are needed of potential recipients of those gifts and donations. Those wanting to participate in Sub-for-Santa can assist in this project with contributions of money, gifts, and gift certificates. They should be directed to Kory Solorio at the city offices, 1265 East Fort Union Blvd., #250, Cottonwood Heights, UT 84047. Kory can be contacted at kory@cottonwoodheights.utah.gov or 801-944-7020.

Individuals, groups, businesses are all encouraged to make donations so all of Cottonwood Heights' children can enjoy a Merry Christmas.

Recommendations for possible recipients and information on those families should also be dropped by or emailed to: kory@cottonwoodheights.utah.gov.

Again this year, the bleak economy is impacting many residents of our City. Financial problems at Christmas enhance the opportunity to find needy families and to make the spirit of the season a part of their lives.

Saturday with Santa

The city is assisting in this annual "Karing for Kids" fund-raising event by helping them locate a facility and providing some publicity to help assure a large turnout.

Saturday with Santa is scheduled for Saturday, December 5th, at the old Cottonwood Heights Elementary School, 2415 East Bengal Blvd. Festivities will begin at noon and continue until 4:00 p.m., with an opportunity for children to meet and have photos taken with Santa. Games and food will also be provided at no charge. Additional information can be found at www.utahkids.org.

Do You Know...?

This is the last in a series of "Do You Know…?" articles that have discussed the findings of a Dan Jones Survey about what the residents of the City think of how the City is being managed, how tax money is being spent, and whether Cottonwood Heights is a good place to live and raise a family. This month we are looking at experiences residents have had interacting with City employees. The information reported is from the Dan Jones Survey that was conducted in March and April of this year that enabled City officials to gain insight into the residents' perceptions of what the city looks like after nearly five years as an incorporated municipality.

- The question was asked about whether residents had contact with the City office to seek service, acquire information, or file a complaint. According to the suryey one-third of you had made such a contact. The significance of that number can be debated, but the fact that 33% of you would find it necessary to make such a contact attests to the value of having a City to turn to with questions or concerns about the things that go on around and impact each of us. While unincorporated it was difficult even knowing who to contact, let alone to expect some action to be taken based on your perceived need. We can also safely deduce from this statistic that fully two-thirds of you are either satisfied or complacent about the way things are going in the City. Either way, you found no need to contact City hall.
- The more important statistic regarding these contacts with City hall is that, of those making such contact, 54% were very satisfied with the interaction and only 11% were very dissatisfied. This is an excellent result for City employees to consider, however, the residents can be sure that steps are being taken to eliminate the very dissatisfied occurrences in the future. These statistics show further that of the remaining 35%, there were an additional 28% that fell on the satisfied side of the scale. So, more than 80% of those interacting with City hall were satisfied to one degree or another with that contact. The City has on-going training programs designed to help employees understand the resident's perspective as they approach the City for information or to file complaints.
- Another way to contact the City is through its website. Respondents were asked if they had accessed the website and, if so, how they rated that tool. Forty-one percent (41%) indicated an occasion on which they accessed the website for some reason. Sixty-seven (67%) rated that contact as good to excellent, meaning that they were able to find the information they sought. The downside of this statistic is that 30% rated the website as fair or poor for ease of use. This is a concern to City officials and is constantly under review. Efforts are being made to improve the site by making it more user friendly and by providing more and more information to city residents.

So, what has been learned from the survey findings that have been discussed in these columns over the past few months? A casual observations suggests that in general the City officials and the residents of the City are interacting with one another well, and that the City is providing the services in a manner that is expected, or in some cases even above expectations; but, that on-going efforts to improve the services City employees and elected officials provide is critical to maintaining and improving the residents satisfaction with their government.