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From the Mayor’s Office

Mayor Richard M Hickman/260.665.7600

As we enter our Fall Season, I want to remind you of events the city will be celebrating downtown between now and the next time our letter comes out in January.

Monday, October 31, we will be celebrating Halloween from 5:00PM to 7:00PM in the City of Angola. Many of our stores will be handing out candy. The same hours are in affect for our residential neighborhoods. We recommend that you have your porch lights on if you are handing out candy and turn them off if you are not handing out candy.

Friday, November 25th, Santa will be coming downtown to visit with our boys and girls and asking them what they want for Christmas. This event is planned for 6:00 PM.

I hope you will get to attend all these events. They are free and family friendly.

As we start to think about winter, I just want to remind you that when you have to shovel snow off of your driveway it is best to shovel to the right of your drive entrance looking toward the street so that the snowplows will not push that snow back in front of your driveway.

Thank you all for another excellent year in Angola. It has not been without its stress, but we seem to have survived in good shape. Our city is in much better shape than most other communities in our state. And we will keep working to strengthen our whole community in 2023.

From the Park & Recreation Department
Superintendent Matt Hanna / 260.665.1588

Fall is right around the corner which means it will be time to gear up for our annual Halloween Fun event! Come join us at Selman Timber Frame for this FREE, fun-filled evening that will be taking place on Thursday, October 27th from 6:00PM – 8:00PM! We will have games, prizes, face painting, hayrides, pumpkin decorating, refreshments, and more!

We again will offer an indoor wood working workshop with Northeast Indiana Woodworkers, and a “Parents Night Off”. These events will have limited spaces! Check out our Facebook page to learn more about our upcoming events and how to sign up!

For more information on any of our events, please give us a call at the park office 260-665-1588. Check out our website at www.angolain.org.

From the MS4 Coordinator

Kris Thomas / 260.624.2663

Invasive Phragmites – A Threat to Local Habitats and Water Quality

As you drive through the city, you may have noticed tall stands of reed grass along some of Angola’s roadside ditches and within both private and public ponds in the city’s corporate limits. These grasses are stands of Phragmites (“frag-mahy-teez”), also known as Common Reed. You may think they are a pretty plant and are a benefit to the environment, but the truth is these vegetative stands found within these areas are actually invasive and are extremely detrimental to the natural ecology of the area unlike their native counterparts, such as sedges and native warm-season grasses.

Most of the Phragmites you see in the city are the invasive variety and are found most often on disturbed sites. Their presence in these types of areas is due in part to the exposed soil along with associated high nutrient inputs. Once established, they can rapidly take over an area and produce extremely dense patches pushing out native vegetation. Phragmites can grow more than 15 feet tall and consist of over 20 stalks per square foot. They survive in stagnant pools of water.

Over time, they will bring about changes to natural wetland hydrology and degrade natural habitats that support local wetland wildlife. Other negative effects include runoff flow alteration and clogged drainage ditches, both of which raise the risk of localized flooding.

The City of Angola/Trine University MS4 along with the City of Angola Street Department are partnering with the Steuben County Surveyor to implement measures to control the growth of this invasive form of Phragmites within the city limits. The agencies involved recognize the threat to the local ecology, as well as the threat to local stormwater infrastructure through worsening obstruction of the drainage courses within the city. Through a coordinated effort, the Steuben County Surveyor's office will ensure the treatment in areas affecting regulated ditches within the city, while the City of Angola will ensure treatment in areas under control of the city including roadside ditches within the right-of-way. These publicly-owned areas will be treated over the next several years as needed to prevent uncontrolled spread.

Invasive Phragmites is a county-wide issue. Residents and businesses owning private property where stands of invasive Phragmites are located should also consider treatment. Such treatment would not only benefit each property through increased property values, but it would also support the overall local strategic plan to control the spread of this harmful vegetation. **All private property owners are encouraged to consult with and hire an environmental professional for proper identification of native vs. invasive Phragmites and for proper, effective, and legal treatment since wetlands and other bodies of water are typically associated with these stands.** More information on this invasive plant species can be found at www.in.gov/dnr/files/Phragmites.pdf.

From the Wastewater Department
Superintendent Jeff Gaff / 260.665.6806

Do you use a water softener at your home or business? Water softeners are commonly used to remove the "hardness" from water caused by naturally occurring minerals.

The salt that you use to help soften your water ultimately gets sent to the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The wastewater treatment process cannot remove the chlorides that come from salt, so the chlorides that come into WWTP pass through and are discharged to the Pigeon Creek. This is a problem because high levels of

chlorides in the receiving stream can be harmful to aquatic plants and animals.

The Angola Water Department softens its water at the water treatment plant, so water softeners may not be necessary for those using city water supplies. A water hardness test can determine whether softening is necessary. If using a water softener, make sure that the softener is set to use only enough salt to soften to your needs. Homeowners frequently use more salt than necessary to soften their water; softening more than necessary is throwing money down the drain!

Whether you are in the market to purchase a new softener or a bag of salt, please consider the following:

- **Determine if a water softener is necessary:** Before investing in a water softener, water hardness should be determined. The Water Department will provide free hardness testing
- **Use less salt:** Many homeowners use at least twice as much salt to soften their water than necessary.
- **Correctly set the recharge / backwash cycle:** Many softeners are set to recharge or backwash too frequently. Adjusting the backwash cycle to the appropriate time period between each backwash may significantly reduce the amount of sodium and chloride discharged into the sewer system.
- **Soften wisely:** Toilets, outdoor hose bibs, and other sources not used for bathing, laundry or cleaning do not need to be softened.

To schedule an appointment for free water hardness testing, please contact the City Utilities office at 665-3422.