

# CITY OF UNION



## Spring 2023 NEWSLETTER

### COMMUNITY KUDOS

See something great in our community ... let us know!  
Send us a message through our website at  
[unionoh.org/home/webforms/contact-us](http://unionoh.org/home/webforms/contact-us) or  
call 937-836-8624.

### 2023 CITY WIDE GARAGE SALES

**June 8, 9, 10**

**Deadline to have your address listed in the newspaper is Tues., May 30.**

Start your spring cleaning now and earn some extra cash. The city wide garage sales will be held Thursday-Saturday, June 8, 9 and 10. No permits are needed for this weekend. Call 937-836-8624 by Tuesday, May 30 to have your address included in a garage sale ad in the local paper. Street addresses and maps of all the listed garage sales will be available at City Hall.

### CITY OF UNION *Spring Egg Hunt*

**Saturday | April 1**

**10:30 a.m.**

Phillipsburg-Union Rd. Community Park

Arrive at 10 a.m. to find  
your age group.

Groups are ages 1-2, 3-4,  
5-6 and 7-8.

Come and celebrate Spring as kids  
scramble to find 4,000 eggs!  
Enjoy punch and cookies and keep  
an eye out for the Easter bunny.  
Don't forget to bring non-perishable  
food items for donation to the FISH  
food pantry. For questions about  
this event, contact the City of Union  
at 937-836-8624.

### 2022 TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY

The 2022 City of Union Tree lighting ceremony was enjoyed by all who attended. Even though the Christmas tree had to be replaced this year, it won't take too many years for it to reach its full splendor. Santa even showed up at the City's fire station! There were lots of giggles, smiles and plenty of candy canes to go around. Thank you to all who attended.



# WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PREVENT STORMWATER POLLUTION?

## **Remember: Only rain belongs in the drain!**

Don't dump anything down storm drains. Be sure to clear away leaves and debris.

## **Clean up pet waste**

Bag up pet waste and dispose of it in the trash to prevent harmful bacteria from washing into local waterways.

## **Do not drain your pool, spa or fountain to a storm drain.**

Allow chlorine to dissipate for several days. Test the water to ensure the residual Chlorine is zero before slowly draining to a landscaped area. You may be able to drain to a sanitary sewer. Contact the City for more information.

## **Make sure storm drains are not running in dry weather**

A stormwater system is designed to carry stormwater. If it hasn't rained in 72 hours, it should not be flowing. Call the City if you hear excess flowing water.

## **Use lawn or garden chemicals sparingly**

Choose organic alternatives when possible and check the weather forecast to avoid applying them before a storm.

## **Minimize runoff by not over-watering your lawn and garden**

Keep sprinklers on a timer to avoid pooling water.

## **Install a rain barrel to capture roof runoff**

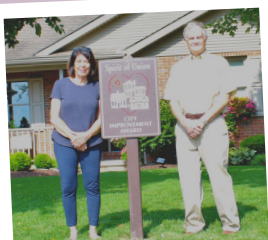
This helps prevent stormwater from reaching waterways and reduces the potential for pollution.

**For any questions or concerns, contact the City of Union at 937-836-8624.**

## 2022 Spirit of Union Award

The well-kept home located at 113 Irongate Drive was selected by the City of Union Park Board for the 2022 Spirit of Union Award.

When Mayor O'Callaghan met with property owner Kitty Klipstine last summer she indicated she moved to Union in 2017 to enjoy the single-story brick ranch home.



Kitty Klipstine & Mayor O'Callaghan

The Klipstine home's exterior is adorned with flowering pots and window planter boxes full of bright, cascading flowers. Kitty enjoys maintaining a lush green yard, edged flower beds and walkways. She looks forward to being outside planting flowers for the new season every spring. Each year she starts her gardening by going to area garden centers to get inspiration on her color theme for the new planting season.

A mature maple tree and a crabapple tree shades the front lawn and if you drive by this spring you should notice the purple blossoms on the crabapple tree.

Kitty enjoys the large raised deck at the rear of their home. The deck is wrapped with a rock lined landscaping bed containing bushes, grasses and a multitude of flowering plants. The rear property line is tree lined and abuts a treed area of the adjoining property giving her home a peaceful park-like feel. Besides gardening Kitty loves spoiling her Yorkies who also enjoy their fenced in rear yard area!



# GAS & ELECTRIC AGGREGATION

The City of Union, in partnership with the MVCC (Miami Valley Communications Council) is placing electric and natural gas aggregation on the May 2nd ballot. Ohio law allows for communities – such as townships, cities, villages and counties – to form aggregated buying groups to purchase electric and gas generation on behalf of their citizens. By bringing citizens together, the aggregation gains group buying power and typically can negotiate a better price with the supplier than each aggregation group member could have negotiated individually.

By voting YES for electric and natural gas aggregation, you will allow your local elected officials to partner with other MVCC communities to purchase electric and natural gas at a competitive rate. Electric and Gas Aggregation provides a competitively priced option for your third-party supply. This is for residents and small businesses that have AES and Centerpoint as your utilities. AES will still be responsible for

the delivery of electricity to your home or business. They own the wires and poles that deliver power to you; therefore, they will continue to read your meter and restore power after an outage. Centerpoint will still be responsible for the delivery of natural gas supply to your home or business. The utility still maintains the pipeline system that delivers power to you and will continue to read your meter and take care of repairs and gas leaks.

First, the governmental aggregation issue must be placed on the ballot and then passed by a majority of the voters. Once passed, all eligible residents and small businesses in the community will be enrolled and will begin receiving the discounted generation pricing under the program. Residents do not need to do anything to join the program. However, anyone who does not want to participate in the program can easily opt out by returning a form, which will be mailed to all eligible members.

# WATER & SEWER RATES

There will be increases in the flat rate water and sewer charges effective with the April utility bills mailed to customers at the end of April.

The flat rate bills will include a \$10.00 increase for water and a \$6.00 increase for sewer for a total of \$16 per flat rate bill. The usage rate bills customers receive will not be increased. (Each year residents receive 8 flat rate and 4 usage rate utility bills).

It has been over 7 years since the last water rate increase. Union's water rates have consistently been the lowest in the region for many years. Even with this rate increase, Union's water rate will remain the lowest in the Miami Valley Region (based on the City of Piqua rate survey of 67 Miami Valley communities). Here are just a few of the reasons the water rate increase is needed: Operational supply costs for the water system have continued to rise. Also, Federal and State Environmental Regulations continue to change to safeguard drinking water quality. As a result, we're faced with increased testing fees to monitor for items such as lead in drinking water, PFAS contaminants and other unregulated contaminants. Water equipment replacement and upgrades are necessary. Also new monitoring requirements for the City's wells and water towers must be met. In 2022, costs for cleaning and repairing one well pump was close to \$60,000. In 2023 we're faced with another well cleaning and inspecting and cleaning of a water tower.

The most recent sewer rate increase was in 2019. This was required for the expansion of the Waste Water Treatment Plant. The City issued 3.2 million dollars in bonds to construct the expansion improvements. A second phase of equipment replacement upgrades is now necessary. This project is estimated to cost \$1,500,000. As with the first phase of improvements the City will be installing most of the equipment in an effort to save costs.

Based on the current City of Piqua combined rate survey for 2022, the increase in Union's water/sewer rates will place our community at 7th lowest in combined quarterly rates out of 64 Miami Valley Communities. Union's combined quarterly rate will be nearly 100 dollars less than the average quarterly rate of the community's surveyed and \$374 less than the highest quarterly combined rate. The City of Piqua's combined rate survey is posted on the City's website and will be updated in May of this year.

# Guide to Property Maintenance & Required Permits

## City of Union Guide to Property Maintenance & Required Permits

Please use this checklist to evaluate your property. We appreciate your compliance with these important community regulations. If you have questions, please call us at 836-8624. We're happy to discuss specifics.

**Why a Code?** The Property Maintenance Code sets minimum standards so a property owner clearly knows what maintenance is expected. Plus, it provides assurance to all residents that their neighbors will do the same. In general, the exteriors of all properties in the City of Union should be structurally sound, and free of nuisances, unsanitary conditions, and hazards, to ensure the safety of occupants, pedestrians, and others, and to help protect property values. It is the property owner's responsibility to comply with property maintenance measures. To further protect property values in our neighborhoods, the City of Union also passed legislation requiring the exterior inspection of properties before they are sold.

**Pre-Sale Inspections.** An exterior inspection is required of all properties before they can be sold. The current property owner should stop by City Hall to complete an application and pay an inspection fee of \$50. A City of Union building inspector will then inspect the exterior of the property, including the exterior of the building and any other structures on the property, including driveways, storage sheds, etc. Any violations to the City's Property Maintenance Code will need to be resolved before the property is sold, or arrangements will need to be made to transfer the required repairs to the new property owner. Adding a pre-sale inspection is an expansion of the existing zoning code and is designed to prevent deterioration of properties. The pre-sale inspection does not replace other inspections such as those for termites, plumbing, interior, etc.

**Code Details.** All owners of properties or structures within the City of Union must comply with the Property Maintenance Code. The City Building & Zoning Department has the responsibility to enforce the code. It will be enforced initially by a formal notice of violation when inspectors observe significant deficiencies on a property. Later, specific legal steps may be implemented to gain compliance and protect the rights of all residents. Property maintenance benefits property owners and neighborhoods by protecting property values. Compliance also avoids possible fines that may be imposed if property owners fail to correct property deficiencies.

## CODE CHECKLIST:

– **Refuse.** Properties should be free of broken glass, stumps, garbage and other debris.

– **Placement of Receptacles.** Containers for all residential garbage, residential rubbish and recycling materials shall be placed at the street curb or alley right-of-way line no sooner than twelve hours before the beginning of the day of normal collection thereof.

– **Removal of Empty Receptacles.** Empty containers shall be removed from the street curb or alley right-of-way line within twelve hours after the end of the collection day.

– **Natural Growth and Weeds.** Dead trees and limbs or other natural growth that is rotting should be removed. Vines, grasses, rank vegetation, and noxious weeds, any of which that are 6 inches or more in height, should be cut down.

– **Landscaping.** Properties should be maintained, with lawns, hedges, and bushes kept from becoming overgrown or decayed. Grass may not exceed a height of 6 inches. All trees and bushes along sidewalks and streets should be trimmed back to provide a clear height of 10 feet above the surface of the sidewalk and 12 feet above the surface of the street. Overhanging branches should be trimmed back to the property line. If a property backs up to a City-owned green space, that area may not be used for gardening, planting of bushes, flowers, trees, etc. If there are any questions concerning this space, please contact the City's zoning inspector.

– **Yard Waste.** Yard waste should be disposed of properly. Or, if yard waste is composted, it must be maintained properly, and kept in the rear yard, so as to not create a nuisance for adjacent properties. Dumping of grass and weed clippings, tree limbs, or other debris on private property or City parks/green spaces is prohibited.

– **Foundation Walls and Basements.** They should be structurally sound, free from defects and damage, and capable of bearing loads safely. Basements should be sound and maintained to prevent the entrance of rodents, wood-boring insects, rain, or water runoff.

– **Chimney and Flue-Vent Attachments.** These features must be maintained to be structurally sound, free from defects, and capable of performing the functions for which they were originally designed.

– **General Maintenance.** The exterior walls, trim, doors, and window casings of every structure and accessory building should be structurally sound and kept painted and/or coated to prevent decay. Paint should be lead-free. Exteriors should be free of broken or unusable windows, crumbling stone or brick, peeling paint, or other conditions that reflect deterioration.

– **Roofs, Gutters, and Downspouts.** Roofs should be maintained to be free of leaks and rot. Drainage should be collected in suitable downspouts, which may discharge into splash blocks or other devices provided that no excess water flows into adjoining properties or over sidewalks. Downspouts should be free of clogs and rust. Connecting any pipe carrying roof water or yard drainage to a sanitary sewer is prohibited.

– **Design Schemes.** Garish design schemes must be modified to eliminate obvious negative impacts on surrounding properties.

– **Junk, Inoperable, or Unlicensed Vehicles.** Properties must be free of junk, inoperable, or unlicensed vehicles. Repairing any such vehicle or trailer is prohibited anywhere on the exterior property, including on the front driveway.

4 – **Utility Trailers.** These trailers must be stored in the rear yard only.

## CITY OF UNION | Guide to Property Maintenance & Required Permits

**Trailers, RVs, Mobile Homes, and Boats.** Trailers, recreational vehicles, tents, garages or temporary buildings cannot be used as residences. RVs, trailers, and boats more than 6 feet in height cannot be parked or stored in the front or side yard of residential properties, except for a loading or unloading period, not to exceed 48 hours. RVs, trailers, and boats less than 6 feet in height may be parked or stored in the side yard of residential districts if screened by a 6-foot solid or privacy fence. Temporary parking of a mobile home is permitted for up to 48 hours; it cannot be used as a residence.

**Operable Vehicles and Commercial Trucks.** All operable vehicles should be parked on a paved surface. Parking or storing any truck or commercial vehicle more than 11,500 pounds is prohibited in the front yard, including on the front driveway.

**Porches.** Foundations should be sound; the porch, guardrails, handrails, and porch stairs should be safe and without rot. Porches require a building permit.

**Additions or Separate Structures.** They should be sound and capable of serving their original purpose. Applicable permits should have been obtained for their construction. If the structure has a garage door, it must have a paved driveway. If a garage is to be converted to living space, the permit will require the existing driveway to be enlarged to accommodate the loss of a parking space. The enlargement of the driveway will not be required if the property is in compliance with parking requirements. When converting a garage into a living area, the construction must include adding a footer under the garage door, leveling the floor, and adding appropriate insulation.

**Driveways and Other Paved Areas.** All off-street parking areas must be either asphalt, concrete, brick, brick paver, or other similar hard-surfaced material. Specific requirements are available at the City Building. Permits are required for replacing deteriorating concrete or blacktop. Best results occur when the original, crumbling layer is removed. Sealing a driveway does not require a building permit.

**Fences, Walls, and Other Non-Residential Exterior Structures.** Accessories such as fences, walls, signs, etc., should be maintained and firmly anchored, with painted and/or protected surfaces to prevent decay and hazard. All fences and signs require a permit. Regulations may vary among subdivisions.

**Reconstruction of Walls and Siding.** Reconstruction of these features should be of standard quality and appearance commensurate with the character of the neighborhood.

**Free From Infestation.** All areas of properties should be maintained to prevent infestation from rodents, insects, and other animals.

**Pools.** Pools are regulated in Union for safety reasons. Even inflatable pools, if the sides are 24 inches or higher, require a building and if applicable an electrical permit. Check with the City's zoning inspector for details.

**Storage Sheds.** Storage sheds require a building permit and must be located in the rear yard. Check with the City's zoning inspector for regulations regarding the size, foundation, and placement on the property.

**Temporary Storage Containers.** Containers such as PODs (Portable on Demand) are permitted but do require a permit. The location and time used are specified in the City of Union's building code.

**Permanent Signs and Billboards.** All signs and billboards exposed to public view must be maintained or otherwise removed. Permits are required.

**Home Occupations.** Generally, office-related home occupations that do not change the appearance of the residential property or increase traffic on the street are permitted, but please contact the City first about the proposed home occupation.

**Pets.** Dogs must be secured on the property of the owner, either by way of leash, fence, or contained inside the home. Dogs are not allowed to run loose while on walks; they should be tethered on a leash no longer than 6 feet. By City Ordinance, pet owners must immediately pick up after their pets on walks and in public areas and also routinely take care to keep their property clean of pet waste. Also, owners should take measures to prevent a dog's prolonged howling or barking. Vicious animals, including vicious dogs, are prohibited in the City of Union. Vicious animals are those that bite or have a propensity to cause harm to humans or animals. Residents must limit the number of dogs and cats to no more than two of each per household.

### PERMITS:

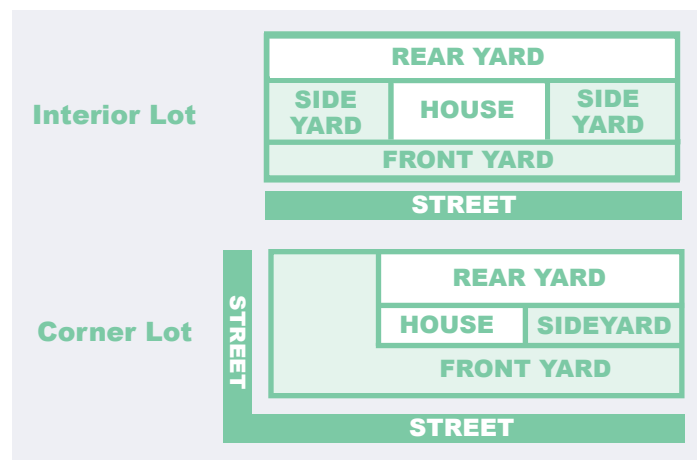
The City of Union requires permits for certain projects, structures, and activities. Some projects, such as plumbing projects, require a permit from Montgomery County. Please contact the City of Union for details about each permit or if you have any questions about if a project does or doesn't require a permit.

#### Items requiring permits:

Air conditioning • Decks • Driveways • Electrical • Fences  
Fireplaces/wood stoves • Garages • Garage sales • Gas • Heating  
Home construction and structural remodeling, including converting garages  
Patios/patio enclosures • Peddlers/solicitors • PODs (Portable on Demand)  
storage containers • Pools • Pre-sale property inspections  
Rehabilitation of properties • Room additions • Satellite dishes  
Sewer lateral replacement\* • Sidewalks • Signs • Storage sheds  
TV and radio towers

\*Residents must notify City Hall if they plan to replace their sewer lateral. Because most sewer laterals are connected to the City's sewer main within the street, either the contractor or the homeowner must post a \$1,200 bond to ensure that any sidewalk, curb, or street asphalt is properly replaced. The City will inspect these repairs before releasing the bond.

Corner and regular lots have different definitions of "front yard." Use this representation to understand the definition as it applies in the City of Union Property Maintenance Code.





## The City of Union Newsletter

118 North Main Street  
Union, OH 45322

937-836-8624  
[www.unionoh.org](http://www.unionoh.org)

**Mayor Michael O'Callaghan**  
937-836-0177

**Vice Mayor John Bruns**  
937-832-0912

**Councilman Jay Niemann**  
937-414-7529

**Councilwoman Helen Oberer**  
937-832-3269

**Councilman Ken Prunier**  
937-751-4073

**Councilwoman Lynne Thomas-Roth**  
937-671-6613

# TRASH COLLECTION

## COLLECTION DAY FOR UNION IS TUESDAYS

Place trash and recycling receptacles behind the curb on Monday evening  
Please do not block trash with vehicles and do not bungee strap lids shut

## TRASH COLLECTIONS TIPS:

- Place handles of Rumpke trash containers facing towards the house/away from the street
- The loaded weight of Rumpke containers is limited to 150 pounds, and other trash containers are limited to 75 pounds.

## BULK ITEM PICKUP:

Residents are permitted to put out ONE bulk item every week. No need to call and notify the city unless you have a question.

- Cloth furniture, mattresses and box springs – Must be wrapped in heavy plastic (large plastic bags for disposal of these items can be purchased at CITY HALL for \$7 each)
- Refrigerators, AC units and dehumidifiers – must be tagged that freon has been removed by certified technician
- Paint cans must have lids removed and be dry (kitty litter helps)
- Yard waste should be bundled and be no longer than 4ft long & 2ft wide
- Tires – will NOT be collected

## 2023 HOLIDAYS - CHANGE IN TRASH COLLECTION SERVICE DATES

Memorial Day - Wednesday, May 31  
4th of July - Wednesday, July 5  
Labor Day - Wednesday, September 6  
Christmas - December 27