



# PROPERTY OWNER FAQ

A Guide to  
Common Questions

## UTILITY BILLING

### WHAT IS INCLUDED IN MY UTILITY BILLS? HOW OFTEN AM I BILLED?

Utility bills are mailed quarterly. Each bill includes charges for water, sanitary, stormwater, refuse, recycling and yard waste collection.

### ARE THE READINGS ON MY BILL ACTUAL OR ESTIMATED?

All readings are actual except for cases of water meter outages.

### CAN PAYMENTS BE AUTOMATICALLY DEDUCTED FROM MY BANK ACCOUNT?

The City offers automatic deduction from a bank account for payment of utility bills. If you are interested in signing up for automatic deduction, please contact the Department of Public Service and Engineering, Utility Billing Division at 614-342-4440 for more information.

### ARE DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE FOR SENIORS?

Residents age 60 and over who are the head of household may sign up to receive a discount on the trash portion of their bill. Sign up by bringing your driver's license or other official ID to the Department of Public Service and Engineering, Utility Billing Division office located at City Hall. For details, please contact the Department of Public Service and Engineering, Utility Billing Division at 614-342-4440.

### DOES THE CITY OFFER A DISCOUNT FOR LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS?

The City of Gahanna is mindful of the rising costs of public utilities including water and sewer. In an effort to aid those in need, Gahanna offers discounts to eligible residents on their water and sewer charges. Actual savings will be based on usage. Please contact the Department of Public Service and Engineering, Utility Billing Division at 614-342-4440 for more information.



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## BUILDING AND PERMITS

### DOES GAHANNA HAVE STANDARD CONSTRUCTION DRAWINGS?

Gahanna uses the following construction drawings: Ten-State for sanitary and water standards, Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) for stormwater standards, its own for street lighting standards and the City of Columbus for everything else.

### DOES THE CITY PROVIDE A LIST OF CONCRETE CONTRACTORS?

Yes. Please contact the Department of Public Service and Engineering, Building Division at 614-342-4010.

### DO I NEED A PERMIT TO REPLACE MY DRIVEWAY, DRIVEWAY APPROACH, SIDEWALK OR CURB?

A permit is not required for the replacement of the driveway. Two permits are required for the replacement of the driveway approach. The first is a driveway approach permit (fee charged). The second is a right-of-way permit (no cost). Only a right-of-way permit (no cost) is required for the replacement of the sidewalk or curb. These permits can be obtained from the Department of Public Service and Engineering, Building Division office



## ZONING AND CODE ENFORCEMENT

### WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY IS IT TO REPAIR SIDEWALKS, CURBS AND GUTTERS?

Per Ohio's Revised Code (ORC) 723.011 and Gahanna's Codified Ordinance 521.06 (a), sidewalks, curbs and gutters are the property owner's responsibility to maintain and repair. The only time the City repairs curbs or gutters is when an entire street is replaced or if damage has occurred in or around a storm drain.

### MY NEIGHBORS HAVE NOT SHOVELED THEIR SIDEWALKS, WHERE SHOULD I REPORT THIS?

Clearing sidewalks and driveway approaches are the responsibility of the property owner. City Code states "No owner or occupant of abutting lands shall fail to keep sidewalks, curbs or gutters in repair and free from snow, ice or any nuisance." (ORC 723.011) Please report all code violations to the City's Code Enforcement Officer at 614-342-4028.

### WHO MAINTAINS STREET TREES?

Per Gahanna's Codified Ordinance 913, it is the property owner's responsibility to maintain and prune street trees. For concerns regarding the health of a street tree or to request removal of a street tree, contact the Department of Parks and Recreation at 614-342-4250.

## UTILITIES: WATER

### WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE LOW WATER PRESSURE?

Low water pressure could be caused by a variety of reasons. It could be a water leak or a bad meter. Before calling a plumber, call the Department of Public Service and Engineering, Utility Billing Division at 614-342-4440, Monday through Friday, 8:00am - 5:00pm. After 5:00pm and on weekends and holidays, call 614-342-4240. The Utility Billing Division will dispatch a utility crew to investigate the situation and assess the issue.

### WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR WATER LEAKS?

The City is responsible for maintaining the water line from the curb box (located in the front of the property, near the sidewalk) to the water main and the mains themselves. The property owner is responsible for maintaining the water lateral, which runs from the curb box to the building. If you suspect a water break, call the Department of Public Service and Engineering, Utility Billing Division at 614-342-4440, Monday through Friday, 8:00am - 5:00pm. After 5:00pm and on weekends and holidays, call 614-342-4240. The Utility Billing Division will dispatch a utility crew to investigate the situation and assess the issue. They will determine who is responsible for the repairs.

### WHAT DO I DO IF THE WATER IS DISCOLORED OR FOUL TASTING?

If the water looks or smells bad, do not drink, cook, clean or bathe with it. Contact the Department of Public Service and Engineering, Utility Billing Division at 614-342-4440, Monday through Friday, 8:00am - 5:00pm. After 5:00pm and on weekends and holidays, call 614-342-4240. The Utility Billing Division will dispatch a utility crew to investigate the situation and assess the issue.

### HOW DO I PREVENT PIPES IN MY HOME FROM FREEZING DURING THE WINTER?

Depending on the diameter of the pipe, it can take only a matter of hours to freeze during cold temperatures. Take the following precautions to protect your pipes: insulate water lines in unheated areas of your home (ie: garage, attic, basement, crawl space, etc), let the faucet drip to keep the water moving through vulnerable pipes (such as those located on an exterior wall), keep cabinets or vanities open to expose pipes to warmer room temperatures and detach outdoor hoses from faucets allowing connecting pipes to drain. In addition, it is important to know where the master shutoff valve is located (typically where the water line comes into the home from the street) in case a leak occurs due to a freezing pipe.

### WHAT DO I DO IF I HAVE A WATER LEAK IN MY HOUSE?

If you have an unknown water leak inside your house or your pipes burst due to freezing temperatures, follow the steps below: 1. Shut off the water line into your house at the master shutoff valve. This is typically located before your water meter (where the water line comes into the home from the street). This will stop the water from flowing out of the leak. 2. If the water is still flowing from the leak after turning the shutoff valve, call the Department of Public Service and Engineering, Utility Billing Division at 614-342-4440. They will dispatch a utility crew to shut off your water from the curb box/street tap. 3. Call a plumber to inspect the leak and perform repairs. A list of plumbers can be found in your local phone book. The City's utility crew are not licensed plumbers and cannot perform private water line repairs.

## UTILITIES: SANITARY

### WHAT DO I DO IF I SMELL A SEWER ODOR OR SUSPECT A SEWER BACKUP?

The City is responsible for maintaining the sanitary mains. The property owner is responsible for maintaining the sanitary lateral, which runs from main to the building. If you smell a sewer odor or suspect a sewer backup, call the Department of Public Service and Engineering, Utility Billing Division at 614-342-4440, Monday through Friday, 8:00am - 5:00pm. After 5:00pm and on weekends and holidays, call 614-342-4240. The Utility Billing Division will dispatch a utility crew to investigate the situation and assess the issue. If the obstruction is located within the sanitary main, the utility crew will clear it. If the obstruction is located within the sanitary lateral, it is the property owner's responsibility to have their lateral line cleared.



### WHAT IS A DEDUCT METER / SEWER ADJUSTING METER (SAM)?

A deduct meter/sewer adjustment meter (SAM) is a water meter that is attached to the property owner's water line that registers outdoor water use (ie: irrigation system). After a SAM has been installed and inspected, there will be no sanitary charges for any water that passes through the meter since water for outdoor use does not enter the City's sanitary system. A SAM can be purchased through the Department of Public Service and Engineering, Utility Billing Division. For more information call the Department of Public Service and Engineering, Utility Billing Division at 614-342-4440, Monday through Friday, 8:00am - 5:00pm.

## UTILITIES: STORMWATER

### WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MANHOLE LIDS?

The City is responsible for all manhole lids on stormwater, sanitary and water lines. If any lid is broken, dislodged or missing, please contact the Department of Public Service and Engineering, Utility Billing Division at 614-342-4440, Monday through Friday, 8:00am - 5:00pm. After 5:00pm and on weekends and holidays, call 614-342-4240. The Utility Billing Division will dispatch a utility crew to investigate the situation and assess the issue.



### WHAT DO I DO IF THERE IS FLOODING IN MY YARD?

Please contact the Department of Public Service and Engineering, Administrative Division at 614-342-4005, Monday through Friday, 8:00am - 5:00pm. The Administrative Division will dispatch a utility crew to investigate the situation and assess the issue.

## REFUSE, RECYCLING AND YARD WASTE

### WHEN IS REFUSE, RECYCLING AND YARD WASTE PICKED UP?

Yard waste is picked up on Monday. Refuse, recycling and bulk items are picked up on Tuesday. The waste hauler may begin service as early as 7am. Place all containers at the curb or designated location by 6am the day of collection but no earlier than 5pm the day before.

### WHAT ARE THE COLLECTION GUIDELINES FOR REFUSE, RECYCLING AND YARD WASTE?

Please follow the guidelines listed on the Refuse, Recycling and Yard Waste webpage on the City's website to ensure proper collection. If materials are not properly prepared, the waste hauler will leave a tag with an explanation. The first instance serves as a friendly reminder. The waste hauler may refuse collection upon subsequent instances.

### DO I HAVE TO SEPARATE MY RECYCLING?

Items to be recycled can be mixed together in the same recycle bin. Do not place recyclables in plastic bags as they may be mistaken for trash.

### WHO DO I CALL IF MY COLLECTION IS MISSED BY THE WASTE HAULER?

If your collection is missed, report it to the Department of Public Service and Engineering, Utility Billing Division at 614-342-4440 by 5pm the next day of the scheduled pickup. Items reported after that time must be held until the following week.

### WHERE DO I GET NEW OR REPLACEMENT RECYCLING BINS?

New recycle bins can be obtained from the Department of Public Service and Engineering, Utility Billing Division located in City Hall (200 S Hamilton Rd). Business hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 5:00pm. It is not necessary to bring in your old bins. Old bins should be marked "trash" and placed at the curb. The hauler will then pick them up.

### IS THERE ANYWHERE IN GAHANNA THAT I CAN TAKE YARD WASTE THAT DOES NOT FIT THE COLLECTION GUIDELINES?

Residents may drop off yard waste at the Service Complex located at 152 Oklahoma Ave in the dumpster marked "YARD WASTE". Drop offs can be made Monday through Friday from 8:00am until 3:00pm.

### DOES THE CITY STILL PICK UP LEAVES? IF NOT, HOW CAN I DISPOSE OF THEM?

The City no longer offers curbside pick-up of leaves. However, the waste hauler will continue to pick up yard waste as scheduled, including leaves, as long as they are placed in the proper yard waste bags and set at the curb prior to 6:00am on collection day. Residents may also drop off leaves at the Service Complex located at 152 Oklahoma Ave in the dumpster marked "YARD WASTE". Drop offs can be made Monday through Friday from 8:00am until 3:00pm.

### HOW DO I DISPOSE OF HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE?

Hazardous, corrosive, toxic or ignitable wastes cannot be accepted by landfills due to Federal and EPA regulations and are excluded from collection. Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio (SWACO) provides free household hazardous waste (HHW) disposal services for Franklin County residents. For more information, call SWACO's HHW drop-off facility at 614-294-1300.

## SNOW REMOVAL

### WHAT ORDER ARE STREETS PLOWED DURING SNOW EVENTS?

The City's snow removal policy places every street into one of four categories based on the street's usage, access and safety. The category determines the priority of when and how streets are treated and cleared. The four categories include: arterial (main streets), collector (streets that lead to arterials), residential (neighborhood streets) and courts. In a plowing event, arterial streets are plowed first. After all the arterial streets are cleared, plows will then work on the collector streets. Following collector streets are residential slopes and residential streets and then courts.

### THE SNOW PLOW DAMAGED MY MAILBOX. HOW DO I GET THIS REPAIRED?

Please ensure that your mailbox follows the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) standards. The front mailbox and door should be 6 inches behind the back edge of curb and 38-42 inches above the ground. If these guidelines are followed it will ensure that the City plows will not physically hit the mailbox. If your mailbox is damaged by a plow or by the force of snow coming off the plow, please contact the Department of Public Service and Engineering, Administrative Division at 614-342-4005.



### IS STREET PARKING ALLOWED DURING A SNOW EVENT?

Vehicles parked on the street during snow and ice events make it difficult for the snow plows to properly clear the streets and present a legitimate hazard. If possible, refrain from parking on the street during snow and ice events. This will enable the snow removal process to be completed efficiently. It will also prevent vehicles from being 'plowed in'. If a vehicle is plowed in, it is the responsibility of the vehicle owner to dig it out.

### WHO DO I CALL TO REMOVE SNOW FROM MY DRIVEWAY APPROACH?

The City does not come back to open private driveway approaches after the snow plows have passed. This is the responsibility of the property owner.

### I CAN'T SHOVEL MY DRIVEWAY DUE TO HEALTH CONCERNS. HOW DO I GET HELP?

You will need to call a private snow removal company. Many local landscape companies provide this service.

## STREETS

### WHEN WILL MY STREET BE PAVED?

The annual street maintenance program is determined by the City Engineer based on the street ratings and the annual allocated budget. Rating the condition of all City-maintained streets is completed annually. The following criteria determine a street's rating: extent of cracking, concrete condition, crack seal condition and pavement defects. To find your street rating and learn more about the street maintenance program, visit the annual street program webpage on the City's website.

### HOW DO I GET A REGULATORY STREET SIGN INSTALLED ON MY STREET?

All regulatory street signage (ie: no parking, etc) is determined by the Chief of Police. Please contact the Police Department at 614-342-4240 with such a request.

### WHERE DO I REPORT A DEAD ANIMAL IN THE ROAD OR CITY'S RIGHT-OF-WAY?

Contact the Department of Public Service and Engineering, Administrative Division at 614-342-4005. They will dispatch a street crew to pick up the dead animal.

### WHERE DO I REPORT POTHOLES?

Potholes may be reported to the Department of Public Service and Engineering, Administrative Division at 614-342-4005.

### WHY DO WE HAVE TRAFFIC CAMERAS AT INTERSECTIONS?

Video detection cameras are set up to relay information for the traffic lights to change and to monitor traffic. They are not used for ticketing or traffic enforcement.

## ENGINEERING

### WHY ARE THERE PAINT MARKINGS AND/OR COLORED FLAGS IN MY YARD?

OUPS (Ohio Utilities Protection Service) markings are placed by various underground utilities to mark their lines when a request to dig or build is submitted. If you need to have your lines marked before digging in your yard, call 8-1-1 or 1-800-362-2764.

### WHERE IS THE EASEMENT IN MY YARD?

Easements are for streets and utilities that provide benefit to the property. Easements should be noted on the property owner's deed. If assistance is needed, contact the Department of Public Service and Engineering, Engineering Division at 614-342-4050.

### HOW DO I OBTAIN OR CHANGE AN ADDRESS?

The City Engineer assigns and certifies all addresses within city limits. All requests should be submitted in writing to the City Engineer.

### WHERE DO I REPORT A STREETLIGHT PROBLEM?

Malfunctioning streetlights may be reported to the Department of Public Service and Engineering at 614-342-4005. The City's contracted electrician typically works on Thursdays. Streetlights requiring routine maintenance (outages, cycling, etc) that are reported prior to Thursday will be put on the current week's work log. If a series of lights are out and the electrician determines it is due to an underground issue, it may take up to