

# Stormwater removal program in jeopardy

A committee appointed by City Council will meet on Wednesday, August 4, 1999, at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall to discuss an initiative petition that was received by the City on July 8, 1999, regarding the joint stormwater removal program between the City and the Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD). Committee members include council members Gary Blomberg, Gene McCracken and Bill Niehaus.

The initiative petition is

a process, allowed by the City's Home Rule Charter, through which new legislation can be proposed to the community through a vote of the electorate at the next general election. The initiative petition regarding the stormwater removal project proposes new legislation that would both repeal the original legislation authorizing this program in addition to restricting city expenditures on the stormwater removal project.

At the August 4 meeting the committee will

decide whether to accept the legislation proposed in the initiative petition, develop compromise legislation, or refer the matter to the November ballot.

During this initiative process the current legislation approved by City Council in February 1999 authorizing the joint stormwater program with MSD will remain in effect and the City plans on fulfilling its obligation to homeowners that have already begun the remediation process.

The joint stormwater removal program between the City and MSD was developed to correct improper stormwater inflows into the sanitary sewer system. These improper inflows were causing basement flooding and raw sewage back ups in homes in the Schoolhouse Lane area. The original legislation approved by City Council in February limited MSD's participation at \$3,000 per home with the City funding any amount over that cap but within a maximum cap of \$112,000.

## How to reach us



**City Hall**  
891-2424

**Police Department**  
(non-emergency)  
985-1600

**Fire Department**  
(non-emergency)  
985-1633

**Service Department**  
792-8355

**Planning/Zoning/  
Building**  
792-8309

**Code Enforcement  
Action Line**  
792-8316

**Council Action Line**  
792-8336

**Municipal Pool**  
985-1659

## Schools back in Session

*Sycamore Schools begin the new school year on August 25. Please be mindful of children as they go to and from school.*

# Work begins to restore Johnson Preserve

During the aftermath of the tornado, city staff and the Parks & Recreation Commission began working with an Urban Forest Recovery Team including representatives from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, the Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District and from the Ohio State University, among others, to develop a plan for the short and long term recovery of the Johnson Nature Preserve.

The short-term plan that was developed by this Recovery Team was subsequently approved by City Council and with the help of the Civilian Conservation Corps, city staff has begun its implementation. The short-term plan for the Johnson Nature Preserve includes:

- *The clearing of existing walking trails by moving all trees to the side of the trail and placing them in contact with the ground.*
- *Reconstructing existing trails,*

*bridges and any other infrastructure that may have been in place at the time of the April 9 tornado.*

- *Utilizing the services of an arborist with certification in hazardous tree identification to mark any hazardous trees for cutting and "minimizing" the trees to the ground.*
- *Removing trees from drainage channels and monitoring those channels for any blockages.*

- *Monitoring the entire area for the use of erosion control measures, including the planting of grasses and ground covers during and after the clean up process.*

In addition, the City has applied for an Ohio NatureWorks grant to assist with the long term costs of replanting and reforestation efforts in the preserve. A decision on state grant funding is expected by mid-2000.

## A special thanks to ALERT

The ALERT Team (Air Land Emergency Resource Team), a private rescue training organization that provides disaster assistance worldwide, returned to Montgomery July 12-23 to assist private homeowners with their tornado clean-up efforts. The ALERT Team helped homeowners in removing

hazardous and broken trees and limbs from their properties and clearing them from the area. Michele Budzek, the Montgomery Woods Neighborhood Association, the city's Public Works Department, as well as the Red Cross and local churches, should be recognized for their efforts in organizing this assistance.