

From the Mayor...

June 5, 2015

The City of Warsaw provides garbage, yard debris, and recycling curbside waste pickup services for our neighborhoods. Garbage and yard debris services are provided by city employees using city equipment. Recycling services are provided by a contractor. There is no fee for any of these services and they are intended for residential consumers only. The city does not provide any curbside waste pickup for commercial or industrial customers.

Later this year the Warsaw Department of Public Works will begin to automate our curbside garbage pickup. Equipment will be converted from the traditional manual rear-loading packer trucks to more cost efficient automated equipment. The benefits of the new program will include greater safety for our employees, cost savings from reduced labor costs, and more efficient service for our citizens. I have engaged a citizen's advisory committee over the past year to help guide the transition.

Currently the city has two rear load garbage trucks staffed with six employees (one driver and two "throwers" per truck). The trucks operate five days a week and often have to double up in the case of holidays and extreme weather. Residents must use containers no larger than 32 gallons that limit weight and thus lessen work related injuries. Pickup is in both the alleys and street side. All trucks must hold moderate volumes of garbage to reduce the number of daily trips to the landfill in Packerton.

The city is currently in the process of bidding for an automated "one-armed bandit" side load garbage truck that requires just one employee to operate. The new truck will pick up 96 gallon totes, identical to those used currently by our recycling contractor. They will be distributed to all residents and will continue to be picked up weekly. We will also offer the option of a smaller 65 gallon tote that may be more manageable to handle for those who don't need the larger tote.

We will also be retrofitting our current trash trucks with rear load "tippers" to automate the process with the larger totes when we pick up the alleys.

From its inception, our curbside recycling contractor has utilized this technology. You have undoubtedly seen these automated "one-armed bandit" side loaders pull up, and using a joy stick, can grab and dump the tote without anyone touching it. As the driver improves his skills and gets past the "learning curve", he/she can complete a route efficiently and with little difficulty.

The goal is to continue to provide the level of service our residents have come to expect with greater efficiency and safety.

There will be the usual adjustment period created by change. Totes will have to be distributed and if desired, old garbage cans disposed of. Routes may need to be adjusted as efficiencies are realized.

The alleys will continue to be our greatest challenge. Our curbside recycling contractor is having problems in our alleys with their larger volume side-load trucks and has informed us of their desire to change pickup to street-side only after their contract runs out at the end of the year. We will look very carefully at this problem as we transition.

I ask for your help and patience while we implement this improvement. We will keep you informed well ahead of any change and will do everything we can to minimize any disruption.