



Cole's Clipboard

STATE REPRESENTATIVE SANDY COLE

Community News & Legislative Update

I hope you and your family are enjoying a fun and safe summer! As you may have noticed, there was a two-month lapse with *Cole's Clipboard*. That is because my staff and I have been working on a new website for District 62 that provides an online "district office" as a means to share ideas, address mutual concerns and keep in touch on the issues that affect our families. So, without further ado, I invite you to visit www.repcole62.com and bookmark it in your "favorites" file so that you can keep up to date on state legislation and programs; District 62 community news and events; resource information; and so much more!

Sandy Cole

GRAND AVENUE POTHOLE REPAIRS

My district office has received many phone calls and letters regarding the road conditions on Illinois Route 132 (Grand Avenue) between Route 45 and the I-94 tollway. Actual resurfacing of that particular stretch is currently scheduled to take place between 2010 and 2014. However, due to extreme weather conditions in Lake County this past winter, IDOT will be repairing this stretch of road as part of its *Locations Pavement Patching Contract*.

The legal bidding process for these contracts began June 13, 2008 and is moving forward. But, due to the large number of state roads in our area that need patching, we may not see the patch work completed on Route 132 (between Rte. 45 and I-94) until later this summer.

Please visit www.repcole62.com where, throughout the summer, I will keep my constituents informed of any new construction updates from IDOT.

ARE YOU READY FOR THE SWITCH?

According to the Digital Television Transition and Public Safety Act of 2005, all American television stations will be required to switch from analog to new digital broadcasts on February 17, 2009. Digital TV is a more efficient technology that will provide clearer pictures, better sound and help emergency responders protect our communities.

If you currently receive free TV through a rooftop antenna or rabbit ears, you will need to upgrade your TV set to continue receiving free television after February 17th. In addition, any TV sets that do not have a built-in digital tuner, or are not connected to a cable or satellite service, will need a digital converter box to continue receiving free television.

The Federal government is offering U.S. households up to two \$40.00 coupons to help pay for the cost of a certified converter box (*retail cost \$50 - \$70*) that will plug into your current TV set. A limited supply of applications for the coupons are available in my district office. You can also apply online at www.DTV2009.gov, or apply via phone by calling 1-888-388-2009. All applications must be submitted by March 31, 2009.

You may also choose to purchase a new TV with a built-in digital tuner, or connect your analog TV to cable, satellite or other pay services. More information can be found on the website listed above.

SAVE ON HOUSEHOLD UTILITY BILLS

The average American home spends about \$1,900.00 annually on energy costs. Cutting down on energy consumption not only helps the environment—it can make a difference in costly utility bills as well. Listed below are some energy and safety tips for more efficient and economical home appliance use this summer:

- Look for Energy Star® and EnergyGuide labels when shopping for home appliances. Energy Star® is the government's seal of energy efficiency, and EnergyGuide helps you to estimate an appliance's energy consumption.
- When you are not using your electric appliances, unplug them (particularly when you are on vacation or away from home for an extended period of time). Believe it or not, 75 percent of the electricity used to power home electronics is consumed while the products are turned off.
- Wash your clothes in cold water whenever possible (look for cold-water detergents at your grocery store). Always use cold water for the rinse cycle.
- Be sure to clean the lint filter in your dryer after every load—this helps to improve air circulation.
- Inspect your dryer vent frequently to make sure it is not blocked. This helps to save energy, and may prevent a fire.
- Upgrading your computer system? Laptop computers use much less energy than desktop computers.
- Turn off computer and monitor when not in use. Screen savers on monitors do not reduce energy consumption, but switching to sleep mode or just turning the monitor off will help save energy.
- Weatherize your home for summer by caulking or weather-stripping any windows or doors that leak air. This will prevent cool air from escaping.
- When using your air conditioner, set thermostat at 78 degrees when you are home and 85 degrees (or **OFF**) when you are away from home. Ceiling or room fans will help circulate cool air. And, replace air conditioner filters monthly. Dirty filters restrict airflow and can cause the system to run longer.
- Consider installing a whole house fan in your attic. The fan draws cool air in through your open windows and forces hot air out through the attic vents.
- To help prevent electricity outages, avoid running your appliances during the peak hours of 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM.
- Your dishwasher actually uses less water than washing your dishes by hand! But be sure to run a fully-loaded dishwasher and turn off the dry cycle so dishes can air dry.
- Reduce the operating time of your swimming pool filter and auto-cleaning vacuum to four to five hours, and only during off-peak times.

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