

# City begins sweeping the streets

**Residents are encouraged to report street problems. The street department will evaluate these requests and schedule sweeping as needed.**

**By Holly Richrath**

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East Peoria, Ill. —

East Peoria streets will soon be cleaner, faster.

The street sweeper, recently purchased, replaces the city's 11-year-old sweeper.

“The old sweeper was just worn out,” said Steve Ferguson, director of public works. “It would pick up debris and drop it back off onto the street.”

According to Ferguson, what often took three passes of a street to pick everything up will now take only one.

“The new sweeper is much more efficient,” he said.

This will allow the sweeper's main operator, Jay Gullett, and fill-in operator, Jake Boesch, to sweep more per day.

Gullett and Boesch spent two days last week becoming familiar with the new machine before hitting the streets.

Both men had experience with the older sweeper, but trained to learn the different operations of the new machine.

“It's a lot nicer and newer than our old sweeper,” Gullett said. “It's a lot more advanced.”

Gullett said he is currently sweeping areas with work orders, but will sweep roads throughout East Peoria this spring and summer.

“We have 130 miles of streets; it takes awhile to get to all of them, but we'll sweep until they're done,” Ferguson said.

He added that once the threat of freezing conditions has passed the public works street department begins the street sweeping process.

“We clean gravel and debris left over from winter,” he said. “We sweep in the fall, too, to pick up leaves.”

At its March 16 meeting, the East Peoria City Council approved the purchase of the new 2010 street sweeper for \$145,405. It was originally budgeted for \$110,000.

“We exhausted every avenue of what to do,” commissioner Dan Decker said at the meeting. “We’ve looked at buying used and new. ...What we have found with this resolution is this is the best bang for the buck staying as close to our budget as we can.”

Ferguson said after trading in the city’s old street sweeper, the cost of the new sweeper was roughly \$139,000, which was paid in full from gaming funds.

While there is no set schedule for frequency of sweeping residential areas, a service request form is available on the street department’s section of the city of East Peoria’s Web site.

Residents are encouraged to report unusual problems and locations which may present a hazard to public safety. The street department will evaluate these requests and schedule sweeping as needed.

To find this information, visit [cityofeastpeoria.com](http://cityofeastpeoria.com), click city departments, public works, then street department.

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