



CITY OF SEDALIA

Municipal Building
200 South Osage Avenue
Sedalia, Missouri 65301

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Contact: Brenda Ardrey, Public Works Director
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
9:00 A.M. CDST, June 25, 2020

CITY OF SEDALIA OFFERS PROGRAM TO PROPERTY OWNERS TO FILL OLD AND ABANDONED CISTERNS AT NO COST

(SEDALIA, MISSOURI): In recent weeks, the City of Sedalia has received calls from neighbors and property owners concerned about exposed holes in their or neighboring lots that could pose a safety hazard for children and pets. The majority of these holes have been identified as being formed by settlement or the loss of a cap or top from old and abandoned cisterns.

Historically, cisterns were found around homes where groundwater might not have been readily available year round and roof runoff could be collected for later use. Cisterns are underground storage pits with rock, brick or concrete linings used for water storage. Many older homes or vacant lots have the remains of these underground cisterns that when originally abandoned were capped and not filled. Over time due to ground settlement or deterioration in the cistern structure, a safety hazard for people and animals as well as a potential route for groundwater contamination can result when fissures, cracks and holes form resulting in failure of the cistern top or collapse of the sidewalls. With cisterns having depths ranging from 4 to 30 feet and with the potential for the pits or tanks to be fully or partially water filled, it is essential that cisterns be properly abandoned through proper filling.

Many new homeowners are unaware their property contains an abandoned cistern until they discover a hole has formed in a side or back yard allowing the homeowner to see down into the underground pit or tank. When cisterns are no longer used, the City has a program to fill the cistern with rock at no cost to the property owner to keep the cistern from becoming a safety hazard. The City of Sedalia encourages residents to walk their property to see if there might be a cistern that could be filled and to contact the Public Works Department to arrange for filling of any cisterns found.

If residents have questions about the Cistern Filling Program or other Public Works projects, please feel free to call (660) 827-3000, ext. 1166 for assistance.

When : As old and abandoned cisterns are identified on private property
Where : City Wide – Sedalia, Missouri
Why : Keeping Citizens and Water Resources Safe