

Baker Clean-Up Days will be May 8 through May 16. There are a few changes in the way that will take place this year.

Clean-Up Days have been held in Baker for decades. Its purpose has been to clean accumulated trash from winter and wind and focused on streets and alleys. During the 1970's and 80's, High School and Jr. High students were released for a Friday afternoon, picking up garbage from one end of town to the other and side to side. When insurance liability concerns brought an end to that, volunteer organizations and individual volunteers sent out crews, young and old, to help tidy things up. Over the years, great good and goodwill has been accomplished as friends and neighbors worked together to clean up.

Most recently, the trash picked up has been hauled to containers set at the City Shop property but that has brought a few unintended issues. While the intent of Clean-Up Days has always been to clean up streets, alleys and yards, it has been quite handy for basement, garage and attic cleanouts. It is good to have a concerted effort to clean up, the cost and manpower to handle the extra refuse has brought a need to re-evaluate how the City of Baker manages the event.

These past two years, we've received a lot of unwanted appliances including refrigerators and freezers, tires, construction waste and furniture. The Public Works Department has been tasked with daily cleanup of the yard where overflow and heavy items lay alongside the containers. Extended Clean-Up days to help the community complete their cleaning ran to three weeks. Late night drop-offs and unsorted trash added to the work required to keep the area safe.

This year, with the Montana Ave Watermain Replacement Project bringing the extra equipment and traffic changes, it becomes apparent that an improvement in the process is needed. After looking into ways to return the focus to just street, alley and yard cleanup, two things were obvious: It would be difficult to restrict what trash is accepted at the City Shop location and it is important to encourage residents to continue cleaning up as well as they have in recent years. The City and County have worked out a good solution with a timeframe consolidated into two weekends and the week between.

Years ago, Fallon County extended drop-off hours at the old landfill closer to town and the newer container site during Clean-Up days. Once again, the Fallon County Commission and the City of Baker have collaborated on extended hours, hauling and the possibility to receive larger items at the Coral Creek Container site. This is just east of town taking Hwy 12, then south ½ mile on Coral Creek Road.

There are a few restrictions: Any freon-bearing appliances must have a tag certifying the freon was properly reclaimed. Tires, batteries and the like will not be accepted. Construction materials from jobsites will not be accepted and should be delivered to the landfill. Tree limbs will be accepted but must be placed in the southwest corner of the site. There will be a separate container for metals. Loads should to be covered/strapped to avoid littering the highway and county road to the site.

Extended hours are Saturday & Sunday, May 8,9, 15,16 from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM. Monday through Friday hours are 12:00 PM to 8:00 PM. An attendant will be present to direct where items are to be placed.

The community is invited to participate and take advantage of the extended hours for Clean-Up Week. Volunteer organizations and individuals who would assist those needing help are asked to call the City of Baker Office with their contact information. Please pass the word!