

***By Jan Schultz, The Imperial Republican News Editor***

It comes just once a year.

That chance to take items from your home to the transfer station at the south edge of the city free of charge.

This year, the city council again approved two Saturdays in October, the 5th and the 12th from 9 to 3 both days, for the “free dump days” in continuing its Take Pride in Imperial efforts.

This is the third year it's being offered, after an initial push from Mayor Dwight Coleman who wanted to bring the community together to take pride in their community. In addition to some hydrant and sign painting around town that year, people also cleaned up ditches and other areas in the city right before the fair.

That first year, one free dump day was offered, which now has expanded to two.

Many complain about the city's nuisance codes and some of the requirements, but bottom line, most of those requirements deal with junk and unused items lying around in people's yards.

Now's the time to get some of those items off your property—things like old tires, paint, other junk and even household trash in your garbage bags.

The free dump days are reserved for Imperial city residents only, and not for commercial dumping.

It's no doubt we all have too much stuff. Sometimes, it just outgrows the storage capacity of a garage and home, so it may end up outside.

Just look at the growth in the storage unit business, not just here, but all over the country. Even some communities much smaller than ours seem to have a storage unit where people can rent space to store “stuff.” That's a testament to the fact most of us have too much “stuff.”

A good rule to follow (one my husband says I don't follow when it comes to clothes) is for every item you buy, get rid of one by either donating it to a thrift store, if usable, recycling it in some manner or disposing of it.

Now's your chance.

While I strongly believe in the adage “a man's home is his castle” I also believe in a neighbor's right not to have to look next door at an unkempt yard full of unused items.

Having spruced-up properties also reflects well on Imperial, which is known well beyond its borders as a clean town and one people like to visit.

Take advantage of the two Saturdays next month when you have free dumping at the transfer station, and “take pride in Imperial.”