



**CITY OF FRANKLIN
MUNICIPAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

OCTOBER 2017 MUNICIPAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

ATTENTION: THERE IS NO CITY LEAF PICKUP

LEAVES CAN BE BROUGHT TO THE TRANSFER STATION-73 PUNCH BROOK RD.

**DURING THE WEEKS OF OCTOBER 16TH/ OCTOBER 23RD /OCTOBER 30TH/
NOVEMBER 6TH AND NOVEMBER 13TH; THE TRANSFER STATION WILL
ACCEPT LEAVES AT A DESIGNATED LEAF DROP OFF AREA LOCATED AT THE
FIRST ENTRANCE TO THE TRANSFER STATION, WHICH IS BEFORE THE MAIN
GATE ON THE RIGHT, KNOWN AS RESCUE ROAD. THIS DROPOFF AREA WILL
BE OPEN TUESDAY THROUGH SATURDAY 7:30 AM TO 3:00 PM. ONLY LEAVES
WILL BE ACCEPTED AT THE LEAF DROPOFF AREA.**

**REGULAR TRANSFER STATION HOURS FOR ALL OTHER ITEMS ARE TUESDAY,
THURSDAY AND SATURDAY FROM 7:30 AM TO 3:00 PM.**

Notice to all Residents:

During my fiscal year 2018 budget presentation, there was discussion with the Mayor, City Council and Staff, relative to essential and non-essential services provided by the various divisions of the Municipal Services Department. This is part of the annual budget process. One topic that deserved further evaluation was the discontinuance, by the Municipal Services Department, of picking up **residential leaves**. Since then, I have analyzed other job functions performed by the five-person Highway Division. I have come to the realization that based on our ever increasing workload; this practice needs to be terminated this fall. This update explains why this is necessary.

This type of review, with respect to the essential services we provide, was performed when we went from a five-day operation of the Transfer Station and Curbside Collection of Solid Waste, to three days per week for each. The end result was no excessive burden to our residents and businesses; a significant cost savings to the City and it provided the opportunity to add recycling to our curbside collection program which saved the City money.

Of all the essential job duties I have listed below, all of which are performed by the Highway Division of the Department, leaf pickup falls at the bottom of the list. This reflects the need to prioritize our workload and be realistic relative to service delivery given the fact that our Public Ways and aging infrastructure are a top priority.

Below, listed by category, are many essential job functions that are far more important than residential leaf pickup:

- ❖ Grading over 14 lane miles of gravel road at least 4 times a year.

- ❖ The ongoing task of filling potholes and performing roadway maintenance. As roads continue to age, there are more potholes and the need to stay ahead on this priority.
- ❖ Drainage repair and maintenance. It takes 12 weeks annually to clean and inspect the City's drainage system. Given the age and condition of drainage system pipelines, catch basins and manholes, all are in constant need of repair, maintenance and replacement. We have a six-year backlog of this type of work to complete.
- ❖ Sidewalk maintenance, removal and repair as needed. We are so far behind on this we need to focus on playing catchup!
- ❖ Tree removal, brush cutting and roadside mowing. These are ongoing priorities and the fall is one of the best times of the year to perform this work especially in preparation for winter snow and ice storms.
- ❖ Sign replacement and repair, fence and guardrail replacement and repair.
- ❖ Pavement markings. Stop bars; parking slots; centerlines; edge lines; etc.
- ❖ Snow and Ice control – Delivery, mixing and preparation of winter sand and salt along with plow route inspection for hazards and getting equipment ready!
- ❖ Street sweeping.
- ❖ Maintenance and upkeep of road shoulders, drainage swales and driveway culverts.
- ❖ Residential Leaf Pickup – Lowest priority given the above more essential tasks.

Now for many of the reasons why I feel we must be honest and realistic if we are ever going to work towards addressing the backlog of work referred to above:

- ❖ Limited size of the Highway Crew to deal with ongoing projects.
- ❖ Leaf pickup is very hard on a four-person crew day in and day out.
- ❖ Fuel, overtime and regular worktime are all costing the City money when performing leaf pickup.
- ❖ Given the ever increasing workload, it is hard to justify that providing residential leaf pickup is money well spent. This is especially true when we have so many other critical infrastructure needs to address.
- ❖ We experience a six-year backlog on many projects as noted above.
- ❖ Many residents do not use this leaf pickup service. Some opt to compost on their own property or deliver their leaves to the Transfer Station.
- ❖ Leaf pickup comes at the busiest time of the year. It consumes staff time as we prepare for winter operations.
- ❖ Our crews are limited to a six-month construction season to perform the most essential tasks.
- ❖ Leaf pickup takes 35 workdays to complete. If there is a late leaf drop accompanied by wet weather, an early snowfall or hard freeze; this impacts our ability to complete pickup in a timely manner. This is not fair to the crew or residents. The end result has been to delay completion of leaf pickup until the spring. Spring is a very busy time for us with the need to perform winter cleanup.
- ❖ Age and condition on the leaf sucker and other equipment used to pickup leaves. Leaf pickup increases the wear and tear on this equipment.

Alternatives and Benefits for Residents to Consider:

- ❖ Composting leaves on your own or a neighbor's property. The UNH Cooperative Extension Service and the New Department of Agriculture Websites are excellent resources to refer to. Visit the following link for tips- <http://extension.unh.edu>

- ❖ Residential composting can save you money as the decayed leaves can be used for lawn care; enhancement of soils for gardens and the like, thus avoiding the need to purchase bagged soils or bulk topsoil deliveries.
- ❖ Residential composting saves on fuel as there is no need for the homeowner or a contractor to haul leaves to the City Transfer Station or other location.
- ❖ Help a neighbor! If everyone works together on a neighborhood project, such an activity of neighbor helping neighbor is a great annual social event.
- ❖ Residential composting saves the City and Taxpayer money as there is less wear and tear on City equipment. City workers are able to focus on **Essential Projects that better prepare the Municipal Services Department for the upcoming winter weather season and wrap up ongoing construction projects.**