

BOROUGH POLICY



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Reference:

Adopted By:

Bath Borough Council 04-04-2016
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Bath Borough Council
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Prepared By: Borough Manager

Date: December 7, 2015

Title: **Leaf Collection Policy**

Policy

Policy Statement: The Borough of Bath conducts curbside collection of leaves as a service to residents for the convenience of maintaining their property. The Borough is providing for an economical way of disposing leaves without burning. For the purpose of this policy, the only yard waste removed by the Public Works Department is leaves; this does not include grass clippings, plant debris, or tree limbs/twigs.

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for a method in which leaf collection will take place throughout the Borough of Bath during the fall period. The Borough seeks to collect all leaves placed within a Borough right-of-way each weekday or the following day after a Holiday or weekend.

Procedure: Leaves for collection must be placed at curbside areas (within the street right-of-way). Collection of leaves on private property is strictly prohibited. There is two sections with regard to this procedure, residential guidelines and Borough rules.

SECTION 1 – Residential Guidelines of Leaf Collection Operations

A. Leaf Collection Seasons – Leaf collection operations typically require a week for crews to cycle through the Borough, depending on other priority work, weather conditions, volume of leaves, available staff, and equipment breakdowns.

- Fall: collection begins **on or about** mid-October **through on or about mid-**December, weather permitting. Collection **generally** ends following the

BOROUGH POLICY



season's first snow accumulation, or when all public works trucks have been converted to snow and ice control operations.

- Leaf collection will be done by splitting the borough into two sectors; north sector (north of Main Street and Northampton Street); MONDAYS. The south sector (south of Main Street and Northampton Street); WEDNESDAYS. Potential make-up days for each sector will be TUESDAYS and THURSDAYS.
- Leaves must be placed curbside by the morning of scheduled pick-up, 6:00 am on Monday's and Wednesdays.

B. Leaf Collection Rules

- Pile leaves near the street curb line or where the street meets the edge of the property yard and arrange the piles in windrows, rather than circular piles when possible.
- Leaves in the street often get washed into storm water drains and discharge into area ponds, streams, and other water resources, feeding algae growth. Please be mindful of piling leaves in street gutters when rain is anticipated and wait to place leaves out for pickup until the next available cycle.
- Leaves should be placed for easy access by trucks and truck mounted vacuum tube; avoid conflicts with trees, poles, mailboxes, hydrants, parked cars (if possible), other obstructions and narrow lane side-streets/alleys.
- Separate leaves from other materials! Leaf collection is done using a powerful vacuum. To avoid damage to the equipment or injury to the public works crew, leaves must be piled away from garbage, refuse, stones, rocks, firewood, brush, grass clippings, and similar non-leaf objects.
- The following will not be collected by the Public Works Department:

BOROUGH POLICY



1. Leaves in bags or other containers. These are not compatible with the vacuum equipment and cause additional work for public works crewmembers.
2. Leaves mixed with brush. Leaves and brush are collected by different equipment at different times. It is inefficient for the crew to separate leaves from brush, and often results in leaves getting pulled into the street or brush getting lodged in the leaf vacuum tube.
3. Leaves bagged/mulched with a lawn mower and dumped curbside mixed with grass clippings.

C. Alternatives to Curbside Collection – While it is the goal of the Borough to collect all leaves placed curbside in fall, that may not be possible during years in which leaves drop late and winter begins early. Other options available to residents include:

- Mulching leaves directly into the lawn. Leaves mulched with a lawn mower will typically decompose before spring, fertilize the grass, suppress weeds, and moderate soil temperatures. Mulching is faster than raking or blowing leaves. Leaf piles block streets and traffic, clog storm drains, and result in excess nutrient runoff (phosphorus and nitrogen), polluting our waterways. Transporting and disposing of grass and leaves as yard waste wastes energy and contributes to pollution. Rather than raking, bagging, or transporting fall leaves offsite this year, consider mulching, a sustainable alternative that actually benefits lawns and gardens and is a highly recommended alternative.
- Place on vegetable and flower gardens and around trees and shrubs. Leaves (mulched or not) placed as a ground cover will conserve moisture, enrich the soil nutrients, and help suppress weeds.
- Compost leaves with grass clippings and other organic waste. Add the resulting compost to gardens and low spots in lawns.
- Drop off leaves at the First Regional Compost Authority (FRCA) Composting Site. Borough residents may drop off grass clippings, leaves, plants, brush, branches, wood chips, sawdust, holiday trees, stumps (clean) and clean wood (not painted or treated) at the FRCA site at the

BOROUGH POLICY



Central Processing Center, 6701 Weaversville Road, Northampton, Pennsylvania.

- Burning of leaves is **strictly prohibited** within the Borough limits.

SECTION 2 – Borough of Bath Procedural Rules of Leaf Collection Operations

A. Equipment and Personnel

1. The Borough has one trailer-mounted leaf vacuum unit that pick-up leaves and blow them into a box mounted on a patrol truck. The truck requires at least two crew members for efficient operation – one to drive the truck, and the other to operate the vacuum.
2. Collection of leaves will generally need to be done within a relatively brief window of time. The Borough Manager and Public Works Committee will monitor weather conditions and remaining leaf piles, and schedule leaf collection operations with the goal of collecting all leaves placed curbside by the end of November.
3. Vehicles parked on the street adjacent to leaf piles present a significant barrier to the efficient collection of leaves. The vacuum cannot reach beyond parked vehicles, and it is inefficient for the crew to rake anything other than a small pile of leaves out to the vacuum. In October, the crew will generally bypass leaves behind a parked vehicle and move on to collect leaves where access is not blocked by a parked vehicle. In November, the crew may need to post a temporary No Parking sign at leaf piles in advance of expected leaf collection so that the vacuum equipment can access the leaves. The crew will try to avoid placing temporary No Parking signs on both sides of a street on the same day.
4. Operating leaf pickup on the opposite side of the street may be required in some limited circumstances. Good judgement should be utilized by the public works crew if any traffic laws may be impinged upon during the course of leaf collection. Personal safety and the safety of the public shall be maintained. At all times while operating the leaf collector, the vehicle's overhead amber beacon shall be turned on.

B. Personnel Safety

BOROUGH POLICY



1. Personnel are not allowed to ride on the platform of the leaf vacuum in transit to or from the work site. Personnel must ride in the cab of the truck unless actively engaged in collecting leaves or within sight of the next collection point.
2. Personnel are required to wear reflective vests, eye protection and hearing protection. Drivers shall have the beacon lights on during operation.

APPROVED:

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BOROUGH POLICY



ATTACHMENT A

