



Recycling Department
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 2, 2018

SUBJECT: ANNUAL RESIDENTIAL LEAF PICK UP PROGRAM
CONTACT: Mary Anne Phillips, Recycling Coordinator (417) 624-0820 ext. 501

The City of Joplin will start the **annual residential leaf pick up program** on **Monday, November 26**, weather permitting.

Residents are reminded that some conditions caused by Mother Nature can delay the start of the program. This includes rainy days and/or wet leaves that clogs the equipment or majority of leaves still on the trees and have not fallen yet. As we approach Thanksgiving, the City will announce if there are any known delays to this service popular with residents. Please watch the City's website, joplinmo.org, Facebook page at "Joplincity" and/or local news outlets for announcements.

For residents that wish to dispose of leaves now, bring them to the **Joplin Compost Facility** next to the Turkey Creek Waste Water Treatment Plant at 3457 Eddy Lane, which is west of the intersection of Eddy and North Peace Church Avenue. Please remove leaves from trash bags and take trash bags with you. No brush, tree limbs, bags, or trash, please.

The annual leaf pick-up program is an important service to residents and the environment. Pickup generally starts the first Monday after Thanksgiving. The City picks up the leaves so that they will not congregate around the storm drains which can cause flooding. Also, during heavy rains, storm drains receive an above average amount of pesticides, soil, fertilizer runoff, trash, pet waste, and leaves, which is then deposited in the nearest storm channel. These channels are designed to eventually flow into Joplin's Shoal Creek and Turkey Creek. All of these **pollutants** can harm recreational activities, wildlife habitat, and drinking water sources. Soil runoff and leaves cause the water to become murky, which blocks sunlight and decreases plant growth. Plants are food sources for insects, worms, crayfish and other animals that support fish populations.

One alternative to leaf disposal is home **composting**. To create compost simply put leaves, grass, and meat-free, uncooked kitchen scraps in your compost bin, keep it moist, stir the mixture to speed up the decomposition process, and then harvest the finished compost from the bottom of the bin. Finished compost should be available in approximately two seasons and produces a free organic fertilizer.

Mary Anne Phillips, the city's Recycling Coordinator, encourages the use of compost instead of non-organic fertilizers and chemicals on lawns and gardens. Compost can be applied to the soil thus making the plants healthy and less susceptible to diseases and insects, which reduces the need for chemicals. Runoff of chemical-based fertilizers and pesticides can harm our water bodies as stated above. The easiest alternative to leaf disposal is to rake the leaves onto the lawn and run over them with a **mulching** lawnmower!

Not-so-earth-friendly alternatives for leaf disposal include setting out bagged leaves for the regular weekly Joplin **residential trash service** or **burning** the leaves. For rules and pricing regarding burn permits, contact the Joplin Fire Department at 623-0403, or visit the web site www.joplinmofire.org.

In providing the leaf pick-up service, the City utilizes three crews which start in outlying areas and work their way toward the center of Joplin.

A crew from the Street Department will start in the northeast section of town (Royal Heights/College View Addition areas) and another crew will start in the Silver Creek/Highlands/Woodland Hills area. The Parks Department crew will start south of 32nd Street and west of Main Street. Crews will work toward the middle of town to complete the program. Weather permitting, this collection could take over one month.

Residents are reminded not to bag their leaves, but rather rake them to the curb. No tree limbs, brush or rocks should be included in the piles, please. The City asks that residents DO NOT rake leaves into the street, as they may clog the storm drains, and it could cause the City's street sweeping truck to bypass that area. Please do not place leaf piles over water meters (manhole covers). Doing so may cause Missouri-American Water to *estimate* your water usage, instead of recording the exact amount for billing purposes.

For more information about leaf pick-up call 417-624-0820, ext. 501.

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