



Department Source: City Utilities - Solid Waste  
To: City Council  
From: City Manager & Staff  
Council Meeting Date: October 18, 2021  
Re: Report: Residential Curbside Yard Waste Collection

## Executive Summary

At the September 20, 2021 and the October 4, 2021 Council meetings, Councilperson Fowler requested information related to the potential for the Solid Waste Division to provide additional services for residential yard waste collection. Staff has prepared a report regarding residential curbside collection of yard waste material.

## Discussion

As part of the FY2021 budget process, the Council approved changes to residential curbside collection requirements in an effort to improve working conditions for solid waste staff and to reduce large volumes of material and large bulky items being placed at the curb for collection. The changes also require heavy users of the system to pay additional costs for the disposal of volumes in excess of the norm. These changes have significantly improved working conditions for the Solid Waste collection employees, reduced the amount of trash going to the landfill and increased the recycling volumes.

The first phase was implemented November 1, 2020 which required all material left curbside to be placed in bags and eliminated the unscheduled collection of large bulky items. The second phase of the approved changes went into effect on February 1, 2021, which implemented the "pay as you throw" portion of the program. Via a voucher program, customers are provided 104 trash bags per year. Extra bags, if needed, are available for purchase at the rate of \$2.00 per bag. Using this system, any customer with curbside collection can dispose of any volume of normal household waste, which includes yard waste, simply by purchasing additional refuse bags and paying the associated \$2.00 per bag fee.

In accordance with Section 22-159 of City Code, all material placed curbside for collection must be in City provided bags with a City logo and shall not exceed fifty pounds. Currently, there are no provisions within City Code that allows customers to place yard waste at the curb for collection in non-City provided bags.

Customers have many options for disposal of yard waste (grass clippings, leaves, tree limbs). Those that align with the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan include:

- Mulching the grass clippings and leaves into the lawn while mowing.
- Gathering the grass clippings and leaves and composting on site.

Other options for yard waste disposal include:

- Taking the grass clippings and leaves to one of the City's yard waste drop off sites.
- Taking the grass clippings and leaves to the landfill.



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- Disposal of grass clippings and leaves at a composting facility not operated by the City.
- Hiring a lawn care service provider to remove the leaves and other yard waste from the property.
- Placing the grass clippings and leaves in City provided bags with a City logo and placing them at the curb for collection and disposal at the landfill.
- In addition, there are community, volunteer and faith based organizations in Columbia that provide support and assistance to Columbia residents in need of assistance with yard maintenance.

One potential option for providing yard waste collection would be to modify section 22-159 of the City Code to allow residential curbside customers to place yard waste in non-City logo bags at the curb for two specific weeks each fall, one in November and one in December. During these weeks, yard waste placed in any trash bag would be collected along with normal refuse in City logo bags on the normal collection day. The yard waste collected would be placed in the same collection vehicles as the other refuse and disposed at the City's bioreactor landfill. The current Solid Waste collection staff vacancies would most likely necessitate residential curbside recycling, bulky item and appliance collections be suspended during each of these weeks to ensure sufficient staffing is available to collect the anticipated volume of yard waste material that would be placed at the curb. Previously, when curbside recycling was suspended, the drop off recycling sites experienced heavy and many times inappropriate use. It is anticipated that unacceptable disposal at the drop off recycling sites would occur during the weeks of yard waste pick up.

While preparing this report, staff did look into what type of programs are offered in other municipalities two examples are included below:

- Sedalia allows for disposal of up to four cubic yards of yard waste during one week each year at no cost. Material in excess of four yards is charged at a rate of \$26.00 per cubic yard. Scheduled collection of yard waste is charged at a rate of \$28.50 per cubic yard at other times of the year.
- Jefferson City contracts with a private contractor to provide scheduled yard waste collection for residents through a service called Yard Waste Curbside on Demand. Residents must purchase 30 gallon paper compostable yard waste bags (available at local retail stores) to utilize the service. The cost of the service is \$50.00 for a basic pick-up, which includes two (2)-30 gallon paper compostable bags. Each additional 30 gallon compostable bag is \$2.00 each.

If Council wishes to institute a yard waste collection program that does not require the use of City logo bags as described above, staff should be directed to propose revisions to Section 22-159 of the City Code for introduction at the November 1, 2021 City Council meeting.



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Short-Term Impact: No financial impact for this report.

Long-Term Impact: No financial impact for this report.

## Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

### [Strategic Plan Impacts:](#)

Primary Impact: Infrastructure, Secondary Impact: Not Applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

### [Comprehensive Plan Impacts:](#)

Primary Impact: Infrastructure, Secondary Impact: Not applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

## Legislative History

Date	Action
NA	NA

## Suggested Council Action

Report for information only