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	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Department of Public Works 600 Abel Wolman Municipal Building
	SUBJECT	CITY COUNCIL BILL 10-0188R

CITY of
BALTIMORE
MEMO



DATE: September 22, 2011

TO

The Honorable President and Members
of the Baltimore City Council
c/o Karen Randle
Room 400 - City Hall

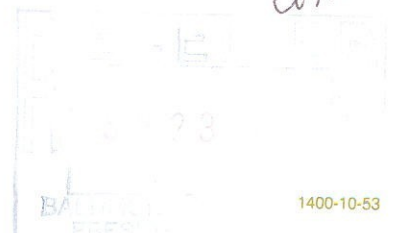
I am herein reporting on City Council Resolution 10-0188R introduced by Council Members Middleton, Cole, Kraft, Henry, D'Adamo, Clarke, Reisinger, Young, Conaway, Holton, and Branch.

The purpose of the Resolution is to request the Director of Public Works and the Bureau Head of Solid Waste to address the City Council on the Leaf Vacuuming program, to share feedback from citizens in the neighborhoods that have received services in the past, the plans for expansion of the program in future years, and to explain the selection process that determines which neighborhoods receive service and the order of priority in which service is rendered.

Baltimore began offering leaf vacuuming service in the 1990s for neighborhoods with significant tree canopies. Identified neighborhoods would be told the week or weeks that leaves would be collected and residents raked their leaves into the gutters. Large vacuum-equipped trucks and attendant personnel collected leaves on a pre-determined neighborhood-by-neighborhood schedule, generally between November and January. The City continues to collect up to 5 bags of leaves on a resident's regularly scheduled mixed refuse collection day, and bagged leaves may also be dropped off at several collection locations.


In recent years, budget constraints have made providing this premium leaf vacuuming service difficult to maintain and Public Works will not be offering the service this season. While vacuuming can be an efficient way to collect leaves, the practice has had the unintended consequence of teaching citizens that cleaning the gutter in front of their homes is the City's responsibility, and sweeping materials into the gutter is an acceptable practice. In point of fact, every property owner is responsible to keep the sidewalk and gutter area in the front of their homes clean, as well as alleys to the rear. Leaves raked into the gutter block storm drain inlets and the free flow of water, and clog storm drain pipes. Leaves that do get washed through the storm drain system end up in our waterways, adding additional organic materials, sediment and other substances carried along with the leaves, negatively impacting water quality. Leaves and other substances entering the storm drains will be addressed in a holistic way under the City's Surface Water Management program and the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit requirements.

Comments



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The Department of Public Works will be present at the hearing on City Council Resolution 10-0188R to provide additional information and answer any questions the committee may have on this issue.



Alfred H. Foxx
Director

AHF/MMC:pat