

# CITY OF MUSCATINE



COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION  
215 SYCAMORE STREET, MUSCATINE, IA 52761  
PH. (563) 264-1550 Ext. 166

## For more information contact:

Kevin Jenison  
Communication Manager | Public Information Officer  
City of Muscatine, Iowa  
(563) 264-1550 Ext. 166  
[kjenison@muscataineiowa.gov](mailto:kjenison@muscataineiowa.gov)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
OCTOBER 9, 2024

## FALL LEAF PICKUP PROGRAM TO BEGIN MONDAY IN MUSCATINE

Composting, mulching, and bagging are other options as leaves begin to accumulate

**MUSCATINE, Iowa** – The arrival of the Fall season means cooler temperatures, less sunlight, and the colorful display of the changing leaves on the trees. The change of season also means that, as much as we appreciate the annual display of nature's wonders, the leaves will eventually fall to the earth and require being raked up, piled up, and disposed of.



The Department of Public Works (DPW) is preparing to once again provide a valuable service to the residents of Muscatine and collect piles of leaves placed curbside during the Fall Leaf Collection Program. But this year there is a twist.

City leaf vacuum trucks will begin canvassing the streets of Muscatine on Monday (Oct. 14) starting with Zone 1 ([see map](#)). The change this year is that DPW will not dedicate certain days

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to certain zones but will complete a cycle in one zone and then move on to the next zone. DPW will work through all eight zones and repeat the process as long as the weather holds.

"There were a number of reasons to make the change including the variation in size of each City zone, and the potential for changing weather conditions," Brian Stineman, Public Works Director, said.

Tyson Wedekind, Street Maintenance Supervisor, said that they will begin with one truck on Monday and added more trucks as they are needed.

As the leaves continue to fall residents can rake their leaves out to the boulevard next to the curb on their property.

"Residents should rake frequently as crews will make multiple passes through each zone this year," Wedekind said. "As we will not be adhering to any schedule, crews will work numerically through each zone until all the leaves are picked up or until the snow begins to fall."

Parked cars can hamper leaf collection efforts, so drivers are asked to be considerate when parking on the street and avoid parking near leaf piles. If the piles are blocked by cars they will not be collected until the next pass and the cars are moved.

Residents are also asked to avoid mixing trash, branches, or other yard waste with their leaf piles as the vacuum cannot pick these items up.

As we move further into fall, the possibility of inclement weather increases. Leaf collection operations may be postponed as snow and ice control take priority.

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Equipment breakdowns and heaving rains can slow progress, and snowstorms can curtail the program as snow removal takes priority. If that happens, leaf collection will be suspended until the spring.

Here are some additional guidelines for leaf collection:

- Leaves should be placed near, but not beyond, the curb and should be within reach of the leaf vacuum.
- Leaves should be free of tree branches and twigs as they can cause the leaf vacuums to clog up.
- All leaves must be placed outside of fenced areas.
- Leaves are not to be placed in the street to avoid clogging storm drains.
- Leaves should not be placed in the street or extend into traffic lanes, thereby creating traffic hazards.
- Leaves should not be placed around obstacles such as mailbox posts, sign posts, and light poles.
- Crews will not pick up leaves mixed with debris, logs, branches, rocks, plastic, metal or glass containers, or any other types of refuse.
- Leaves should not be placed on City cul-de-sacs, vacant land, or city property except on the public right-of-way along the curb/shoulder area.

For more information, contact the Department of Public Works at 563-263-8933.

## **BAG YOUR OWN AND TAKE TO COMPOST FACILITY**

The Compost Facility at the Transfer Station will remain open throughout the Fall season, weather permitting. The Compost Facility is currently open from 12-6 p.m. Sunday through Friday and from 9 a.m.-6 p.m. on Saturdays. However, the hours of operation will change on

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November 2 when Daylight Savings Time begins with the facility closing an hour earlier (12-5 p.m. Sunday through Friday and 9 a.m.-5 p.m. on Saturdays).

## BAG YOUR OWN AND SET CURBSIDE ON REFUSE COLLECTION DAY

Residents have the option to gather their leaves in paper yard waste bags, attach a City sticker to the bag (see below), and set the bags curbside on their regular refuse collection day for pickup by the Solid Waste Division.

### GUIDELINES FOR CURBSIDE COLLECTION

1. Grass clippings, leaves, and garden waste will be picked up at the curb on the residents' regular refuse collection day. Grass clippings, leaves, and garden waste must be placed in 20- or 30-gallon **paper compostable bags** and closed with a City of Muscatine yard waste sticker.
2. Yard waste only - no trash, recycling, building materials or animal waste.
3. Do not overfill bags (50 pound maximum) and keep them dry.
4. Stickers are for City of Muscatine residential yard waste collection only.
5. Place bags out to the curb after 4 p.m. the day before but before 5 a.m. the day of collection.
6. City of Muscatine Yard Waste Stickers can be purchased at these locations:
  - a. Muscatine Transfer Station
  - b. City Hall
  - c. Public Works
  - d. Hy-Vee and Hy-Vee Main Street
  - e. Fareway
7. Yard Waste in any paper bag along with tree limbs and other trimmings can be taken to the Compost Facility during normal hours operation.

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8. Residents of Muscatine and Fruitland can drop off yard waste free of charge with proof of residency. A small fee is charged for non-residents.

## Iowa DNR - top three ways to handle fall leaves –

Fall leaves are beautiful – until they pile up in your yard. Don't send those precious nutrients up in smoke (it is actually illegal to burn yard waste in Muscatine on properties of two acres or less). Instead, put those nuisance leaf piles to good use. Leaves, small branches and other landscape materials can nourish your lawn, garden or community.

It's easy:

1. **Compost.** Composting leaves and food scraps is a great way to turn this waste into garden nutrients. A good compost mix needs both carbon (dead or dry leaves) and nitrogen (green materials like food scraps and grass clippings). Many types and sizes of compost containers are available. For tips on low-tech ways to compost, see a [DNR tutorial](#).
2. **Mulch.** Your lawn will love you if you chop up and leave your leaves in place. Leaves are a free, natural fertilizer that enriches your soil with organic matter. You can use your regular lawn mower. Or, use a mulching lawn mower to shred and mix leaves and grass into your yard.
3. **Bag it.** If you have too many leaves or branches to compost, you can bag the leaves and tie up the branches to be collected curbside or you can take these items to the [Muscatine Compost Facility](#). There is a small fee for non-residents to drop off material to the Compost Facility. The upside is that anyone can pick up composted materials for their yards or gardens from the Compost Facility.

For some, burning leaves seems to capture the nostalgic smell of autumn. But breathing [leaf smoke](#) pulls pollutants such as carbon monoxide, soot and toxic chemicals into your lungs.

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While it may smell good, smoke is especially harmful to children, the elderly, and those with respiratory or heart problems. Turning leaves into nutrients is the healthy way to protect your and your neighbor's lungs.

## KNOW THE LAW

Muscatine Municipal Code allows open burning only with a permit (Title 15, Chapter 5). Individuals who have property of one acre or more can apply for a permit through the Muscatine Fire Department to burn landscape waste, which commonly consists of leaves, organic matter, brush and trees gathered from that property.

Building materials shall not be burned under this permit.

Prior to the permit being issued, a Fire Department representative will attempt to ensure that the fire poses no problem with relation to smoke obscuring roadways, creating a nuisance, or of the fire spreading beyond the control of the responsible individual. Such burning shall be done in piles that are easily controlled and extinguishable. Large piles cannot be used for open burning purposes.

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