



City of Topeka

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From the City Manager's Desk

November 19th, 2018

How fall leaves affect storm drains and the water supply

Throughout Topeka, leaves have steadily fallen, canvassing the ground with a wide array of colors; now the choice of whether to commence with raking, blowing



and maybe bagging. There is a fourth option for taking care of fall leaves.

Mulching leaves and grass provides your lawn with nitrogen-rich grass and carbon-rich leaf particles. This provides your lawn with needed nutrients, and improves soil structure. Micro-organisms that live in the soil break down the leaves and should disappear by spring.

Here are a few items to keep in mind when mulching:

- Set the deck height to highest setting (at least 4")
- Slowly go over leaves 2 or 3 times until finely chopped or shredded
- Don't mulch if leaves are so thick they make mowing difficult
- Mulching blades may be available at local stores

Another option for finding a use for leaves is composting. By



combining grass clippings, leaves, and other vegetable waste, a dark and rich soil called “Black Gold” is naturally created. Compost enriches the soil, helps retain moisture and reduces the need for chemical fertilizers.

By keeping leaves and grass clippings from blocking and clogging storm inlets, you are helping prevent local flooding and the environment. When decomposing yard waste collects in the drain system, high levels of nutrients are released and are harmful to local ecosystems.





Property Maintenance and Habitat for Humanity Video

The City of Topeka Property Maintenance Department and Habitat for Humanity is partnering to create facebook live video's once a month. These videos address code issues and how to make easy repairs.

The topic for November was window repair. You can check out the video

here: <https://www.facebook.com/cityoftopeka/videos/1115254645317519/>

Street Sweeping

Fall leaves are beautiful but when they fall on the ground in autumn they are a major source of litter throughout the treed areas of our



community. If not removed, leaves are washed into storm water inlets during a rain or when snow and ice melts creating clogs in the storm drains and putting litter into the water supply.

The City of Topeka is responsible for sweeping our streets. In the fall, sweeping becomes much more burdensome than any other season due to the large amount of leaves.

To assist street sweeping crews, please do not rake leaves or throw twigs and limbs into the street. What might take a two-sweeper crew one or two passes could turn into a five or six pass process. Twigs and larger limbs also can damage the equipment. The fewer limbs and twigs in the street, the less the chance of a breakdown, which would only slow the leaf removal process.

“We are seeking voluntary compliance,” said Jaci Vogel, Deputy Director of Public Works’ Operations, whose department is



responsible for maintaining our streets. “While there are measures in our litter ordinance that outlines action to be taken against those who violate it, we don’t have time to address every violation through code enforcement. Vogel said crews would much rather spend their time picking up leaves as quickly as possible and not get bogged down in leaf piles swept into the street.

The purpose of removing leaves from streets is to keep them out of our waterways. Once leaves break down, they become sludge that can clog pipes. Clogged pipes can cause melting snow not to drain, which results in water at intersections refreezing. In turn, the intersection can become dangerously slick.

Road Construction Update



ROAD CONSTRUCTION UPDATES

The image on the right is a list of featured road construction projects for 2018.



Work continuing on:

- SW 29th and Burlingame. Working on lane striping ahead of lane shift to allow for signal installation. Waiting on signal poles to be delivered.
- SW 29th and SE Adams. Road is open – sod being installed. Waiting on signal poles to be delivered so work at 29th can be completed. Working with the contractor to address ride quality issues in the southbound traffic lanes.
- Huntoon/Arvonias. The plan is to finish asphalt paving on Friday if temperatures rise. Still waiting on signal poles to be delivered.
- Mill/overlay project in the Grantville neighborhood. The plan is to place asphalt on Thursday/Friday of this week if temperatures approach 50 degrees.
- Central Park. The plan is to place asphalt on Thursday/Friday of this week if temperatures approach 50 degrees. Still some ADA ramps and previous utility patches left to complete.
- Alley work continuing in the 1400 Block just east of KS Avenue.



- Clarion Woods – working on sidewalk/ADA ramps in Phase 1.

You can find updates to all street projects on the Capital Projects Dashboard.

Recent Updates

- Finance presented the 3rd quarter financial report to the Governing Body on November 13th. View the full financial report at <https://www.topeka.org/finance/financial-reports/quarterly-reports/>
- There have been 23 broken [water mains](#) this month with 779 year to date. Last year at this time there were 356 breaks.
- TFD Training Division staff participated a Communications Exercise that was hosted by the State of Kansas at Lake Shawnee.



Water Main Installation

The Utilities Department is currently working on several projects. The project in the photo to



the left is of a water main installation heading west towards the turnpike along SE 29th Street.

Tiger Cubs

The tiger cubs are now one month old. Three of the tiger cubs have names; Badar, Raja and Zayana. The name of the fourth cub will be announced soon.



Topeka Garlinghouse's

The City of Topeka, Kansas is requesting funding through a Historic Preservation Fund grant to research and compose a Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) for homes originating from the business of Lewis F. Garlinghouse. The L. F.



Garlinghouse Company was founded in 1910 in the City of Topeka, Kansas, and since that time has served as one of the nation's premier catalogue providers of home plans and designs.

Since its inception as a business in Topeka, numerous examples of the work of the L.F. Garlinghouse Company can be found within the City of Topeka and throughout the nation. The purpose of this project is to provide a thematic context for evaluating and listing Garlinghouse homes constructed in the City of Topeka during the years from 1910 through 1960.

City-wide, it has been estimated that by 1925 the Garlinghouse Company had sold or constructed in excess of 550 homes in the City of Topeka. Two Garlinghouse homes will be nominated to the National Register under the new MPDF as a part of this project. This MPDF will also provide City Staff and the general public with the resources necessary to pursue



subsequent individual nominations based on the foundation of contextual significance of the L.F. Garlinghouse Company in the City of Topeka.

The City of Topeka will seek input from the public during a public meeting at 6:30 p.m. Dec. 5 in Marvin Auditorium at the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library, 1515 S.W. 10th.

Neglected Building Registration Survey

Below is a link to a brief survey regarding the proposed neglected building registration. We would appreciate your assistance getting the word out so we can get as much public input back on the proposed program as possible.



[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/
NeglectedPropertyReg](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NeglectedPropertyReg)

Coming up

- City Council Meeting, November 20th at 6 p.m.
 - The Zoo and Friends of the Zoo are getting ready for Giving ZooDay on Tuesday, November 27th. This year's campaign will center on supporting some of the baby animals born this year. <http://topekazoo.org/support/givingzooday/>
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Brent Trout

This weekly report is presented to you from the office of City Manager Brent Trout.

[For other weekly reports, visit the City's website](#)

This report was produced through our open data portal. We have several other open data portals to help connect you with the work we do, including portals that let you:

- [Visualize Topeka's \\$270M budget](#)
- [See Topeka's expenses, one check at a time](#)
- [Navigate our major infrastructure projects](#)
- [Track departments' progress toward our goals](#)





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