

# Village of Wilmette - Leaf Collection Program – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

## When does the program start?

The 8-week leaf collection program starts in the middle of October and ends early December. Please visit the Public Works section of the Village website, [www.wilmette.com](http://www.wilmette.com), or view the fall edition of the Village Newsletter for specific start and end dates.

## Should I bag my leaves or place them into containers?

No, leaves need to be in loose condition, free of any bags or containers, and raked to either the parkway or curb for collection (see FAQ, 'Where should loose leaves be placed for collection?').

## Where should loose leaves be placed for collection?

Residents who live on main arterial streets (e.g. Lake Avenue, Wilmette Avenue, Ridge Road, Green Bay Road, Sheridan Road and Hibbard Road) should place leaves on the parkway and behind the curb (\*not in the street) to avoid obstructing heavy traffic.

Residents who live on residential side streets are asked to rake leaves to the curb.

Place leaves in accessible areas along the parkway and curb, free of any obstructions.

\*Please do not place leaves near the base of any fire hydrant, light pole, sign post or parkway tree as it presents a safety hazard and may result in damage to Village property and equipment.

\*Please do not place leaves within 10 feet of any catch basins or storm drains as this will promote street flooding and contaminate storm water, which drains to local rivers and streams.

## Can other landscape waste be disposed of besides loose leaves?

No, only loose leaves are acceptable for collection.

Do not place out other yard waste material such as tree branches, pumpkins, potted plants, grass clippings, soil and other garden waste as it will not be collected.

Please utilize the Yard Waste Program for disposal of this type of material; visit the Public Works section of the Village website, [www.wilmette.com](http://www.wilmette.com), for program guidelines. The Yard Waste program extends from April to November each year.

## Where can I park on scheduled leaf collection days?

Residents without garage or driveway access may park at the following locations on scheduled collection days:

- CTA parking lot – located at intersection of 4<sup>th</sup> street and Linden Avenue, \$4.00 daily fee.
- METRA parking lot – located at Green Bay Road, between Lake and Central Avenues, \$2.00 daily fee.
- Poplar Ave. parking lots – located along west side of Poplar Avenue, near Greenleaf and Linden Avenues, \$2.00 daily fee.
- Poplar Ave. – parallel street parking along west side of street, between Oakwood and Isabella, no daily fee.

The No-Parking ban on scheduled collection days is necessary for providing safe, efficient and effective leaf operations while maintaining adherence to the schedule.

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## **When is it safe to resume street parking?**

The No-Parking ban remains in effect from 7:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m. on each scheduled collection day. Residents should avoid parking on the street during this time period.

Temporary 'No-Parking' signs with corresponding leaf collection dates are posted on all streets.

Leaf collection operations are not completed until a Street Sweeper makes a final pass down the street; residents take their own risk, on receiving a parking ticket, when parking after a Street Sweeper makes its pass.

## **When are leaves collected around school zones?**

School zones receive heightened awareness and are treated with extra caution. In order to ensure that operations don't interrupt teacher, student and parent arrival/dismissal; collection occurs during early morning hours and before school starts on respective collection days.

## **If I utilize a landscaper to rake my leaves, should I notify them of the leaf collection schedule?**

Yes, please share the leaf collection schedule/map with your landscaper so that raking coincides with the leaf collection schedule. The schedule/map can be downloaded and printed off the Village website at [www.wilmette.com](http://www.wilmette.com).

Temporary 'No-Parking' signs with corresponding leaf collection dates are also posted on all streets.

Leaves that are placed out after designated collection days will not be collected until the following scheduled day. The Village does not have the resources to respond to missed collection requests resulting from failure to adhere to the collection schedule.

## **Will leaves be collected each day when collection is scheduled over a 2-day period?**

No, only one collection is made and will occur on either the first or second day of scheduled collection. Residents should have their leaves raked out no later than 7:00 a.m. on the first scheduled collection day. The No-Parking ban remains in effect on both days.

## **What happens if the Village experiences a snow event during leaf collection?**

Leaf operations may or may not resume depending on several factors including: the timing, duration and severity of the snow event and the forecast outlook of favorable weather conditions.

Residents should contact the Public Works Department at 847-853-7500 or visit the Village website, [www.wilmette.com](http://www.wilmette.com), for the latest updates whenever snow disrupts the leaf collection schedule.

The Village's ability to extend the leaf program into late December is restricted by several factors:

- Leaf equipment cannot collect leaves that are frozen to the street/parkway or located within piles of snow.
- Availability of an IEPA licensed compost facility. Collected leaves must be disposed of at a licensed compost facility. Compost facilities are closed during winter months and do not reopen until spring. The Village cannot store leaves at the Public Works Facility over the winter months.
- The Public Works Facility is a transfer station licensed by the IEPA. Under terms of the permit, leaves cannot be stored onsite for a period greater than 24 hours and must be hauled to a licensed compost facility after that period.

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If leaf collection operations are able to resume after a snow event, residents will be responsible for re-raking any leaves that are pushed back onto the parkway from snow plowing operations.

In the event the Village is unable to resume leaf collection operations, and conclude the final week(s) of the program, residents will be asked to bag any remaining leaves and store them for subsequent disposal through the Yard Waste Program (beginning April 1<sup>st</sup>).

### **Will the Village rake leaves off the parkway that are inadvertently placed there during collection?**

Leaf operations are carried out in the most cost-effective manner to ensure continuation of the program. Consequently, operations are conducted on a large-scale basis with the use of specialized mechanical equipment; including, pick-up trucks with attached push brooms, garbage trucks with attached steel pans, a VAC-ALL vacuum truck and street sweepers.

While the leaf program is both effective and efficient; it is not a utopia, and there are occasions when minor leaf debris is inadvertently left behind on the parkway. Unfortunately, the Village does not have the resources to hand rake, collect all residual leaf debris off parkways. Residents are responsible for raking any leftover leaf debris back into piles in preparation for their next scheduled collection day.

### **Can I compost leaves on my own property as an alternative?**

Yes, residents have the option of composting leaves on their property. However, all composting activities must comply with Village Code provisions; see Chapters 7-7.4 Compost Piles and 7-7.5 Compliance.

Residents having specific questions regarding composting provisions should contact Code Enforcement at 847-853-7521.

The Village Code can also be accessed on the Village website, [www.wilmette.com](http://www.wilmette.com), under the Government tab on the main page.

### **What happens to all of the collected leaves?**

All collected leaves are hauled to a compost facility licensed by the IEPA. The disposal site fluctuates from year to year depending on the outcome of the sealed bid process for Leaf Disposal.

### **How many collections does the Village make over the 8-week program?**

The Village will make a total of five (5) collections for each zone over the 8-week program.

### **How many compacted cubic yards of leaves does the Village collect each year?**

Historically, the Village collects approximately 9,100 compacted cubic yards of leaves each season or the equivalent of 364 full garbage trucks. Each season's final volume varies depending on weather conditions that occur during the preceding growing period and those faced during leaf operations.