

## MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Craig A. Stough 10/11/2018

### "2018 Leaf Collection"

It is that time of the year again already and the annual leaf collection will be starting the week of October 22<sup>nd</sup>. Leaf collection is a very big job in the City of Sylvania, and is a city service used by many of our residents. I remember the burning of leaves when I was a child and the smoke and the smell that were an ever present part of the fall. But leaf burning is no longer permitted, and probably never was very safe.

Our "City of Trees" lives up to its namesake by having tens of thousands of trees throughout the community. Approximately 7,700 street trees are growing in street right-of-ways alone, with many thousands more in parks and on private lands, including the towering oaks and maples native to the area.

Last year, City crews spent 3,230 hours loading and hauling 10,800 cubic yards of leaves to the City composting field on Yankee Road north of town. There the leaves and green yard waste are ground and composted into wind rows. The wind rows are turned each year, and the composting process takes about three years to turn the materials into Sylvan-Gro, a rich compost the City sells by the bushel.

Leaf collection is paid for with General Fund dollars. A separate property tax assessment is not collected in Sylvania as it is in some nearby communities.

The annual leaf collection begins the week of October 22<sup>nd</sup> with one or two Streets Division collection crews as needed following predetermined routes through the City. As more leaves are raked to the curb, two additional crews will be working full time at leaf collection. In an effort to speed up leaf collection, temporary workers are used and overtime is offered to City workers in the Forestry and Streets Divisions when needed.

The City crews load leaves raked to the curb into leaf boxes mounted on city dump trucks using diesel powered leaf loader vacuum units. Sticks, grass clippings, flowers, plants, etc. can clog or break the leaf loaders and are not to be part of the leaf collection process. Those items should be set out separately for regular pick-up by the Green Recycling program of the Forestry Division. An unlimited free Green Recycling pick-up is scheduled for October 29<sup>th</sup> to November 9<sup>th</sup> on your regular Green Recycling pick-up day.

Please do not pile leaves into the street – keep them on the grassy area next to the curb or pavement edge. Every year I see leaves piled way beyond the curb causing some streets to become dangerously narrow, and sometimes forming dams that block storm drainage and cause flooding. The leaves can also clog catch basins and storm drains.

City crews will move as quickly as possible to collect all the leaves. The crews will make multiple sweeps through the City, six rounds last year. If we have good weather and it doesn't snow too much, and the leaves fall on schedule, the leaf collection will be completed by December 7<sup>th</sup>. But the weather and the trees don't always cooperate. Thanks for your patience! City of Sylvania crews will be making their rounds and will be to your street soon.



Three diesel powered leaf loader vacuum units.



Leaves and green yard waste being ground by horizontal grinder and stacked into wind rows.