

- **SEPARATE LEAVES FROM OTHER MATERIALS.**

- Leaf collection is done using a very powerful vacuum. To avoid damage to the equipment or injury to the crew, leaves must be piled away from garbage, refuse, stones, rocks, firewood, brush and similar non-leaf objects.

- **THE FOLLOWING WILL NOT BE COLLECTED:**

- **Leaves in bags or other containers.** These are not compatible with the vacuum equipment and cause additional work for the City crew.
- **Leaves mixed with brush.** Leaves and brush are collected by different equipment at different times. It is inefficient for the crew to separate leaves from brush, and often results in leaves getting pulled into the street or brush getting lodged in the leaf vacuum tube.

ALTERNATIVES TO CURBSIDE COLLECTION

While it is the goal of the City to collect all leaves placed curbside in fall, that may not be possible during years in which leaves drop late and winter begins early. Leaves that cannot be collected in fall may remain on the terrace for collection the following spring. Other options available to residents include:

- **Mulch leaves directly onto the lawn.** Leaves mulched with a lawn mower will typically decompose before spring, fertilize the grass, suppress weeds, and moderate soil temperatures.
- **Place on vegetable and flower gardens and around trees and shrubs.** Leaves (mulched or not) placed as a ground cover will conserve moisture, enrich the soil nutrients and help suppress weeds.
- **Compost leaves with grass clippings and other organic waste.** Add the resulting compost to gardens and low spots in lawns.
- **Drop off at MRD compost site.** City residents may drop off grass clippings, leaves, plants, brush, branches, limbs (up to 4" in diameter), wood chips, sawdust, holiday trees, stumps (clean) and clean wood (not painted or treated) at the MRD compost site, 5211 CTH Q, seasonally from April 1 through November 30. Hours of operation for the [MRD compost facility](#) are available on the City's web site.

COLLECTED LEAVES ARE AVAILABLE TO CITY RESIDENTS FOR PERSONAL USE

Residents may request delivery of leaves to use as mulch. The City will deliver without charge collected leaves per the following guidelines:

- The resident agrees to take an entire truck load at a time, typically 15-20 cubic yards of leaves.
- Deliveries outside of the City will generally be limited to a five (5) mile radius of the City.
- Deliveries will be made at the convenience of the Street crew.
- The City will not re-collect material previously delivered.

Resident requests for delivery should be made to the Public Works Department (821-8370) or dpw@ci.middleton.wi.us. Include the resident's name, address and phone number, as well as a description of any preferred specific delivery location. Requests will be communicated to the Street Foreman by a work order.

SECTION 2: CITY PROCEDURAL RULES – LEAF COLLECTION OPERATIONS

EQUIPMENT AND PERSONNEL

1. The City has two trailer-mounted leaf vacuum units that pick up leaves and blow them into a box mounted on a patrol truck. Each truck/vacuum combination requires two crew members for efficient operation – one to drive the truck, and the other to operate the vacuum.
2. As staffing allows, during peak periods of leaf collection operations two additional trucks and drivers will be used to shuttle full trucks to the delivery location (usually MRD compost facility on CTH Q or the UW-Madison Agricultural Research Station on Mineral Point Rd. near Pleasant View Rd.) to keep the vacuums most productive.
3. Collection of leaves will generally need to be done within a relatively brief window of time. Given the constraints of other priority work, staff and equipment availability, and the typical number of weeks between leaves dropping and snow falling, the street crew will typically need to collect leaves on Saturdays. The Street Foreman will monitor weather conditions and remaining leaf piles, and schedule leaf collection operations with the goal of collecting all leaves placed curbside by the end of November.
4. Vehicles parked on the street adjacent to leaf piles present a significant barrier to the efficient collection of leaves. The vacuum cannot reach beyond parked vehicles, and it is inefficient for the crew to rake anything other than a small pile of leaves out to the vacuum.
 - In October, the crew will generally bypass leaves behind a parked vehicle and move on to collect leaves where access is not blocked by a parked vehicle.
 - In November, the crew may need to post a temporary No Parking sign at leaf piles in advance of expected leaf collection so that the vacuum equipment can access the leaves. The crew will try to avoid placing temporary No Parking signs on both sides of a street on the same day.
5. Cpt. Noel Kakuske of the Middleton Police Department wrote an e-mail on March 17, 2004 confirming that it is legal for the leaf picker to be operated on the left-hand side of the roadway. His message noted,

State Statute 346.05 prohibits driving on the wrong side, however 346.05(2) states, “The operator of a vehicle actually engaged in constructing or maintaining the highway may operate on the left-hand side of the highway ...”. I would construe the collection of brush and leaves from the curb line and terrace to be highway maintenance, that is, maintenance of the gutter, curb and terrace. Similarly, a street sweeper is also involved in street maintenance.

Bottom line – Yes, your procedure is legal and proper. I would recommend a warning light. Also the standard caveat supplied is, “the exemptions granted the operator do not relieve such operator from the duty to drive with due regard under the circumstances for the safety of all persons nor do they protect such operator from the consequences of his or her reckless disregard for the safety of others” – Translation, you have to be reasonably careful.

PERSONNEL SAFETY

1. Personnel are not allowed to ride on the platform of the leaf vacuum in transit to or from the work site. Personnel must ride in the cab of the truck unless actively engaged in collecting leaves or within sight of the next collection point.
2. Personnel are required to wear reflective vests, eye protection and hearing protection. Drivers shall have the beacon lights on during operation, and have a slow moving vehicle sign on the rear of the unit.