



STAFF REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

DATE: Regular Meeting of October 24, 2017

TO: Members of the City Council

SUBMITTED BY: Mike Roberts, Public Works Director/City Engineer

SUBJECT: Stormwater Program – Landscaping Waste Blown Down Storm Drains

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

City Council receive a staff report, discuss, and provide direction if needed regarding utilizing the administrative citation program to enforce the prohibition against depositing landscaping waste such as grass clippings and leaves into the storm drain.

FISCAL IMPACT OF RECOMMENDATION:

This is an introductory item and has no direct fiscal impact.

DISCUSSION:

Earlier this year Council directed staff to provide information about options to restrict the use of leaf blowers to blow leaves and lawn clippings into storm drain inlets. Lawn clippings and leaves can have residue from fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides and as organic materials can negatively impact the aquatic health of water bodies downstream of the City's stormwater collection system. Accumulated landscaping waste can also cause blockages in the City's stormdrain system and cause flooding. To prevent this from occurring, public tax dollars are expended each year to remove accumulated vegetation from the storm drain system before the rainy season begins. Commercial landscapers who engage in this practice gain a competitive advantage over competitors who expend resources to properly dispose of landscaping waste through on site composting, use of a green waste trash bin, or hauling the waste to a green waste facility.

Depositing yard waste including lawn clippings and leaves into the storm drain is in fact currently prohibited under the Hercules Municipal Code. Per HMC Chapter 8, Section 5-8.010(c) "It is the purpose of the City Council in enacting this Chapter to protect the health, safety and general welfare of Hercules' citizens by: (3) Controlling the discharge to the City's stormwater system from spills, dumping or disposal of materials other than stormwater." Additionally, Section 5-8.060(a) states "The release of non-stormwater discharges to the City stormwater system is prohibited."

Given this practice could proliferate if unaddressed and is a code violation, staff is recommending compliance be gained by enforcement through the Administrative Citation Program that is currently being implemented. As was discussed at the last Council meeting of October 10, the Administrative Citation Program is an effective way to gain code compliance when staffing is limited and carries a first citation amount of \$100, a second amount of \$250, and third offense of \$500. Staff is also recommending an informational e-mail be sent to the homeowner associations in Hercules and landscaping companies known to be working in the City alerting them that depositing landscaping waste in the storm drain is a prohibited activity.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Municipal Code