



“Leave” them by the curb

The leaves have turned yellow, orange, and red. Daylight hours are getting shorter. In the evening, the air is crisp and cool. You know what that means—chores! Meanwhile, the City of Fort Wayne has been getting ready, prepping trucks and staff for the annual curbside leaf pick-up.

This year, the City Street Department will again have two cycles of leaf collection in each neighborhood. Leaf collection begins on October 30, 2017 in the North area, which is generally north of Coliseum Boulevard, State Boulevard, and Maysville Road.

Crews will then move to the Central area of the City for the week of November 6th and then to the South area the week of November 13th. The South area is everything south of Aboite Center Road, Engle Road, Rudisill Boulevard, and McKinnie Avenue. A second round of leaf pick-up will follow—with all collection scheduled to be finished on December 15, 2017. The week of November 27th will be a catch-up week, if needed.

To help make leaf pick-up most effective for your neighborhood, please keep the following in mind:

- Have leaves raked to the park strip or curb and ready for pick-up on the first day of your scheduled weeks.
- Please do not rake leaves into the street. This will help avoid having leaves clog storm drain inlets and will help prevent street flooding in the event of heavy rains.
- Do not burn leaves. Burning leaves within City limits is a violation of City Code §74.70. The fine is \$100 and increases to \$150 if not paid within 30 days.



Credit: Flickrimages | iStock | Getty Images Plus

If you bag your leaves in biodegradable paper bags, please call 3-1-1 for pick-up. Bagged leaves will be picked up within two business days after you call.

Remember—no leaves may be disposed with your garbage. Leaves are only accepted in brown bags and from leaf piles on the park strip.

LEAF PICK-UP SCHEDULE

OCTOBER 30–DECEMBER 15, 2017

For collection of leaves that have been bagged in biodegradable bags, please call 311. Bags will be picked up within two business days after you call.

NORTH

OCT. 30–NOV. 3 • NOV. 20–22

CENTRAL

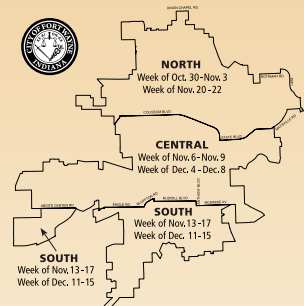
NOV. 6–9 • DEC. 4–8

SOUTH

NOV.13–17 • DEC. 11–15

The week of November 27th–December 1st will be a catch-up week. There will be no leaf collection on Friday, November 10th due to the Veterans Day holiday.

Click the map to enlarge:



Weather conditions or the volume of leaves in a particular area may cause the planned schedule to change. You may also visit www.cityoffortwayne.org/leaves or contact the Leaf Hotline at 427-2302 or the Citizens Services Center at 311 with questions.



Holiday hacks suppress stress and maximize merriment

Would you like to make your holiday season a little less stressful and turn it a brighter shade of green? Would you like a season that focuses more on your relationships than your stuff? Would you prefer a season with more merriment and less waste? We have some advice that will help.

Make a list and check it twice:

Write down all of the names of people for whom you normally buy gifts. Is there someone on the list that you'd like to see more often? Instead of giving a gift, make arrangements to get together. Could someone on your list use company throughout the year? Avoid buying a gift and, instead, promise a monthly visit. Do you have adult family members on the list? Suggest a dinner together in lieu of gifts, donate to a charity that you select as a group, have a "white elephant" gift exchange, or draw names and buy for just one person. Remember, gift-giving is a two-way street. If you want to change the rules this year, communicate with friends and family members about your ideas and suggestions. They will probably be glad that you were brave enough to bring it up!

Plan your spending: Now that you have a plan, decide how much you want to spend on holiday giving. Once you have a total, estimate a budget for each person on your list. Remember that the little extras, such as stocking stuffers and accessories, can add up. As you begin to shop, keep track of your receipts. Periodically evaluate how much you're spending compared to the budget that you developed.

Priceless: Consider gifts of yourself and your time. These gifts improve your relationships, cost nothing, and create no waste. For example, you could offer to visit a friend and bring all the fixings for a homemade dinner—and then make it together. You might schedule a game or movie night for family or friends. You could offer to babysit for an evening or, even, a weekend. No children in the family? Offer to pet sit or house sit. Volunteer to clean up the yard in the spring or mow the lawn. The possibilities are endless.

Made with love: Another way to give of yourself is to put your skills to work by making homemade gifts. If you preserve food or jams, give some away as gifts. Make a recording of a child's performance or an "interview" that gets the child talking about friends, school, and activities, and send the recording to a far-off relative. Refresh a family memory by making your brother the cookies that Grandma used to bake at the holidays. Decorate an old picture frame with fishing lures or bobbers and add a photo of you and your dad fishing together. Put your old jewelry, clothes, and hats into an unneeded suitcase to create the perfect dress-up chest for a child. We're sure you can think of many other ideas that reflect your own hobbies or honor the skills that a family member or friend passed along to you.

Experience the drama: Do you have friends or relatives who love a certain sports team but don't go to games very often? Give them tickets! Not sports fans? Give tickets to a concert or play, a movie gift card, a museum membership, or park passes. If you have a friend who is interested in learning something new or becoming an expert on a favorite hobby, offer to pay for a class. Whether it is photography or spreadsheets, there is probably a class offered somewhere.

Know your recipient: Waiting to the last minute to shop can lead to breaking the budget and choosing less-than-perfect gifts. When you are out of time, anything near a checkout seems "good enough." However, a good-enough gift is likely to be unused. At best, it will be returned, re-gifted, sold, or given away. At worst, it will be forever unused and, eventually, thrown in the trash. Knowing what a friend or family member likes and dislikes, as well as knowing sizes and other essentials, can lead to thoughtful gifts that don't waste your time and money or end up as trash. If you don't have time to find a gift that will reflect the recipient, give a gift card instead.

Remember to reuse: Reusable shopping bags aren't just for groceries! Wherever you are shopping for holiday gifts—antique stores, secondhand stores, or the mall—carry your own reusable bags with you to the store. Rather than dealing with lots of plastic shopping bags when you get home, you can begin sorting and wrapping.

Wrap it up: And speaking of wrapping, remember to wrap without waste. Reuse last year's paper (and save this year's for next year). Choose reusable gift bags. Decorate boxes that you use each year for the same person. Use fabric scraps, magazine pages, colorful brochures, or old maps to create unique wrapping "paper."



Credit: Freer Law | iStock | Getty Images Plus

Practical tips to reduce food waste

Credit: Machine Headz | iStock | Getty Images Plus



Food: 40% grown in the U.S. is wasted, 90% of us toss it too soon, 20% of what we buy is not eaten, and the wasted portion costs a family of four \$1,500 per year. What can you do about it? Go to www.savethefood.com for more tips like these on cooking and storing food to reduce food waste:

- If you are a user of Amazon Alexa, enable the food waste skill and ask about any food. Alexa can help you store food to last longer, discern whether it's still good, and even tell you how to revive it when it's past its prime.
- View "The Extraordinary Life and Times of Strawberry," an entertaining, 2-minute film showing the sequence of events from birth through death for a quart of strawberries. Spoiler alert: only one berry gets eaten before the moldy remainder gets buried in a kitchen trash can.
- Check out the detailed meal planning tips that allow you to plan, freeze, and conquer like a food waste warrior. This section includes tips on reviving food, using your freezer like a secret weapon, as well as deciphering those "use by," "sell by" and "best buy" dates. It even includes tips on how to pass these good habits on to your children.
- Wander over to the recipe section, which goes beyond turning chicken bones into "Blonde Chicken Stock" and bruised bananas into a tasty snack bread. It also shows how to turn your excess apples and peaches into tarts and shortcakes, potato peels into "Rustic Chips," and cheese rinds and ends into a fancy snack spread called "Fromage Fort." With these detailed recipes, leftover mashed potatoes and veggie scraps become the entrée, "Scraps Falafel," and stale bread and veggies become "Panzella."
- Turn into a storage superhero. The storage section of the site gives detailed information on storing, freezing, and reviving various foods. These tips will make you a master at using up every last bite of the food you buy.
- Learn about the environmental impact of your wasted food in terms of water waste. It equates minutes of leaving the shower running to quantities of food. For example, allowing one pound of beef to go uneaten is like leaving your shower on for 6 hours and 17 minutes!

Clear drains prevent flooding

Sometimes heavy rains can totally overwhelm Fort Wayne's storm sewer system. In autumn, falling leaves can block storm drain inlets causing standing water and localized flooding even during smaller rain storms. You and your neighbors can protect your property and help ensure that emergency and other vehicles have access to your neighborhood by doing the following:



1. Be a good neighbor and remove leaves and other material from the gutters and storm sewer inlets near your home before it rains. This helps prevent street flooding during future rain storms and keeps your neighborhood looking tidy and well maintained.
2. If you notice that your street is flooding, clear accumulated leaves and other debris from storm sewer inlets to keep the water flowing.
3. Manage yard waste properly by keeping it out of the street and storm drain.
4. Never pour chemicals, grease, oil, paint, or any other fluids down storm sewers.

Fort Wayne's Street Department employees will pick up leaves and will clean leaves off the streets, and City Utilities has a program to clean the city's approximately 19,500 inlets about once every three years. But the City also relies on your efforts as a good neighbor to reduce flooding and protect property in your neighborhood.

Christmas tree recycling

December 25 through January 12

The National Christmas Tree Association says 25 to 30 million trees are sold annually in the United States. Before you know it, the holidays will have past and it will be time to pack up the decorations for another year. Drop-off locations for used live trees will be announced in December. Ornaments, tinsel, lights, stands, and plastic bags must be removed from the tree before it is dropped off. For details, visit www.acwastewatcher.org.

Wreaths are not accepted at the Christmas tree recycling locations. Wreaths may be placed in your garbage cart.



Credit: Scovad | iStock | Getty Images Plus

New garbage and recycling provider

The city has contracted with a new hauler for next year. Beginning January 1, 2018, Red River Waste Solutions will collect your trash and recycling. Notification of this change will be mailed to all residents in December.

While new trucks will be driving the routes, residents are asked to keep doing things the way they currently do. There will be no changes to the day of the week that your materials are collected. The carts will remain the same, and the same materials will be collected.

Reuse reduces refuse

Used building materials don't go into your recycling cart. They really don't belong in your trash cart either. If a major or minor remodeling project has left you in possession of used but functional windows, doors, and fixtures, maybe you can donate them.

The Habitat for Humanity ReStore is a nonprofit home improvement store selling new and gently used items to the public. They accept donations of furniture, appliances, building supplies, household items, lighting, and more. Donations to the ReStore assist Habitat for Humanity in providing hardworking families with an affordable, decent place to live. Donations also help protect the environment by reusing items that would otherwise end up in a landfill. The ReStore is located at:

3837 N. Wells St., Fort Wayne, 260-470-4200

HOURS: Monday–Friday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

For additional information, go to www.habitatgfw.com/restore.



Credit: victoriass88 | iStock | Getty Images Plus

Clothing is another category of waste that is ripe for reuse. Your donated clothing helps provide employment, job training, and other programs for people who are disabled, lack education, lack job experience, and face other employment challenges.

If you itemize deductions on your tax return, donations may be tax-deductible. And, like donating building supplies, donating clothing helps keep valuable resources out of landfills. Goodwill Industries of Northeast Indiana has six stores in Fort Wayne:

Brooklyn Avenue

3127 Brooklyn Avenue

Covington Plaza

6256 W. Jefferson Blvd.

Dupont Village

525 E. Dupont Road

Chapel Ridge

10540 Maysville Road

Glenbrook Commons

4122 Lima Road

East State Shopping Center

3101 East State Blvd.



Credit: asisepit | Getty Images

For store hours and additional drop-off locations, go to www.fwgoodwill.org/donate/where-to-donate/.



Mayor Tom Henry

City of Fort Wayne Solid Waste Department

200 East Berry St., Suite 210

Fort Wayne, IN 46802-1804

427-8311

www.RecycleFortWayne.org