



ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT DIVISION

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Laurel Lunt Prussing and Members of the City Council
FROM: William R. Gray, Public Works Director
Rod Fletcher, Environmental Manager
DATE: February 5, 2010
RE: Garbage Hauler Operating Hours

Background

The City has not previously regulated hours that haulers operate. However, as a result of complaints that have been received over the years and that have been received by council members during the last several months, complaining of collections occurring as early as 3:00 a.m.; several City Council members inquired as to what remedies could be structured. As a result, staff prepared a draft ordinance restricting hours of operation from 6 am. until 6 pm. This draft was mailed to licensed haulers indicating that the proposed ordinance was to be scheduled for council discussion in December. A request was received from the haulers to meet and discuss this issue before it went to Council.

Discussion

Staff has met with hauler representatives twice during December. The first meeting was on December 7, where 8 companies attended. Currently, 17 companies are licensed in Urbana. This meeting largely focused on the concerns expressed by the haulers regarding the proposed restrictions. They cited several issues including: certain contractual issues – i.e. the School District requires all garbage to be collected before 7 am.; safety issues; collection efficiency – i.e. there are less conflicts with pedestrians, vehicles or other obstructions that begin later in the morning to name a few. Following discussion, haulers agreed that it is in their best interest to “self police” and address complaints to the extent possible.

A second meeting was held on the 17th in which council members Smyth and Gehrig attended to hear concerns first hand. A discussion of hauler issues and concerns by Smyth and Gehrig occurred. In lieu of proceeding with a proposed ordinance to restrict operating hours, two options were developed to seek solutions. These would include:

1. The City will maintain a list of complaints concerning early operations and will then forward those to the haulers for them to re-schedule collections at a later time of day in response to individual complaints. The Environmental Compliance Officer in Public Works will be responsible for maintaining and disseminating such complaints and monitoring.

[However, the Legal Division has advised that the names or specific addresses of complainants cannot be released, as that would constitute an invasion of personal privacy under state law 5 ILCS 140/7(1)(b). Therefore only the “hundred” block of a street will be conveyed to the haulers.]

2. Council member Smyth suggested that “core” residential areas could be identified by all Council members and would be submitted to haulers to re-schedule collections in such areas to not start before 6 am.

A staff meeting was held January 14th with Bill Gray, Rod Fletcher, David Gehrig, Charlie Smyth, Jason Arrasmith, and Courtney Rushforth to discuss waste collection hours. With the haulers agreeing to change collection routes and times based on individual citizen complaints, it was agreed that we would try the first option to initially and monitor its success. If needed, the second option could be undertaken if satisfactory results were not seen.

Citizens will be encouraged to call Public Works (217-384-2342) or leave a complaint on the city website - www.city.urbana.il.us/urbana/mayor/citizens_voice/citizensvoice.asp. When a complaint is received the Environmental Compliance Officer will log and track the complaint and notify the haulers the area and time of the complaint. The E.C.O. will then follow up with the citizen within two weeks to see if the noise has been eliminated.

It was also discussed that the shifting of routes and times may cause noise complaints in other areas that were not affected before. If this should occur or the haulers do not successfully respond to noise complaints, then the city would look into implementing option two restricting operations in “core” areas. If this should become necessary then further discussions would be needed to define the “core” areas as well as further discussions with the haulers.