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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Storm Response Update October 22, 2020

CEDAR RAPIDS, IA – October 22, 2020 – Storm response updates for October 22, 2020. A full list of resources can be found on the City’s website: www.cedar-rapids.org.

Tree Debris Removal

Crews wrapped up their initial first pass on collecting tree debris from public right-of-way on October 21 and are making additional passes. While the first pass was intended to grab as many large, bulk piles as possible that were accessible to the hauling trucks and crane, these additional passes will focus on clearing smaller streets such as cul-de-sacs and dead ends, private roads, and returning to high volume debris areas to pick up additional material or anything that was missed.

There is not a set number of passes, every neighborhood is different and has varying volumes of tree debris remaining; some neighborhoods might require more than three passes, others might require less. Crews will continue to collect tree debris in the right-of-way until a reasonable cut-off date is determined based on remaining material; the cut-off date will be communicated to the public in advance so residents know when the final pass will occur.

Residents can view an updated map on the City’s website that reflects real-time location of crews instead of generic work zones, giving the public a more accurate illustration of the type of work and where the work is being performed. Crews will return to each street multiple times; however, residents can also report missed locations on the City’s website.

Direct Link: http://www.cedar-rapids.org/tree_debris_removal.php

To date, crews have picked up approximately 2.3 million cubic yards of tree debris.

City Limb and Branch Removals

Contracted work continues on hazardous limb removal. Limbs will be cut if they are larger than two inches in diameter and have the potential to fall. They will be cut just past the break, so stubs may be left for forestry crews to repair later. Contractors may also remove hazardous limbs now and come back at a later time to completely remove the tree. Debris will be left behind and should be stacked in the right-of-way, parallel to the street for pick-up.

Certified arborists, working in cooperation with City Forestry staff, are identifying public trees that will need to be removed. While the goal is to keep as many trees as possible, there are trees that are standing that are structurally unsound and will need to be removed. Trees that have lost a large portion of their center crown or trees with split trunks are examples of trees that will have to be removed out of concern for safety.

An orange tag will be stapled to the tree if it will be removed at a later date. A map showing where public tree work is underway may be viewed on the City's website.

Direct Link: http://www.cedar-rapids.org/tree_inspections_info.php.

Tree debris from removals will be taken at the time of the removal. Direct questions about removals to forestry@cedar-rapids.org.

Burn Ban Remains in Effect

With the completion of the first round of tree debris removal throughout the city, the Fire Department re-evaluated the burn ban and is recommending a continuation of the burn ban. The Fire Department understands that recreational fires are an activity that many residents enjoy, however there is still a significant fire risk in the community by additional tree debris that needs to be collected. More importantly, there are many homes that have plastic tarps over large sections of the roof as the home owners are awaiting repairs. There is concern that a spark from a recreational fire could unnecessarily endanger others.

The Fire Department is allowing Liquid Petroleum (LP) gas and natural gas fire pits to be used. However, no wood-fired recreational fires are allowed due to the possibility of sparks. The Fire Department will continue to evaluate the burn ban on a regular basis and provide updates to the community.

Nonorganic Storm Debris

With the first pass of tree debris pickup completed, additional crews have been allocated to the collection of non-tree (nonorganic) debris. To date, approximately 29% of streets have had a first pass of nonorganic debris collection, and another 10% of streets have clearing underway. Crews are working their way to more neighborhoods every day, so we urge residents to set out their non-tree debris at the curb in front of their house, out of the street and sidewalk at this time. Keep non-tree debris piles separate from tree debris; keep both these piles separated from piles of leaves left for vacuum collection. Find more information, and a list of items that are accepted for collection, [on the City's website](#).

Garbage, Recycling and Yard Waste Collection

Solid Waste & Recycling collection continues from the STREET and NOT the alley until further notice. Crews have completed a survey of alleys and are working through lists of low-hanging wires, problematic tree limbs, and other blockages to be corrected before regular alley collection can resume.

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