



BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

FY21 ANNUAL REPORT ON ACTIONS TAKEN TO REMEDIATE ILLEGAL DUMPING IN BALTIMORE CITY

December 2021 FINAL REPORT

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1. Introduction

In accordance with House Bill 670 of 2016, the purpose of this report to the Baltimore City Delegation to the General Assembly is to describe actions taken by Baltimore City to remediate illegal dumping. The contents of this report cover Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21).

Baltimore addresses illegal dumping in the city through investigations and citations, debris removal, and a comprehensive educational outreach program. The Baltimore Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) is responsible for investigating instances of and issuing citations for the offense of illegal dumping. Illegal dumping sites are found either through proactive site visits or through a citizen complaint issued through the 311 reporting service. Once DHCD has investigated an illegal dumping location, the matter is referred to the Department of Public Works (DPW) to remove the illegally dumped debris.

In addition to removing illegally dumped waste, DPW offers many services and programs to allow residents and businesses to properly dispose of waste (see Appendix A), including a permit process for small haulers to dispose of bulk waste. The DPW Office of Communications and Community Affairs provides educational outreach to encourage residents to take part in preventing and reporting illegal dumping (refer to Appendix B).

DPW addresses illegal dumping in accordance with the Baltimore City Equity Ordinance, aimed at promoting equity and reducing disparities, as well as eliminating structural and institutional racism and discrimination in City communities. DPW programs provide improvements to residents that include an equitable approach to the distribution of benefits. Recent equity initiatives include "Equity in All We Do", a DPW strategy to achieve equity through a holistic approach.

2. Overview of Illegal Dumping in Baltimore

Illegally dumped waste is a persistent issue in Baltimore City. An estimated 10,000 tons of waste is dumped annually, leading to many negative impacts on the environment and the health of the community. In addition to its potential to contaminate the soil, surface water and groundwater, illegal dumping creates many health hazards to residents living in close proximity to dump sites. For example, residents face increased risk of injury and damage from sharp objects, disease from mosquito breeding grounds, as well as an increase in rats and other pests. Dumping sites also have a negative effect on the surrounding neighborhood property values and can adversely impact the local tax base. Dumping areas are unattractive to commercial and residential developers and can deter investment.

In legal terms, the disposal of any waste in an area not designated for such disposal is considered "illegal dumping." This includes dumping at corner cans, in parks, in alleys, in yards of homes, in lots of buildings, etc. Every time a resident or business owner dumps a bag of trash at a corner can, drops off tires in an alley, dumps construction debris in a park, or disposes of trash in the yard of a vacant property, they are dumping illegally.

Illegal dumping can include varying quantities of material ranging from large bags to building materials and bulky items. It is difficult to profile a typical illegal dumper; however, offenders can include construction companies, landscapers, scrap collectors, unpermitted small haulers, and local residents. Illegal dumping generally takes place in more secluded locations, on vacant lots or homes, back alleys, and

in wooded areas. It is more common in areas with a high number of vacant homes or areas with transient populations that may not be familiar with their trash collection schedules or other services.

The 311 Request System holds records of citizen-filed dumping reports, and includes photos and details about the incident. However, the 311 Service Request (SR) category of "Illegal Dumping" only captures a portion of illegal dumping occurrences. Illegal dumping can be reported to 311 in a variety of ways, depending on how the complainant views the issue. There are several SR categories that may involve some degree of illegal dumping, including: HCD-Sanitation, HCD-Illegal Dumping, SW-Public (Corner) Trash Can Issue, SW-Cleaning, SW-Bag Pickup, SW-Dirty Alley, SW-Dirty Street, SW-Park Cans, SW-Water Way Cleaning, and SW-SIU Clean Up. In FY21 there were 61,032 closed service requests across eight categories related to illegal dumping (see Table 2): Illegal Dumping, Dirty Alley, Dirty Street, Cleaning, Park Cans, Water Way Cleaning, Public Trash Can, and SIU Clean Up.

Depending on how the issue is reported, it may be referred directly to DPW to be cleaned without an investigation by DHCD. While this allows expedient trash removal and cleaning of the area, it generally does not allow for the opportunity to issue a citation and punish the violators.

The City expends many resources to prevent and respond to all types of illegal dumping. This report outlines the functions of the Department of Public Works and of the Department of Housing and Community Development as they relate to illegal dumping.

3. DPW's Initiatives and Advancements

3.1. "Less Waste, Better Baltimore" Long-Term Operational Plan

In August of 2020, DPW completed its "Less Waste, Better Baltimore" (LWBB) long-term operational plan. This effort identified options for improving solid waste diversion, recycling, and disposal in the City. This operational plan outlines a clear and realistic future vision for improving the City's solid waste program and operations, over both the near- and long-term. The main goal of the plan is to maximize waste reduction, reuse/repair, recycling, and sustainable management of materials.

Components of the LWBB plan inform best practices for preventing illegal dumping. Both the winter and summer sampled waste sorts conducted as part of the background research for the plan included an observation of the number and types of vehicles utilizing the residential drop-off center at the Northwest Transfer Station, including small haulers. It also looked at the types of materials being disposed of through the program.

The final draft of the plan can be found at:

https://publicworks.baltimorecity.gov/sites/default/files/LWBB Final%20Master%20Plan 7-28-20.pdf.

In FY21, DPW has started to implement some of the recommendations of the LWBB plan. For example, DPW managed the distribution of recycling carts to residents, hosted compost workshops, established food scrap drop-off sites to collect organics for composting, and began the contracting process to assess the closed municipal landfills in order to determine their suitability for waste management facilities.

DPW has developed proposals for programs to improve the solid waste infrastructure of the city, and is hoping to successfully implement some of these programs using funds received from the American Rescue

Plan Act (ARPA) as part of COVID-19 pandemic recovery. Operational challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic have delayed significant progress with implementing the recommendations outlined in the LWBB plan.

3.2. Volunteer Clean-Up Events

In August 2019, the Department of Public Works created a "Volunteer Clean-Up Event" Service Request. This service request type allows residents to receive bag pickup for clean-ups of any size, year-round. Previously, options for hosting a clean-up were limited to the Community Pitch-In, which is intended for registered community associations, and the Mayor's Spring and Fall Cleanups. Through this new initiative, anyone can register a Volunteer Clean-Up Event to receive bag pick-up from the Bureau of Solid Waste and stormwater credits from the Office of Compliance and Research. This incentivizes more people and organizations to hold clean-ups and enables us to track volunteer participation. In Fiscal Year 2021, 92 Volunteer Clean-Up Event service requests were closed, and community pitch-in events collected more than 1,827 tons of debris.

3.3. Recycling Cart Initiative

Baltimore City received a grant package from The Recycling Partnership to fund a portion of the cost of purchasing and distributing recycling carts for every household in the city. The wheeled carts have attached lids that will enable and encourage residents to recycle and keep material secure, unlike the open-top bins currently in use. These new, secure carts and the other recycling initiatives will improve the environment by keeping waste out of local waterways, providing for a cleaner, healthier neighborhood. Distribution of the carts is expected to run from late 2021 to early 2022. As part of the grant agreement DPW will also provide education and outreach to residents on recycling in an effort to curb contamination and encourage proper recycling. Recycling cart distribution began in September 2021, under the leadership of Mayor Scott.

3.4 Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an ongoing impact to DPW solid waste services, extending beyond FY21.

The department experienced short-staffing across divisions due to difficulty filling positions and retaining employees, as well as attendance issues with current employees from call-outs and COVID-related quarantining. Employees responsible for cleaning up illegal dumping in the divisions of Property Management and Street and Alley Cleaning occasionally moved to Routine Services so that they could service trash and recycling collection routes. Reassigning employees, even for the day, slows down the rate of completion for service requests and builds the backlog.

In June 2020 the entire Eastern Sanitation Yard was shut down due to a COVID-19 outbreak. Crews were reassigned to provide trash collection, which was prioritized over other services, like recycling. As a result, large piles of recycling were left in alleys and streets, which became illegally dumped items. The COVID outbreak prevented the Bureau from serving residents at its full capacity, and many service requests failed to meet their service level agreements. All services were impacted by delays and cancellations.

Bulk collection was suspended from March 2020 until October 2021 and resumed on October 2 with a modified schedule. Drivers and laborers regularly assigned to bulk pickup were still reassigned to curbside

collection, limiting bulk pickups to once a week on Saturdays. Cleaning and boarding were also suspended from March to May 2020, and as a result there was a large backlog of service requests and volume of waste to collect, especially with a limited crew.

DPW received approval to set up emergency staffing contracts to help keep operations going. These contracts with workforce development programs include Living Classrooms, Lazarus Rite, and ROCA Baltimore. These programs help underemployed and unemployed individuals gain on the job experience and skills. Fully staffed, permanent crews improve performance due to the crew's knowledge and familiarity with the routes. Crews that service the same routes are familiar with where trash or recycling bins will get placed by the resident. The driver's familiarity with a route also reduces the amount of time driving throughout the day which allows the crew to complete their route on time.

As part of the city's COVID pandemic response, DPW received approval to set up an emergency contract to digitally map trash and recycling routes. This helped crews and supervisors note issues, follow a digital route, and improve communications. The next step is to optimize the routes and seek routing software for all operations.

4. Department of Housing and Community Development Code Enforcement

While proactive cleaning, education, and communication are key to a clean city, enforcement is needed where these efforts fail. The responsibility to investigate and enforce illegal dumping complaints falls under the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). The Code Enforcement team of DHCD will issue citations for sanitation issues, such as properties that do not have trash contained in a proper container or properties with trash and debris. The Special Investigations Unit (SIU) of DHCD will investigate more serious illegal dumping complaints, such as large amounts of bagged trash, dumped bulk items, construction debris, etc. These investigators utilize any evidence available, including eyewitness accounts, security cameras, and any receipts or identifying information found on site. The DHCD team can issue citations for illegal dumping and can also pursue cases through legal means.

In Fiscal Year 2021, DHCD issued 405 citations for illegal dumping activities (refer to Table 1). The fines for illegal dumping can be between \$50 -\$30,000 and, in some cases, can include imprisonment.

The investigation of illegal dumping requires coordination between the Bureau of Solid Waste and DHCD. DHCD owns, operates, and rotates the location of 90 motion-activated cameras designed to catch illegal dumping. DHCD currently proactively inspects over 100 "hot-spots" multiple times a week for evidence of illegal dumping. The Bureau of Solid Waste continues to work with DHCD to identify new hotspot locations for enhanced sanitation enforcement. SIU has completed many successful investigations of illegal dumping occurrences. If bags of trash are present, SIU will open the bags and search them for any identifying evidence. The investigators also use evidence gathered by witnesses, such as descriptions of individuals and vehicles, including license plate numbers. After DHCD finishes its initial investigation of an illegal dumping complaint, it will refer the location to DPW for cleaning.

5. Conclusion

The City continues to make great strides in addressing sanitation challenges in Baltimore City. While DPW is extremely proud of the department's accomplishments, there is a long way to go in order to make Baltimore a cleaner city. Behavioral change is essential to department efforts, which can be accomplished

through a combination of education and enforcement. The Department of Public Works will continue to work with other City agencies and non-profit partners to investigate and pursue methods of remediating illegal dumping.

Table 1: DHCD Citations for Illegal Dumping FY2021

Legislative District	Number of Citations for Illegal Dumping
District 40	17
District 41	8
District 43	38
District 44A	8
District 45	323
District 46	11
Total	405

These citations include a range of dumping related citations, including for trash dumped on lots, next to corner cans, in the right of way, etc. It also includes citations for illegal discharge which is the dumping of grease, oil, mortar, or other liquids.

Table 2: Service Request Categories for Illegal Dumping -

311 SR Category	Possible Type of Illegal Dumping	Number of SRs Closed in FY21	Photo Example
Illegal Dumping (HCD)	 Bulk Items* or Bags of Trash in Alleys Bulk Items or Bags of Trash in Parks, Vacant Lots or Yards Bags of Trash in Corner Litter Cans 	13,678	
Dirty Alley (SW)	Bulk Items or Bags of Trash within the public right-of-way such as an alley or side street	23,073	

311 SR Category	Possible Type of Illegal Dumping	Number of SRs Closed in FY21	Photo Example
Dirty Street (SW)	Bulk Items or Bags of Trash on the public right-of-way such as a street or sidewalk	19,305	
Cleaning (SW)	Bulk Items or Bags of Trash at vacant and abandoned properties	19,954	

311 SR Category	Possible Type of Illegal Dumping	Number of SRs Closed in FY21	Photo Example
Park Cans (SW)	Bulk Items or Bags of Trash in municipal Parks	504	
Water Way Cleaning (SW)	Bulk Items, Bags of Trash, or Litter in within the Baltimore Harbor	7	

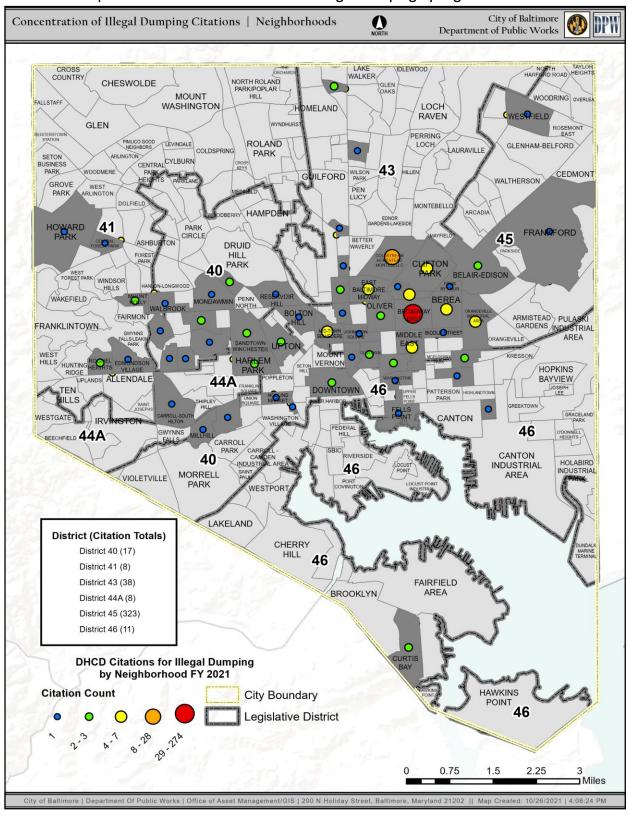
311 SR Category	Possible Type of Illegal Dumping	Number of SRs Closed in FY21	Photo Example
Public (Corner) Trash Can Issue (SW)	 Bags of Trash in public Corner Cans Bulk Items placed around Corner Cans 	2,933	
SIU Clean Up (SW)	 The Cleaning of Illegal Dumping Sites after DHCD's SIU team has investigated Illegal dumping sites within the public right-of-way with over 100 pounds of trash or debris 	1,531	Saint George Au 1D-14-2020 (Before) 3:4

^{*&}quot;Bulk Items" can include any large item including mattresses, furniture, tires, and construction debris.

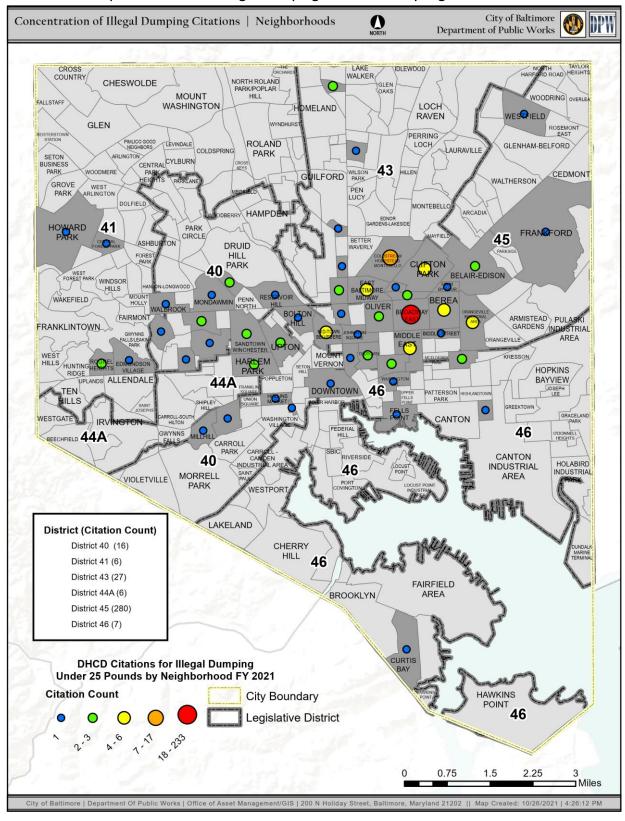
SW = Solid Waste: These requests are referred to DPW's Bureau of Solid Waste, which responds by cleaning/collecting. These are not investigated by HCD or recorded as illegal dumping unless there is strong evidence of dumping which then prompts SW to contact HCD.

HCD = Housing and Community Development: These requests are referred to HCD's enforcement unit to investigate and are then referred to Solid Waste to clean.

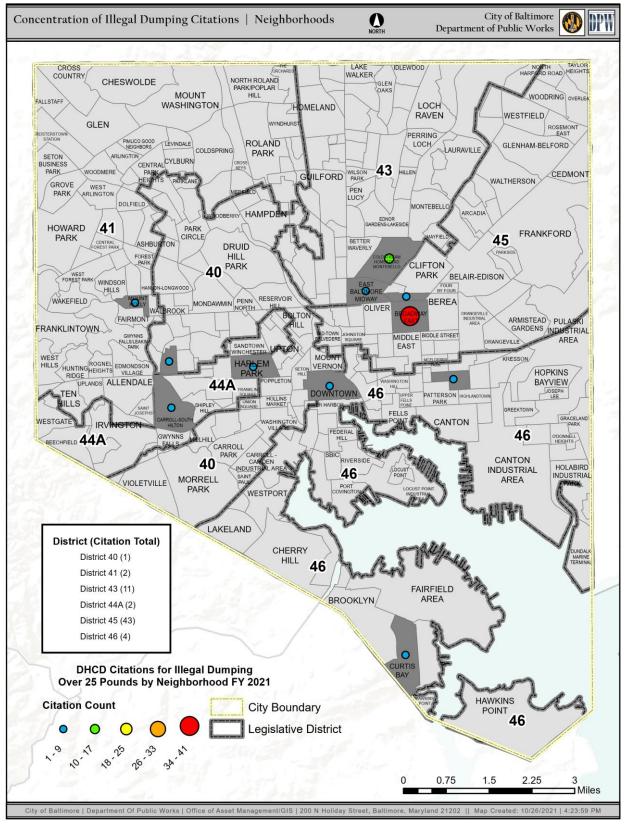
Map 1: Total Number of Citations for Illegal Dumping by Legislative District



Map 2: Citations for Illegal Dumping Under 25lbs by Legislative District



Map 3: Citations for Illegal Dumping Over 25lbs by Legislative District



Appendix A: Services Provided by the Department of Public Works

The Department of Public Works, Bureau of Solid Waste is responsible for the curbside collection of solid waste and recycling from approximately 200,000 households and small businesses each week. In early 2016, DPW began city-wide distribution of municipal trash cans to single family homes and small businesses. These sturdy cans with attached lids make it possible for residents to conveniently and securely store their trash.

In addition to curbside collection, DPW offers several free and convenient services for residents to dispose larger bulk items, larger quantities of materials, and household hazardous waste. DPW's Bureau of Solid Waste operates bulk trash collection, which provides residents with the opportunity to place up to three (3) bulk trash items for collection, free of charge. Furniture and White Goods are items commonly collected through bulk trash service. The Bureau of Solid Waste operates five (5) citizen convenience centers throughout the city that allow residents to dispose of their trash, recycling, yard waste and bulk items (refer to Appendix D). Seasonal collection of household hazardous waste is offered at the Northwest Citizen Convenience Center, allowing residents to responsibly dispose of hazardous materials that should not go out with mixed refuse. Permitted small haulers are able to dump refuse at the Quarantine Road Landfill and at the Northwest Transfer Station for a nominal fee.

The Bureau of Solid Waste cleans city gateways, services corner litter cans, responds to dirty alley and street complaints, performs waterway cleaning, and performs rat eradication, among other responsibilities. The switch to a four-day collection week, under the One Plus One effort, freed up crews and equipment, allowing for the creation of dedicated Alley and Lot Cleaning Crews. The Bureau of Solid Waste addresses alley and lot cleaning on an assigned schedule. Dedicated alley and lot cleaning crews have been able to address illegal dumping "hot spots" without having to rely solely on citizen complaints.

The City's cyclical response to the illegal dumping problem is a costly endeavor. In FY 2021, the Department spent approximately \$21,975,020 on right-of-way cleaning services, which includes street and alley cleaning, mechanical street sweeping, marine operations, graffiti removal, and cleaning of business districts.

This range of effort all works toward the goal of maintaining a clean and healthy city. The Bureau of Solid Waste strives to make it convenient for residents to keep their properties clean. ¹

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¹ Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many Solid Waste services were disrupted in March 2020. Routine collections of trash and recycling continued, and the Northwest Transfer Station and Quarantine Road Landfill remained open, however all other services were suspended temporarily. Services that experienced disruptions included Dirty Street and Alley operations, Mechanical Street Sweeping, Bulk Trash Collections, Convenience Center Operations, Property Cleaning and Mowing.

Appendix B: DPW's Education and Communication Efforts

DPW works to remediate illegal dumping by educating the public on proper trash disposal using prevention practices, or non-structural practices. These methods focus on shifting the public's approach and attitude toward littering and illegal dumping through many DPW programs and services available to help engage communities.

The Solid Waste Volunteer Cleanup service request empowers residents to tackle the trash problems in their neighborhoods. This allows any resident or organization to register a cleanup and request collection from the Bureau of Solid Waste. Under the Community Pitch-In Program, Community associations can request up to four (4) roll-off dumpsters a year to aid in cleanup efforts. The Mayor's Annual Spring and Fall Cleanups are multi-agency, city-wide events, spearheaded by the Bureau of Solid Waste, that encourage residents to clean up their communities. The Bureau offers bags, roll-off dumpsters, and sameday bag collection to participating community organizations and business organizations. Cleanup participants are eligible to receive credit on their stormwater bills.

The DPW Office of Communications and Strategic Alliances educates residents and businesses on proper trash disposal and advertises DPW's services. This office provides useful information through the DPW website, social media, the annual DPW calendar, and informational brochures and flyers. In 2012, DPW created several community liaison positions to provide regular outreach to community groups and non-profits through educational presentations, participation in public meetings and cultural events, and working with local schools. Community Liaisons are assigned by City Council District so they get to know the community leaders, the residents, and the unique issues in the assigned area.

The Liaisons teach residents about the importance of proper trash disposal in municipal trash cans or equivalent sturdy, durable cans with tight-fitting lids, and the importance of preventing and reporting illegal dumping. The Liaisons also provide information to residents about DPW services, including the residential drop-off sites, recycling services, cleanup events, shredding events and household hazardous waste drop off days.

Additionally, Community Liaisons offer educational programs to public schools. These programs are valuable for educating the next generation of citizens on the importance of caring for their neighborhood and environment. Content includes information on trash reduction, recycling, litter prevention, and storm drains/stormwater management, as well as the connection between these efforts and the health of the harbor and the environment.

In FY2021 DPW liaisons gave public presentations and provided resources at over 200 community meetings. They brought information to 60 community events including community association meetings, resource fairs, and special events. The liaisons also initiated an ECO-Warrior competition at 6 schools and pursued grant funding for a school ambassador program to encourage cleanups among student peers.

Appendix C: BMORE Beautiful

BMORE Beautiful is a City-led, peer to peer beautification program. The goal of the program is to not only change behaviors and attitudes towards the beautification of the City, but to also encourage residents, businesses, and organizations to become directly involved in activities and projects that will keep their neighborhoods clean and beautiful.

To meet this goal, the City works closely with neighbors on unique beautification projects and cleanliness challenges, as well as provides education literature, outreach materials, resources and programs, opportunities that residents can use to KEEP Baltimore Beautiful.

In exchange for signing a simple pledge, residents receive a clean kit, that can be used to keep the front and rear of resident's home litter free. Neighborhoods and organizations that have demonstrated the ability to mobilize at least 5-10 volunteers are encouraged to participate and apply for our popular programs and grant opportunities. These programs and grant opportunities include Love Your Block, Care-A-Lot, Say YES! (Youth Environmental Stewards), and Activate Your Space Grant. Love Your Block is a minigrant program that provides funding for small community led beautification efforts. Care-A-Lot is grant program that provides funding for communities and organizations to mow and maintain vacant lots in the City. SAY YES! Program is an opportunity for youth to become actively involved in the cleaning and greening in their communities. Activate Your Space Grant is a grant program that provides design assistance, consultation and funding to neighborhood organizations utilizing CPTED (crime prevention through environmental design) strategies to transform blighted vacant lots into safe community assets.

Additionally, BMORE Beautiful helps residents to build their internal capacity by helping residents learn different ways to troubleshoot and resolve common beautification challenges within their neighborhoods. Quarterly community meetings are an opportunity for active and engaged communities to meet, greet, and exchange ideas. Community leaders serve as the subject matter experts for fellow leaders who are working to Keep Baltimore Beautiful.

BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

RESIDENTIAL DROP-OFF CENTERS

Residential drop-off centers are locations where City residents can dispose of items at no charge. Please consider donation of items before disposal.

Waste and Recycling Drop-Off Locations

1. Quarantine Road Landfill

6100 Quarantine Road (410) 396-3772

Haulers and Landfill Use:

Mon.- Sat. 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Residential Drop-Off:

Mon.- Sat. 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

2. Western Sanitation Yard

701 Reedbird Ave (410) 396-3367

3. Eastern Sanitation Yard

6101 Bowley's Lane (410) 396-9950

4. Sisson Street Drop-Off Center

2840 Sisson Street (410) 396-7250

5. Northwest Transfer Station

5030 Reisterstown Road (410) 396-2706 Mon.- Sat. 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m

Hours:

Drop off locations are open the following hours unless otherwise noted.

Labor Day to Memorial Day:
Monday to Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Memorial Day to Labor Day:
Monday to Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Accepted Materials:

- The following materials are accepted at all locations: household trash, single stream recycling, bulk items such as furniture and mattresses, electronics, white goods such as stoves and refrigerators, scrap metal, rigid plastic, and motor oil.
- Tires without rims are accepted at all locations except for the Sisson Street Drop-Off Center.
- Oyster shells are accepted at the Sisson Street Drop-Off Center.
- Household hazardous waste collections occur the first consecutive Friday and Saturday of the month, April through October at the Sisson Street Drop-Off Center only.
- Durable medical equipment is accepted for donation at the Quarantine Road Landfill and Northwest Transfer Station.





For more information on services available at dropoff centers, please contact the Office of Recycling at (410) 396-4511



BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

SMALL HAULERS PROGRAM

The Small Haulers Program is an initiative of the Department of Public Works to make it easier for small commercial haulers to properly dispose of trash to improve their efficiency, reduce instances of illegal dumping, and help keep our City clean.

Who should get a Small Haulers permit?

- You need a waste haulers license if you contract with others for the collection, transportation, or disposal of solid waste; or engage in the collection, transportation, or disposal of solid waste.
- By having a small haulers permit, you will be allowed to use our locations at the Northwest Transfer Station and the Quarantine Road Landfill. This will also allow you to dump for a fee of \$20 per load instead of the usual fee.
- Please note vehicles over 7,000 pounds are not eligible for a small haulers permit and must apply for a large haulers license. Large haulers are only permitted to dump at the Quarantine Road Landfill.

How do I get a permit?

- Apply by bringing the registration form for each vehicle to Environmental Inspection Services at 1001 East Fayette Street, Baltimore, MD 21202.
 Registration must include the weight of the vehicle.
- Vehicles under 7,000 pounds can register for a small haulers permit for \$35. Vehicles over 7,000 pounds are required to register for a waste hauler permit for \$100.

Small Haulers are permitted to dispose of waste at the below locations:

Quarantine Road Landfill

6100 Quarantine Road (410) 396-3772 Mon.- Sat. 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Northwest Transfer Station

5030 Reisterstown Road (410) 396-2706 Mon.- Sat. 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.





For more information on Small Haulers Permits call the Health Department at (410) 396-4428 or visit health.baltimorecity.gov/waste-hauler-license

