



Department of Public Works

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## **Tall Grass/Noxious Weeds Ordinance Change Now in Effect in the City of Milwaukee**

*Amended City Ordinance 80-17-2 & 80-17-6 took effect August 10*

Property owners in the City of Milwaukee are advised that a City ordinance amendment concerning tall grass and noxious weeds on their property is now in effect.

**What has changed?** City Ordinance 80-17-2 is amended to read in part: "...no turf grass or weeds of any kind shall be permitted to grow or stand more than **7 inches** on any property in the City..." Before the amendment was passed by the Common Council in July, the allowable height for grass and weeds had been 9 inches. All owners, tenants or occupants of property are now required to maintain grass and weeds below the maximum height of 7 inches.

**Why was the ordinance changed?** Residents have always been required to keep their property clean and orderly, including mowing grass and removing noxious weeds on a regular basis. Attractive yards add value to individual properties and City neighborhoods, and are an example of how Milwaukeeans take pride in their community. Well-maintained properties also help to stabilize and revitalize neighborhoods, and encourage prospective commercial and residential buyers to invest in the City. Mowing the lawn and taking care of noxious weeds can also help deter criminal activity – an example of the "broken windows" theory that taking care of basic property maintenance sends the message that residents and the neighborhood care about and watch over their community.

**What happens if a property is found to be in violation?** Property owners who violate this ordinance will be assessed a special charge of \$50.

**What happens if that property continues to be in violation?** If the property is not mowed, a further special charge of \$100 will be assessed, plus special charges for mowing costs. Any additional violations during the same calendar year shall be assessed a special \$150 charge, plus additional charges for mowing. Special charges not paid within 30 days after billing will result in a lien being placed on the property, and will include a \$25 administrative fee.

The Department of Public Works staff is responsible for monitoring properties for tall grass/noxious weeds compliance and provides clean-up services when necessary. Residents can also alert DPW to problem properties by calling **(414) 286-CITY**.

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