



## **CITY OF MOUNTAIN BROOK**

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SAM S. GASTON  
CITY MANAGER

August 20, 2021

Dear Mountain Brook Residents:

Many of you, over the past several months, have experienced problems and issues with your garbage, trash and recycling services from Waste Management. The City of Mountain Brook has contracted with Waste Management since 1995 to provide these services to our residents. During these 26 years, with an occasional hiccup, Waste Management has provided our community with good service until the last few months.

There are several factors that have resulted in a decline in the quality of their work.

- Waste Management is having a challenging time, like many other businesses, finding and keeping workers.
- The turnover of most all longtime Waste Management workers, drivers and supervisors who have served our community for years. This is due to retirements, transfers and promotions to other jurisdictions that Waste Management serves.
- Waste Management acquired Advance Disposal, another waste company, in October, 2020 and has been reorganizing its staffing due to this purchase.
- Waste Management is experiencing a large number of equipment failures and breakdowns as their entire fleet management staff and procedures have changed.
- Waste Management has implemented new testing procedures and many longtime, experienced “temp” workers cannot meet these standards and are not allowed to work for Waste Management.
- Waste Management continues to experience a high rate of turnover among their newly trained workers and drivers.
- All the Waste Management drivers working in Mountain Brook are new and still learning their routes and our street system.

With this said, Mountain Brook is not alone in having garbage, trash and recycling problems as several other cities in our area served by Waste Management, are also EXPERIENCING SIMILAR PROBLEMS.

### **What Can You Do?**

- Have your household, bagged garbage in cans in plain sight within 20 feet of the rear of your home. Garbage cans shall not be underground, behind fences/gates or inside an enclosure. With all new workers from Waste Management serving our community, finding your garbage cans can be a challenge.
- Do not place your curbside trash, limbs, bags, boxes, etc next to your mailbox, street signs, trees or utility poles. This prevents Waste Management's knuckle boom trucks from being able to use their claw to remove your trash without the possibility of damage to these structures.
- Do not park your vehicles near your curbside trash on your regular pickup day. This will prevent Waste Management's knuckle boom truck from having access to your trash.
- Cut limbs/hedge clippings/logs into 4-5' sections for pickup. Place these piles no more than 3' from the curb with the ends facing the street.
- Place your trash or recyclable materials at curbside the night before or by 7:00am of your normal pickup day.

### **What Is The City Doing?**

- Our current contract with Waste Management extends to September 30, 2022. We have had numerous discussions with their management team who have assured us that this will be resolved. Unfortunately, we are not seeing these types of results.
- Our City's Public Works Department has responded to hundreds of missed service calls, removing and dumping garbage and trash that is the responsibility of Waste Management.
- We have fined Waste Management over \$27,000 in the past 3 months, with \$37,000 in fines soon to be assessed, due to missed services. In our contract, Waste Management has 36 hours to respond to a garbage miss and 72 hours for trash/recycling misses.

- Our City is a founding member of the newly formed Cahaba Solid Waste Authority along with six (6) other cities. Presently, this authority is negotiating a contract for future services with another waste company.
- Local governments in Alabama are now permitted to enter into five (5) year residential garbage contracts instead of only three (3) years thanks to our state legislators in the 2021 Legislative Session. This may give us some financial relief when we have a new garbage contract since the waste companies will have longer to amortize their expensive equipment during the contract terms.

### **Who Do I Contact?**

#### Public Works Department:

Ron Arbitelle 205-802-2390 [arbiteller@mtnbrook.org](mailto:arbiteller@mtnbrook.org)

Donna Blackman 205-802-2390 [blackmand@mtnbrook.org](mailto:blackmand@mtnbrook.org)

#### City Manager's Office:

Sam Gaston 205-802-3803 [gastons@mtnbrook.org](mailto:gastons@mtnbrook.org)

Janet Forbes 205-802-3800 [forbesj@mtnbrook.org](mailto:forbesj@mtnbrook.org)

We ask for your patience as the City continues to work with Waste Management to improve their services to our residents. It is our aim to have this corrected as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



Sam S. Gaston  
City Manager