



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:** 16-5408

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**Agenda Item Number:** 20.

**Agenda Date:** 11/3/2016

**In Control:** City Council A Session

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**DEPARTMENT:** Solid Waste Management Department

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** David W. McCary, CPM

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** Citywide

### **SUBJECT:**

An Ordinance establishing a new brush collection schedule to reduce the spread of the oak wilt fungus.

### **SUMMARY:**

Staff will present an ordinance to memorialize brush schedule changes in response to a Council Consideration Request from Councilman Joe Krier regarding a stronger oak wilt suppression program.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Oak wilt is a fungal disease that affects all species of oak trees. While some species of oak trees may be more resistant to the disease, many oak trees infected with oak wilt die. Oak wilt occurs in many states across the U.S., including Texas. In San Antonio there are several active oak wilt centers in the northwest side of the City. Generally, the active oak wilt centers in San Antonio are located outside Loop 410, north of Potranco and west of Highway 281.

The disease can be spread through open wounds on the trees, such as those created by pruning that are not immediately painted to protect the cut. In this scenario, small beetles may carry the fungal spores from an infected tree, or infected firewood, into a previously uninfected tree through the open wound. The oak wilt fungus and the beetles that may transmit the fungus are especially active during the spring. An infected tree may also transmit the disease through interconnected root systems. Oak wilt is particularly active during the spring months. Therefore, the Texas A&M Forest Service recommends not to prune oak trees during the months of February through June.

The Solid Waste Management Department (SWMD) provides curbside brush collection two times per year and curbside bulky collection two times per year. Generally, this schedule consists of a fall brush collection, followed by a bulky collection in the winter, a spring brush collection and then a summer bulky collection.

Councilman Joe Krier submitted a Council Consideration Request (CCR) on March 31, 2016, that specifically requested the City change the brush collection schedule to avoid collection between February 1 and July 1. Because oak wilt is most active in the spring, the Texas A&M Forest Service recommends not pruning oak trees between February through June to prevent the spread of oak wilt.

SWMD presented to the Governance Committee on June 15, 2016 with a recommendation to change the brush collection schedule to avoid brush collection in the north and northwest side of the City between February through June. This new modified schedule maintains two brush and two bulky collections annually. This new collection schedule generally maintains a late fall/winter brush collection, spring bulky collection, summer brush collection and late summer/early fall bulky collection.

The Governance Committee recommended that SWMD draft an ordinance for the Neighborhood and Livability Committee supporting this new schedule. Staff prepared an ordinance that specifically states that SWMD will avoid notification of scheduled curbside brush collection in active oak wilt areas between February 1 and June 30. As a result, these areas in the north and northwest will receive their former spring brush collection in July and August. Areas outside of the active oak wilt areas, including the south and east sides of the City will receive their former spring brush collection earlier, approximately May and June. The actual collection dates may move slightly to accommodate holidays and other scheduling constraints. In order to make this schedule change before spring, SWMD started to transition into this new schedule on September 12, 2016.

In addition to actions taken by SWMD, the Parks and Recreation Department and Development Services Department have undertaken mitigation efforts to prevent the spread of oak wilt.

#### **ISSUE:**

An Ordinance establishing a new brush collection schedule regarding a stronger oak wilt suppression program.

In order to prevent the further spread of oak wilt in San Antonio, SWMD proposes an Ordinance modifying its curbside brush collection schedule as necessary to avoid brush collection in active oak wilt areas from February 1 to June 30. Areas in the north and northwest will receive their former spring brush collection in July and August. Areas outside of the active oak wilt areas, including the south and east sides of the City will receive their former spring brush collection earlier, approximately May and June.

#### **ALTERNATIVES:**

As an alternative, the City Council could choose not to act on this recommendation.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

This Ordinance is anticipated to have no fiscal impact.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of this ordinance establishing a new brush collection schedule to prevent the spread of oak wilt within San Antonio.