

**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR**

Diane Veltri Bendekovic,  
Mayor



**CITY COUNCIL**

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TO: Residents of Plantation  
FROM: Diane Veltri Bendekovic, Mayor  
DATE: October 16, 2017  
RE: Hurricane Debris Removal Update

I certainly understand your frustration that our “grass is greener” community is now “mounds of brown” and the removal is at a slower pace than one would expect. Also I am in agreement there are debris removal issues. However, if and when the City is aware of an issue it is addressed immediately.

From the onset of the recovery there was an issue with limited resources. This was explained in my letter of September 22, 2017. Presently, the City has 30 vehicles servicing Plantation, and out of approximately 550,000 cubic yards (public roads) and 200,000 cubic yards (private roads), as of today, 347,000 cubic yards have been removed. The removal pace averages approximately 16,000 cubic yards a day; the haulers are working seven days a week.

Residents have contacted both the Administrative office and Public Works Department with concerns. Let me share some of the concerns voiced:

**Trucks are leaving our neighborhood half empty.**

Trucks have a weight load limitation, and the larger logs increase the weight and contributes to the trailer’s appearance of half empty. Haulers are paid by the cubic yard not by the truck load.

**Public Works employee aren’t working, they are just watching the haulers picking up the debris.**

Those individuals aren’t City employees. They are monitors hired by the hauling contractors to evaluate the debris loads. The monitors are required by FEMA for documentation purposes so the City will secure FEMA’s 75% reimbursement. FEMA requires a monitor must be in position for every truck.

**Public Roads/ Private Roads Removal**

Private Road Debris Removal requires a Declaration from FEMA so that Plantation will be eligible to receive the 75% reimbursement of the removal cost. If the city doesn’t receive FEMA’s Declaration authorization, it won’t receive the FEMA reimbursement. At the Oct. 11 Council meeting, a private road debris removal presentation was shared with the Council. After a thorough discussion the Council’s decision for private road debris removal was deferred until the October 25 meeting. Councilmembers hope by that date, the FEMA Declaration will be issued.

If the declaration isn’t forthcoming a decision by Council will need to be made to either enter the private roads to remove the debris knowing there is a possibility of not receiving the FEMA reimbursement or not to enter at all. The total cost to the city for debris removal is \$16.1 million, \$11.8 million for public roads and \$4.3 million for private roads. Just as a point of information Wilma’s debris removal took four months and several passes to remove, and six years to receive FEMA’s reimbursement. I would suggest residents tune in to the Council meeting on Oct. 25, Channel 78 (Comcast) or online for the debris removal discussion.

**Bulk didn't pick up my items.**

Vegetation bulk pickup needs to be in a clear plastic bag or neatly bundled. Black bags are not picked up at any time. This pickup procedure isn't any different than the residential monthly pick up. So far 22,000 clear bags have been picked up by the city's Public Works Department and an estimated additional 15,000 in the coming week. It is IMPERATIVE to separate your bulk from the debris removal.

**The Mayor is doing nothing to resolve the issue.**

I can assure Plantation residents, the Public Works and Park and Recreation departments are working diligently with the Administrative office to restore our hometown landscape as soon as possible. I would encourage residents to refer to the city's website [Plantation.org](http://Plantation.org) for post storm information. FAQ's are provided to assist in answering most of your concerns.

**My grass is dying due to the debris and the City needs to replace the sod.**

Residents are responsible for maintaining their swales, and in most cases the grass discoloration condition is a temporary one. Debris removal and other post storm occurrences aren't just an isolated condition to Plantation. All municipalities statewide are incurring issues caused by the storm, and many are more severe than Plantation's.

*Please be cognizant of the fact there is some abuse occurring in neighborhoods. Once the hurricane debris has been removed, additional debris is appearing in swales. Lawn maintenance crews are dumping their clippings, etc. instead of hauling it away. It is easily identifiable as not hurricane debris due to the color. The City is not responsible for hauling lawn maintenance debris.*

Working together Plantation's landscape will return to where the "grass is greener". So we continue to ask for your understanding and patience during the post storm cleanup.