

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 16, 2009

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO # 108 : STREET SWEEPING REDUCTION

The memorandum is in response to Councilman Wilson's question, "What are a few options for reductions in street sweeping and an understanding of the implications?"

Currently, there are 521 lane miles in the City of Alexandria. The Solid Waste Division is responsible for performing regular sweeping and cleaning of the streets within the Combine Sewer System (CSS) area. Documentation of the City's street sweeping activities within the CSS area is necessary for reporting to the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) under the City's Virginia Pollution Discharge Elimination System (VPDES) permit under which street sweeping in the CSS areas is mandated for permit compliance. This CSS area is approximately 102 lane miles in the City. In addition, the 223 lane miles of Red Emergency routes in the City should be and are maintained as they represent the main corridor for traffic flow throughout the City. Accumulation of debris in these areas can create traffic safety hazards and can potentially lead to costly maintenance for storm sewers. The remaining 196 lane miles represent the sweeping miles in residential areas. Residential streets are normally swept one to three times a year. Sometimes they are swept more at the request of citizens and associations.

The cost to the City for street sweeping totals \$1,083,154 annually which includes personnel and equipment and depreciation. These personnel have been restructured through the implementation of the best management practices in the Solid Waste Division. The street sweeping employees are used to supplement or augment other programs, such as leaf collection in the fall and snow removal in the winter. These employees are also used at times to support daily refuse collection personnel shortages.

Eliminating sweeping in residential areas would require that City residents clean along their property frontage, thus likely generating numerous complaints. The aesthetics and cleanliness would be affected by the residents refusing to clean their street. Street sweeping is one of the most frequent requests by residents and scaling the program back beyond the already implemented efficiencies would reduce the ability to respond to these complaints. Arlington County at one time eliminated street sweeping in residential areas and thus subsequently restored it.