



## COMMUNITY GARDEN PLOT MANUAL

The Worth Park District Community Garden Plot Program is an opportunity for individuals, groups or organizations to be part of a community gardening program. Participants in the program will enjoy nature, plant flowers, grow fruits and vegetables for food, and get exercise from the practice of gardening. The gardens measure 3 feet wide by 9 feet and will be rented individually or by halves, depending on interest. The Community Gardens are located at the Park District Terrace Centre, 11500 S. Beloit Ave., Worth.

The Community Garden Plot Manual provides gardeners with basic rules and guidelines for a successful garden plot program. The rules and guidelines within this manual ensure that all participating gardeners have the opportunity for a positive gardening experience, that garden plot sites are an asset to the community, and that all plots are used in a productive manner. By following the rules and guidelines, gardeners show that they want to garden successfully in a community garden plot program. All gardeners must agree to follow the rules and guidelines of the Community Garden Plot Program.



## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **Rental Procedure**

Garden plots are rented on a seasonal basis. The cost is \$20 for residents and \$50 for non-residents per plot.

### **Existing Plot Condition**

All plots are rented in their existing condition.

### **Inspection**

The Park District will inspect and contact gardeners whose plots are not in compliance with the rules, who interfere with neighbors, or whose plots are not used appropriately. Gardeners who fail to address a rules violation within seven (7) calendar days, or within an alternative timeframe specified by the Park District staff, risk losing their garden plot rental.

### **Plot Return Policy**

Gardeners may return their plots at any time by contacting the Worth Park District. Garden Plot renters may not give away or sublet their rented plot to other renters. All garden plot trades and terminations must be managed by the Park District.

### **Safety**

Renters garden at their own risk. Since all plot locations are on a public land, the public cannot be banned from this area. The Worth Park District assumes no responsibility for any loss or damage to personal property, plants or produce at the Community Garden Plots.

Should illegal activities, such as theft, alcohol use, illegal planting, malicious damage, illegal dumping, etc. be observed, please contact the Worth Park District at (708) 448-7080.

## **GARDENER RULES**

1. All gardening activities must be contained within the plot boundaries as marked by the Park District.
2. The season begins May 1 (weather permitting). Gardeners should prepare their entire plot for gardening and begin planting by June 1. Complete fall clean-up by October 31. For a successful fall clean-up, please clear the plot of any weed blanket fabric, tomato cages, garbage, debris, concrete block, fencing, gardening tools and accessories.
3. The stakes and markings designating the boundaries of plots must not be removed at any time.
4. Plots must be neatly maintained to the boundaries May 1 to October 31.
5. All trash is the responsibility of the gardener to remove and dispose of properly off-site. This includes any and all non-biodegradable trash, garden waste or weeds.
6. Water must not be misused. No sprinklers can be attached to the water spigot.
7. Fence must have mesh fence materials. The total height of the fence and strand of string or wire is not to exceed 3 feet.

8. Fence posts or other structures may not be used outside the plots.
9. Pets are not allowed inside the plot area.
10. Plot renters that do not plant, maintain or properly remove debris from plots will lose gardening privileges and are subject to clean-up fees.
11. Proper attire including shoes and shirts must be worn at all times.

## **GARDENER INFORMATION**

### **Gardener Eligibility**

The following criteria will establish eligibility for garden plot rentals:

1. Rental contracts must be signed and returned by May 1.
2. Plot renters must grow food in the plots for personal consumption. Food may not be grown for commercial purposes.
3. Must comply with the Agreement and Code of Conduct.

### **Gardener Responsibilities**

1. All plots must be planted by June 1. The Park District will reassign unplanted plots without refund after June 1.
2. Before planting, gardeners should check the numbered stake to be certain they are on the correct plot. If gardeners are not sure of the plot number, they should contact the Park District before planting. The Park District is not responsible for costs incurred for replanting.
3. It is suggested that string is used to make the boundary of each plot's lines. This make the boundaries visible to adjacent gardeners. The Park District will take care of areas surrounding the garden site. Plots are not to extend beyond the designated boundary lines.
4. While the Park District tills the soil at the beginning of the season, gardeners may need to till just prior to planting.
5. Gardeners are expected to weed and maintain their entire plot(s) throughout the season until closing on October 31. Trash barrels will not be provided.
6. If weeds are growing 6" tall on more than 1/3 of your plot for longer than seven days or if you have extended your plot beyond the assigned boundary lines, you will be contacted by the Park District by phone/email. Gardeners will then have one week from the day they are notified to take the appropriate action before the plot is mowed/removed. Gardeners are expected to plan for their plot to be maintained during any extended absences.
7. If gardeners fail to maintain their plot, the Park District will resume maintenance and they will not receive priority registration for the following year.
8. Plastic bags, rocks, string, wooden stakes or other materials should not be left in the garden aisles. These objects can be very dangerous and destructive when mowing. It is the gardener's responsibility to remove items from the plot area at the end of the season.
9. Gardeners that do not have all items list above removed, will be assessed a \$100 clean-up fee.

**Plot Identification**

The Community Garden Plots are located at the Worth Park District Terrace Centre, 11500 S. Beloit Ave., Worth, IL 60482. Weather dependent, the program will run from May 1 through October 31. Plots will be staked/marked and ready for planting with consideration to weather and soil conditions. Garden Plots are identified with a numbered stake.

**Parking**

Parking for vehicles is located at the Terrace Centre parking lot or the Kennelly Park parking lot.

**Water**

A water hose near the plots will be available for gardener use. Sprinklers may not be attached to the hose as noted in the Gardener Rules. Gardeners will be expected to roll the hose back up and return to the spigot location after use.

**Mulch**

Gardeners may bring in mulch to use on their plots with the following provisions:

- Acceptable forms of mulch include alfalfa, buckwheat hulls, corrugated cardboard, feathers, garden residue, grain hulls, hay, lawn clippings, leaves and shredded newspaper. If gardeners would like to use mulch that is not listed above, please contact the Worth Park District at (708) 448-7080. Mulches such as woodchips, stone, carpet, sludge and artificial turf are prohibited.
- Gardeners wishing to have a bulk delivery must notify the Worth Park District at (708) 448-7080.
- Any mulch brought in must be spread on the plot within 24 hours. Plot renters are responsible for clean-up of the garden area.
- Mulch may not encroach on neighboring plots without permission from that plot owner. The Park District reserves the right to remove mulch materials from gardeners who do not comply with the stated policies and assess a \$100 clean-up fee.