

BOROUGH OF MECHANICSBURG
A GOOD PLACE TO GROW



COMMUNITY
G A R D E N

Borough of Mechanicsburg
Community Garden Handbook
2015

*Mechanicsburg,
a good place to live ... and garden*

Purpose of the Mechanicsburg Community Garden

The Mechanicsburg Community Garden is reserved for the exclusive use of individuals authorized by the Borough of Mechanicsburg to grow plants for their personal consumption and enjoyment. This garden may not be used for commercial purposes.

Location

The Mechanicsburg Community Garden is located in Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Park, north of the John H. Frederick Field and the swimming pool parking lot.

Authorized Use of Community Garden plots:

Individuals are permitted to rent and use the Community Garden plots only after authorized by the Borough of Mechanicsburg.

1. To request a plot the Gardener must complete a request form, submit their payment and sign a liability waiver. Returning plot holders and Borough residents will be given preference. If there are open plots after March 16th, non-residents may rent a plot at the designated rate for non-residents. The request form may be obtained by visiting the Borough Office, the Borough Website or calling 717.691.3310. If a plot is available it will be assigned to the requestor. If none are available the requestor will be placed on a waiting list.
2. When authorized and assigned a plot the gardener must pay an annual rental fee of \$35.00 for residents and \$40.00 for non-residents, when submitting their request.
3. The Gardener will use only the plot assigned to him/her.
4. The Gardener will sign a Liability Waiver before beginning use of the assigned plot.
5. By accepting the assigned garden plot the Gardner agrees to comply with the guidelines presented in this Handbook.

Authorized use of a Garden plot in one year does not automatically guarantee the Gardener use of a plot in subsequent years. The Gardener must contact the Borough Office and make his/her request to rent a plot each year. Gardeners from the previous year will be sent a renewal application in January. Returning plot holders will be given priority to retain their plot for the subsequent year if their request is completed and returned by March 2nd. Borough resident requests for new assignment will be given priority if their request is completed and turned in by March 15th. Non-resident requests for new assignment of garden plots will be determined starting March 16th on an as available basis.

Failure to comply with the guidelines of this Handbook may disqualify the Gardener from continued authorization to use his/her assigned plot, or from renting a plot again in the future.

Guidelines for the use of Garden Plots

1. **Rental season.** The Community Garden is available for use from March 15th to November 15th . Off season dates are reserved for maintenance of the facility.
2. **Hours of operation.** For safety reasons gardening is restricted to daylight hours only.
3. **Parking.** Parking is permitted only in designated spaces adjacent to the Community Garden. Parking along the street shoulder, even temporarily to drop off or pick up equipment or supplies, is a hazard to others using Memorial Park.
4. **Be a good neighbor.** Garden your plot with consideration and courtesy to those other gardeners around you.
 - a. Keep your plants within your own plot area. Do not allow your plants or weeds to invade neighboring plots.
 - b. Do not spray chemicals outside your assigned plot.
 - c. Do not allow children to enter the garden plots of others.
 - d. Pets are not permitted anywhere within the Community Garden plots.
5. **Self-Policing.** Gardeners are trusted to manage their plots in keeping with the spirit and vision of the Community Garden program; that is, that it is to be a resource for the common good of Mechanicsburg residents. As such, Gardeners are responsible to ensure the guidelines of this Handbook are followed, both by themselves in managing their personal plots and by all other gardeners. Take corrective actions when necessary but please be friendly in doing so.
6. **Water.** The water source must remain locked at all times when not in use. It is to be shared by all gardeners so please be patient when other gardeners are using it. Please return all hoses to their storage areas when finished. During times of drought the Borough of Mechanicsburg reserves the right to restrict water use.
7. **Compost.** Compost is available both on site and at the Mechanicsburg/Silver Spring Joint Composting Facility located at the Waste Water Treatment Plant.
8. **Chemicals.** Gardeners are encouraged to use organic fertilizers and pest control products. Herbicides are not permitted for use within the Community Garden.
9. **Waste Disposal.** Gardeners may dispose of waste only in the trashcans provided. Biodegradable waste may be deposited in the compost pile.
10. **Fencing.** Gardeners are permitted to erect fencing around their plots to contain their gardens. All fencing however must be no greater than three (3) feet tall and be able to be easily removed if so required by the Borough of Mechanicsburg.
11. **Ground cover.** Use of plastic or other non-biodegradable ground cover is not permitted within the Community Garden.
12. **Storage facilities.** Gardeners may place storage bins within their plots to hold hand tools or associated materials for their own use. Bins must be able to be easily removed if so required by the Borough of Mechanicsburg. Storage sheds are not permitted.
13. **Walkways.** Keep walkways within the Community Garden area clear at all times. Tools, equipment, and garden supplies deposited there could be a hazard to anyone transiting in the walkways.
14. **Plot use integrity.** Gardeners may only plant in their assigned plots. Anything planted in another plot is prohibited.
15. **Unused plots.** If a plot that has been assigned to a Gardener is unused by May 31st the Borough may revoke the privileges of the assigned Gardener, without compensation,

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and reassign that plot. There will be no refund of fees paid to the Borough.

16. **Abandoned plots.** If a plot that has been assigned to a Gardener is observed to be untended for an inappropriate length of time, the Borough may revoke the privileges of the assigned Gardener, without compensation, and reassign that plot.
17. **Problems.** Please report any problems with the Community Garden facilities or observed violations of the Guidelines presented in this Handbook to the Borough Office at 717.691.3310.

At the Conclusion of Gardening

When finished gardening, either because of the end of the growing/rental season or because the Gardner intends to discontinue use of the plot, the Gardner will clean up his/her plot. Specifically the Gardener will remove:

1. All plants not intended to winter over for the next growing season.
2. All tools, hoses, equipment, etc.
3. All non-biodegradable garden supplies (fertilizer, mulch, peat moss, etc.).
4. All man-made items (fencing and trellises may remain if the gardener is authorized to use that same plot again the next year).
5. All plant stakes (not to include garden plot perimeter stakes).
6. All ties (rope, fabric or other).

Trash may be disposed of in the trashcans provided or on-site compost pile as appropriate. Once the plot has been cleaned up, the Gardener will not be held accountable for trash in his/her plot left by the wind or neighbors.

If the Gardener intends to permanently discontinue use of the plot, he/she will notify the Borough Office at 717.691.3310 at the earliest opportunity.

Sharing The Harvest

In keeping with the spirit of the Community Garden, it being intended for the general benefit of the Mechanicsburg community, gardeners are encouraged to donate a portion of their surplus produce to a local Food Bank to aid those among us most in need.

Borough of Mechanicsburg Responsibilities

The Borough will provide overall management of the Community Garden program. Generally it will provide the Community Garden site and its facilities, manage garden plot authorization and assignment, maintain oversight of ongoing garden use and provide resolution for problems which may arise.

The Borough will provide the following services at the Community Garden site.

1. Boundary stakes to identify the limits of the Community Garden and to identify the individual plots.
2. Lawn mowing in the surrounding areas.
3. Parking.
4. Water source and access.
5. Establishment and management of a composting site.
6. Trashcans and trash disposal.

The Borough will not provide:

1. Security of plants, material, tools, or other personal property left by gardeners at their plots.
2. Tools, seeds, plants, or other materials to gardeners.
3. Electric service, other than Memorial Park lighting.

