



Date: August 17, 2018
To: Patrick H. West, City Manager *PW*
From: Gerardo Mouet, Director, Parks, Recreation and Marine *GM*
For: Honorable Mayor and City Council
Subject: Recommendation to Discontinue the Use of Products Containing Glyphosate

Recommendation

The Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine (PRM) has long been a leader in sustainable practices. This is evidenced by the recent decision to use cork and sand infill on our artificial playing fields instead of encapsulated rubber. Staff believes the City should be a leader in the elimination of the use of Round Up and other Glyphosate-based products in our parks, medians, and golf courses. As I said at the August 14, 2018 City Council meeting, the use of these products in our parks, where there is a higher possibility of contact with patrons, will cease immediately. I am also recommending the elimination of these products on our medians and golf courses, but feel it prudent to investigate the alternatives, and associated costs, and to take the matter of an immediate or phased approach to elimination to the Parks and Recreation Commission for its input.

Impacts to Parks and Medians

PRM and other jurisdictions have conducted tests of organic or synthetic applications that do not contain glyphosate. All of these products are more expensive, require more frequent applications and are "top-burn only," so they do not control the roots of weeds. Therefore, increased applications of more costly products would be required, once the use of glyphosate-based products are discontinued. As the parameters for the recently approved contract with PRM's new contractors were based on previous practices related to weed abatement, this decision to no longer use glyphosate-based products will have a financial impact to the contracts approved by the City Council last week. There may be alternatives that can mitigate these financial impacts with respect to our medians. A phased approach would allow additional time to identify these alternatives, and help keep our medians attractive in the interim.

Impacts to City Golf Courses

The American Golf Corporation (AGC) has not tested any organic or synthetic weed abatement products, but has reviewed studies about their use and effectiveness. They believe that the additional costs for product, the additional staff hours to conduct at least three additional annual sprayings, hand-pulling and string-trimming, plus the gasoline costs associated with the use of more gas-powered weeding devices; will be approximately \$25,500 for each regulation

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course, and slightly more than one-half of that for each of the two short courses. This would be a minimum annual increase in costs of \$100,000. When these increases are added to rising costs for water and other utilities, health care and labor, this will be a significant cost increase. AGC has not had much time to completely analyze the impacts of this decision, but it will probably result in a request for a rent-related remedy.

If you should have any questions, I may be reached at (562) 570-3170.

cc: Charles Parkin, City Attorney
Laura Doud, City Auditor
Tom Modica, Assistant City Manager
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