



Community Garden Plot Manual

Welcome to the Mokena Community Park District Community Garden Plot Program. The Garden Plots give individuals the opportunity to be a part of a community gardening program. Residents and Non-Residents participating in the program will enjoy nature, plant flowers, grow vegetables for food, and get plenty of exercise from the practice of gardening. 60 garden plots are rented on an annual basis. Plots measure 12' x 12', and are located at the Yunker Farm Park (10824 La Porte Road). This 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 the garden plot sites are an asset to the community, and that the plots are used in a productive manner. By following these rules and guidelines, gardeners show that they want to successfully garden 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. Registration information is in the Park District Winter/Spring brochure. The cost is \$25 for residents per plot, \$40 for non-residents.

Inspection

The Park District will inspect the plots periodically. We will contact gardeners whose plots are not in compliance with the rules, who interfere with their neighbors' plots, or whose plots are not used appropriately. Gardeners who fail to address a rules violation within 7 calendar days, or within an alternative time frame specified by the Park District, risk losing their garden plot rental without refund.

Plot Return Policy

Gardeners may return their plots before April 1st by contacting the Mokena Community Park District. Garden Plot renters may not transfer or sublet their rented plot to another individual. All garden plot trades or terminations will be managed by the Park District. There are no refunds for returned plots.

Safety

Renters garden at their own risk. Since plot locations are in a public park, the public cannot be banned from these areas. The Mokena Park District assumes no liability or responsibility for any loss or damage to personal property, plants, or produce at the garden plots.

Should illegal activities, such as theft, alcohol use, malicious damage, dumping, etc. be observed, please contact the Mokena Police Department at (708) 479-3911 and the Mokena Park District at (708) 390-2401.

GARDENER INFORMATION

New Gardener Eligibility

The following criteria establish eligibility for garden plot rental:

- Garden Plot reservations accepted on a first-come first served basis. Date will be announced in Winter/Spring brochure. Residents will receive priority registration.
- Signed rental contract must be returned to the Administration Center at registration.
- Food grown in the garden plot must be for personal consumption. Food may not be grown for commercial purposes.
- Flowers or ornamentals grown in the garden plot must be for personal use, and not for commercial purposes.
- Gardeners must comply with the Agreement and Code of Conduct.

Gardener Responsibilities

- All plots must be planted by June 1st. The Park District will reassign unplanted plots without refund after June 1st.

- Before gardening, planters should check the numbered stake to verify that they are at the correct plot. If gardeners are unsure of their plot number, they should contact the Park District before planting. The Park District is not responsible for costs incurred for replanting.
- The Park District will maintain the areas surrounding the garden site. Plots are not to extend beyond the plot boundary lines.
- Park District will till the soil once prior to the beginning of the season, provided the plot has not already been fenced in. Gardeners may need to rototill or turn the soil just prior to planting. Tilling will take place in late April, early May depending on the weather.
- Gardeners are expected to weed and maintain their plot throughout the season until closing on November 1. Trash receptacles are provided, do not leave debris or weeds in the aisles. The trash receptacle and compost area are to be used for garden waste only, and are not to be used for yard waste from home.
- If weeds exceed 12" on more than a third of your plot for longer than 7 days, or if you have extended your plot beyond the plot boundary lines, you will be contacted by the Park District. Gardeners will have one week from the date of notification to take appropriate action before the plot is mowed. Gardeners are expected to make arrangements to maintain their plots during any extended absences.
- If gardeners fail to maintain their plot, the Park District will assume maintenance. Gardeners will then forfeit their registration privilege for the next year.
- 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.

GARDENER RULES

- All gardening activities must be contained within the plot boundaries as delineated by the Park District.
- Gardeners may begin preparing their plot for planting on May 1. Planting must begin by June 1st, Plots that are not planted on June 1st will be taken back by the Park District, and re-rented (no refunds). Plot should be cleaned up by November 1. For a successful fall clean-up, please clear the plot of weeds, plants, weed blanket fabric, tomato cages, garbage, debris, fencing, gardening tools and accessories.
- Any stakes and markers installed by the Park District designating the boundaries of the plots must not be removed at any time.
- Plots must be neatly maintained up to the boundaries May 1 through October 31.
- All non-biodegradable trash must be placed in garbage cans. Garden waste or weeds shall be placed in the designated compost area.
- Water is provided. Water is suitable for garden watering but is non-potable. Do NOT drink the water. The park district will put a hose out by June 1st for watering. You can also bring your own bucket to fill up from the water spicket.
- Fences must be removed by November 1, unless you have already reserved your plot for the next year. Fence height can be no more than 6 feet.
- Poured concrete or limestone screening cannot be used to anchor fence posts or other structures. Gardeners may not dig channels or create berms outside of their plots.
- Pets are not allowed inside the plot area.

- Plot renters that do not plant, maintain, or properly remove debris from plots will lose subsequent years' rental privileges, and may be assessed a clean-up fine.
- Proper attire, including shirts and shoes, must be worn at all times.

OTHER INFORMATION

Plots

- There is a limit of 2 plots per gardener. Previous plot renters will be grandfathered in as of 10/24/2024. If there are plots available after June 1st, renters can purchase additional plots but will be limited to their 2 original plots for the following year.
- All current garden plot renters will be contacted via email to reserve their plot for the following year. If the plot is not claimed by January 1st of the start of the year, those plots will be forfeited and cleaned up to be rented out.

Parking

Limited parking will be available at the garden plots site. Additional parking is available in the Splash Pad/Dog Park parking lot.

Water

There are two water spigots. Water is suitable for garden watering but is non-potable. Do NOT drink the water. Water cannot be misused. Do not allow the water to run unattended. Water is for garden use only. Washing of cars or other non-garden related activities are prohibited.

Mulch

- Mulches such as wood chips, stone, carpet, sludge, and artificial turf are prohibited.
- Acceptable mulch includes: alfalfa, buckwheat hulls, corrugated cardboard, garden residue, grain hulls, hay, lawn clippings, leaves, or shredded newspapers.
- Any mulch brought in must be spread on the plot within 24 hours. Renters are responsible for clean-up of the driveway and drop area.
- Mulch may not encroach on neighboring plots. The Park District reserves the right to remove mulch material from gardeners who do not comply with the mulch policy, and assess a \$150 clean up fee.

Access

- Plots are open for gardening during daylight hours.
- Park District reserves the right to access the plots to inspect and evaluate whether gardeners are in compliance with Garden Plot policies.
- Gardeners may bring their own tools into the plots, tools may not be stored on site.

Compliance

- There are no pets allowed in the garden plot area.
- No tobacco use (chewing or smoking)
- No alcohol or illegal drugs
- No illegal plants
- No fires or cooking
- No bird feeders
- No sales – garden is for personal, noncommercial use only. Gardeners may not sell produce or flowers grown in the garden.

- No firearms
- Children should not be left unattended in the garden plot area.

