

WHY SWEEP?

WHY SWEEP AT ALL?

Is Sweeping Simply A Luxury?

There are many reasons that regular, frequent and thorough street sweeping is worth much more than simply aesthetics. Below is a list of 10 reasons to justify the relatively minimal expense of street sweeping. They are listed in what should be priority order (one being highest).

1. Reduces debris in storm drains & sewers:

The EPA has concluded that runoff from streets is a significant contributor to underground water contamination and pollution in general. Unless removed, all debris on streets and in gutters eventually make it to either the storm drain system and out to sea (and onto our beaches) or into the sewer system.

Frequent sweeping:

- a. reduces pollution
- b. minimizes localized flooding from clogged storm drains
- c. reduces the frequency of catch basin pumping
- d. reduces sewer system loading, especially during heavy rains

2. Increases Asphalt Life:

Gravel and glass ground into the street by traffic hastens the crumbling or unraveling of the asphalt. A single piece of gravel driven over by a car is pushed into the asphalt thus dislodging another piece of gravel. How there are two pieces for the next car. Then four, then eight, and so on.

Sweeping can decrease the frequency of expensive resurfacing and very expensive repaving.

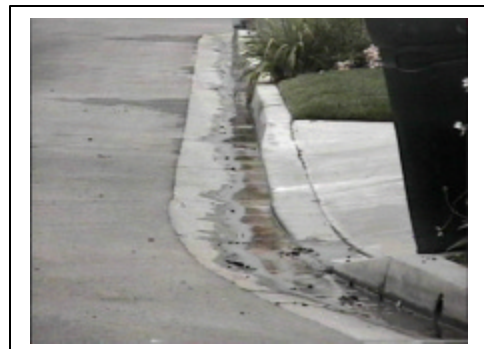
3. Sanitation:

Though seldom a visible problem in our private communities, trash, garbage and rotting vegetation in the gutters and corners can be a health issue. Kids play in and pick up all sorts of objects. (In fact, you probably don't want to know the types of things that we pick up in our sweepers.)

Though not obvious on the surface, rats and other vermin are attracted to accumulating debris, especially in catch basins. Also mosquitoes love the standing water caused by debris laying in the gutters.

4. Aesthetics, good looks and general appearance:

This is many times the first and sometimes only reason people will list. This narrow view can lead to penny wise, but dollar foolish decisions regarding sweeping and pavement maintenance.



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5. Reduces Liability and injury:

Small objects have been known to cause trips and falls. Slippery slime, the result of standing water in the gutters, can also be a hazard. While sweeping can no way eliminate these potential hazards (even if swept daily) a regular and frequent schedule does show due diligence and can reduce the chance of being charged with negligence.

If your kids play ball in the street, regular sweeping may impact your annual band-aid consumption by reducing the slips, falls, scraped knees and elbows. (And don't forget the torn jeans.)

6. Reduces debris tracking into garages and homes:

“Johnny, wipe your feet!!!” Sounds familiar? Sometimes it would be nice to also wipe your cars feet before tracking the dirt into the garage. Sweeping can be the next best thing to a car size door mat.

Shopping mall operators have long realized the impact that tracked-in dirt has on reducing the life of carpet and tiles.

7. Trash breeds trash, clean areas stay cleaner:

A study by the Human Resources Institute found that “people had little or no objection to discarding litter in dirty or littered areas” “They also tended to litter where others are responsible for cleaning up.” “It appears that once litter accumulates a reduction in civic pride follows.” (as if we needed another study to document the obvious)



8. Reduces crime:

This may be stretching it a bit, however clean, well maintained communities do tend to have less graffiti and vandalism. This is a classic example of “What came first, the chicken or the egg?”

9. Increased Property Values:

What impression do potential buyers have when driving thru your community? Is the new paint and beautiful landscaping spoiled by the “Yuck” in the gutters? Can potential buyers feel and hear the grit under their tires as they drive through looking for a new home?

10. Quality of Life:

This is a intangible that is hard to put a value on. How do you feel when you take a walk in your neighborhood or just go the mail box? Does your street add to or take away from the enjoyment of relaxing in the front yard?

After paying top dollar for housing in Southern California, how does your street impact the enjoyment of your investment?

Regular, frequent and thorough street sweeping plays an important part in maintaining one of an associations major investments, the streets.

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