

## Nelson Gardens landfill to close system Tuesday

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The era of cleaning out closets and garages to stash the trash at the Nelson Gardens municipal landfill is coming to an end.

City officials issued a notice Friday the municipal facility is to close at 6 p.m. Tuesday in preparation for work that must be done to meet state requirements for ceasing operations.

That means people who spend their weekends sprucing up their homes have only this weekend to take their discards to the city-operated landfill.

City Council officially voted Tuesday to close Nelson Gardens by Oct. 9 to avoid an estimated \$10 million in environmental work that would have been required to keep the facility open after that date.

The decision to shut it down was made informally by the council Sept. 2 when the Texas Natural Resource Commission, formerly known as the Texas Water Commission, appeared unlikely to grant a permit to extend operations of Nelson Gardens for three more years.

A spokeswoman for the city said Nelson Gardens will be open from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and from 6 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Sunday.

A 75-cent fee is charged for a load of material hauled in a pickup as long as the load doesn't exceed 7,000 pounds, she said. Once the landfill closes, city crews will continue to collect residential and commercial waste, but will deposit it at the Tessman Road landfill operated by Browning-Ferris Industries under an existing contract.

A Browning-Ferris spokesman said individual residents can drop off truckloads of trash at that eastern Bexar County landfill or at a smaller facility at 440 Pinn Road. The Pinn Road landfill only accepts construction materials and brush at costs ranging from \$13.50 to \$18. Fees at the Tessman Road landfill depend upon the size of truck and amount of material to be dumped.

Next week, the council is expected to contract with one or more private firms to provide landfill space for a five-year period while the city searches for a 2,000-acre regional landfill site.

The city Public Works Department is negotiating with BFI, Waste Management Inc. and Texas Disposal Systems of Austin.

The contracts were to have been awarded Thursday, but action was postponed in an effort to obtain the lowest rate possible, officials said.

City Manager Alex Briseno had proposed a 75-cent increase in the current residential garbage fee of \$8.99 to offset costs associated with expanding the curbside recycling program and buying a regional landfill site.

But that increase could double, to \$1.49, because of the new direction to contract with the private sector, officials have said.

Exact prices will be known when the contracts are unveiled Wednesday.

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