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Department of Public Works

BUREAU OF STREET-USE & MAPPING

875 Stevenson Street, Room 460, S.F., CA 94103

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DPW Order No: 179,231

ESTABLISHING GUIDELINES FOR THE PLACEMENT OF SIDEWALK LANDSCAPE CONTAINERS ON THE SIDEWALK THAT ARE LESS THAN 36 INCHES IN HEIGHT

I. PURPOSE:

In order to beautify the City's streetscape residents, business owners, and property owners will often place containers for plants on the sidewalk. Although this DPW Order provides guidelines for above-ground containers, the Department encourages owners to consider applying for a sidewalk landscaping permit, which allows for planting areas rather than concrete, providing storm water benefits, and require less water than above ground planters. Although large containers or containers that are permanently affixed to the sidewalk require a permit as described in Article 15 or 16 of the Public Works Code, smaller containers that are well maintained may not require a permit. This DPW Order provides details on said guidelines.

II. DEFINITIONS:

A. A sidewalk landscape container is any container, less than 36 inches in height and width, that is placed on the sidewalk for the purpose of growing plants. .

B. Prohibited sidewalk landscape container plants include those plants considered to be poisonous and recognized as having thorns or sharp points.

C. San Francisco's Better Streets Plan (2009 –pg. 98) describes the area most used by pedestrians as the "Throughway Zone"


III. GUIDELINES for the Placement of Sidewalk Landscape Containers:

A. Placement on the Sidewalk –

1. The placement of the container on the sidewalk must not create a throughway zone that is less than 72 inches
2. The container must be at least 24 inches from the outside edge of the sidewalk curb
3. Multiple containers placed parallel to the curb must provide one unobstructed clear path of travel, 4 feet in width, every 20 feet. The path of travel shall ensure that pedestrians can walk from the curb to the "Throughway Zone".
4. Containers may not be placed on sidewalks with slopes greater than 8.33%. As a reference, an 8.33% slope is typically found on a curb ramp.
5. Containers may not be placed on top of sub-sidewalk basements, utility boxes; sewer vents or within 5 feet of any vertical sidewalk structures such as utility poles, parking meters, or fire hydrants.
6. Containers may not be placed within Bus Zones, nor adjacent to the curb within Blue

or Red Zones. Containers may be placed in a Blue or Red Zone next to the property line if the sidewalk is greater than 9 feet in width.

B. Maintenance - The property owner is responsible for maintaining the sidewalk in a condition that is safe to pedestrians and vehicles and free of litter and unsightly weeds.

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3/31/2011

X 

Signed by Sanguinetti, Jerry [View details](#)
on Thursday, March 31, 2011 11:09 AM (Pacific Daylight Time)

3/31/2011

X **Fuad Sweiss, City Engineer**

Signed by Sweiss, Fuad [View details](#)
on Thursday, March 31, 2011 11:50 AM (Pacific Daylight Time)

3/31/2011

X **Edward D. Reiskin**

Signed by Reiskin, Ed [View details](#)
on Thursday, March 31, 2011 4:02 PM (Pacific Daylight Time)