



**CITY OF KIRKLAND**

**Department of Public Works**

**123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033 425.587.3800**

**[www.ci.kirkland.wa.us](http://www.ci.kirkland.wa.us)**

---

**To:** Dave Ramsay, City Manager

**From:** Daryl Grigsby, Public Works Director

**Date:** January 8, 2006

**Subject:** E-MAIL FROM ROBERT L. STYLE CONCERNING SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE

**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council authorize the Mayor to sign a letter of response to Mr. Style, who emailed concerning surface water drainage.

**BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:**

The City received an email from citizen Robert Style regarding his concerns with the frequency and timing of street cleaning. The response contains information about the City's street cleaning program as well as pertinent facts about the severity and intensity of the storm. It also thanks him for his efforts in helping to clean drain grates during the storm.

## Janet Jonson

---

**From:** RLSTYLE@aol.com  
**Sent:** Monday, December 18, 2006 9:56 AM  
**To:** KirklandCouncil  
**Subject:** Surface water drainage

12/18/06

Councilmembers:

Something that took place in the latest storm brings up the following question, Why weren't the leaves cleaned up off the streets before the storm rather than during the storm?

On Thursday at 1:00 PM, I personally went out used a rake to clean out 6 storm drains on Lake Washington Blvd. The drains on the East side were plugged and the water was coming across the street to west. The gutters on the West side were also plugged so I had to clean out both sides of the street. I was successful but only for a period of time. I don't understand why the drain in front of Marsh Park had tarpaper blocking the drainage. It was probably left there after Verizon finished their installations. That was a mistake, but it was only one drain.

By sunset, the 6 drains were plugged again, the water was coming across the street, over the sidewalk, and running down to my basement before it went out to the lake. I'm still assessing the damage.

I had to leave at 4:55 P.M. but before I left, I successfully cleared the drain in front of the house. At that point it was the only functional drain. I stayed with it for 15 minutes. The water on both sides of the street was draining down my drain. The other 5 drains were not functioning.

When I returned about an hour later, someone, I assume the city, had cleared three drains on the West side of the street from leaves. They did not clear east side. If they could clear the leaves during the storm, how come they couldn't do it before the rain came?

For two weeks before the storm hit, the big leaves from the cottonwood in the park accumulated without the city sweeping or picking them up off the road. It was a disaster waiting to happen. Granted the leaves were wet prior to the storm but they were also wet when they finally cleared the drains.

That leads me to the next point. We pay our Public Works Director a lot of money to make the correct decisions. He didn't do it. The cottonwood in Marsh Park is a chronic ongoing problem. Street sweeping/cleaning should be done at least once a week and more often given the weather forecast. Not to do so is unacceptable.

Sincerely,

Robert L. Style  
6735 Lake Washington Blvd, NE  
Kirkland, WA 98033  
425-827-0216

12/18/2006

January 16, 2007

Robert L. Style  
6735 Lake Washington Boulevard NE  
Kirkland, Washington 98033

**DRAFT**

Dear Mr. Style:

Thank you for your letter of December 18<sup>th</sup> regarding the storm event of December 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. We appreciate your efforts described in your letter to clean the storm drains near your residence. We have also heard of other residents who took it upon themselves to clear storm drains as well. Your work was very helpful in mitigating impacts of the rainfall on the night of December 14.

The City of Kirkland's street sweeping program employs two air-sweepers to clean city streets. Under typical conditions, from January to May, the sweepers are cleaning primarily dirt and normal road debris. During this period we are able clean the entire city on the average of one and one-half times per month. When road activity increases in spring and summer, and leaf season begins in the fall, we are able to clean up to 75% of the city each month. The primary reason for the reduction in total streets cleaning is the increase in debris quantity. In addition, weather conditions this year, beyond the storm of December 14-15, resulted in dramatic increase in total debris and leaves collected by our sweepers. For example, we normally collect three to five yards of material every day during the January to May time frame. This increases somewhat in the summer, and by fall we collect 25-40 yards per day. During this fall season we have been collecting 60-70 yards per day.

Our goal is to clean every street approximately 11 times per year, or a little less than once per month. Over the past several years we have been able to sustain that service level. During the fall season the higher collection volumes result in fewer miles of street cleaned per day. We do, however, supplement the sweepers during heavy leaf seasons by utilizing a dump truck and backhoe to assist the sweepers on occasion.

In this particular storm, the intensity of the storm washed more debris than normal onto the streets and gutters of the city. Rainfall data from Seatac Airport showed we received 1.76 inches of rain in 67 minutes. Within those 67 minutes was 11 minutes when 0.61 inches fell. Over a 24-hour period Kirkland received 3.93 inches of rain. That extraordinary level of rainfall washed more debris into the street and overwhelmed the capacity of the surface water drainage system. This was true for Kirkland as well as those facilities managed by Washington State Department of Transportation, King County Metro sewer system, and other municipalities.

Given the intensity of the storm, we again appreciate you for helping to alleviate impacts from the storm by cleaning grates and gutters. You can be assured we are emphasizing our ongoing street cleaning efforts. Finally, we will be conducting a review to determine what we learned from this experience, and how we can better prepare and respond to situations like that of December 14-15.

Sincerely,

KIRKLAND CITY COUNCIL

James L. Lauinger, Mayor

Cc: Daryl Grigsby, Public Works Director