

# Buzz in the Zoo: Grow Wild For Pollinators

## Pollinator-Friendly Lawn Management



*Buzz in the Zoo* is a summer long initiative to support Michigan's native and migrating pollinators. Building on last year's No Mow May, the City will once again ***relax it's Tall Grass/Weed Ordinance during the month of May.***

Not mowing for a few weeks is a simple step in helping the local ecosystem, though it is only part of the solution. It acts as a starting point for moving toward ***increasing native habitats throughout the urban landscape.***

### May 1st, 2025 – May 31st, 2025

By letting lawns grow undisturbed, we ***give pollinators food and habitat in the early part of the growing season.*** In early spring, floral resources may be hard to find, especially in urban and suburban landscapes. By allowing lawns to grow longer and letting flowers like dandelions and clover bloom, ***nectar and pollen become more available to help pollinators thrive.***

When participating in *Buzz in the Zoo*, you will be ***exempt from the Tall Grass/Weeds Nuisance Violation Notice for the month of May, as long as the following areas are kept managed:***

- The entire curb lawn between the street and the sidewalk (if there is no curb lawn at your home, then at least five feet from the edge of the road)
- At least one mower width on the private property (house or lot) side of the public sidewalk
- At least one mower width on any walkway or approach to the front porch
- At least three feet at neighboring property lines

These rules help ensure that everyone, especially pedestrians, can ***safely use sidewalks and public spaces.***

# June 1st 2025 – September 1st, 2025

What happens after May?

***On June 1st 2025, the Tall Grass/Weed Ordinance Notice will be reinstated***, meaning properties with ***grass over 8 inches in height may receive a violation notice***. However, pollinators don't disappear on June 1st. They still need support throughout the summer!

You can still take part in ***Buzz in the Zoo*** and stay within ordinance guidelines by ***reducing your mowing frequency***.

Here's how:

## Mowing Guidelines

- Let your grass grow ***up to 6 inches*** before cutting
- Set your ***lawnmower height to 3.5-4 inches***

This keeps roots strong, allows flowering plants to bloom, and gives pollinators more time to enjoy food and shelter before the next mow

## Plant Native Species

- Learn more about specific native plants for our region, and ***get recommendations for your needs***:
  - *Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones*
  - *Michigan State University Extension*
- Check out our webpage for links to these resources

## Keep the Buzz Going: Leave the Leaves!

Even after ***Buzz in the Zoo*** wraps up, you can keep supporting pollinators by doing less yard work!

### Leave the Leaves

Butterflies, bees, and other insects rely on leaves, plant stems, and brush piles for winter shelter. Instead of bagging everything, leave some in garden beds or create a small brush pile for habitat.

### City Pickup & Composting

Public Service will continue to collect leaves, which will be composted. If you leave your leaves in place, be sure to check and clear storm drains near your home to help reduce the risk of flooding.



Questions? Contact:  311  311@kalamazoocity.org