

# The Gardens Network: Planning Your Community Garden Year

Rev 2.28.2015

Suggested activities for Garden Leaders throughout the year:

## January- February

### ***Pre-season planning meetings***

- Review last season.
- Verify that all garden leadership positions are filled; recruit needed volunteers.
- Assign tasks to prepare for upcoming season.
- Set dates: Registration, Opening Day, Planting Date, work days, Closing day.
- Set garden social/educational events and contact possible facilitators, e.g., MGVs.
- Review Welcome Packet; make changes as needed.
- If necessary, make plans for special building projects or expansion.
- Plan outreach activities for new and returning gardeners (if needed), e.g., postcards, calls, emails, Facebook.
- Update waiting list.

Share your garden calendar updates with the Gardens Network (contact [danecountycommunitygardens@gmail.com](mailto:danecountycommunitygardens@gmail.com)).

## March-April

### ***Registration Event(s)***

- Contact new and returning gardeners.
- Mail notice of Registration Day (one month prior) to returning gardeners, new gardeners and wait listed gardeners.
- Prepare for Registration Day.
- Hold Registration Day.
- Update garden contact list.
- Contact Master Gardener Volunteers to help support your garden.
- Call Water Utility if your garden uses fire hydrant for water supply.
- Meet with Garden Leadership Team; most gardens hold monthly meetings.
- Order hay/straw (if needed).
- Submit demographics forms to the Garden Network (contact CGW)

## April-May

### ***Garden Opening***

- Prepare for opening day (buy supplies, send reminders).
- Opening Day! And Rain date...
- Meet monthly with Garden Leadership Team.

## May

### ***Spring Water Maintenance***

- Turn on water May 1 or later (pipes can freeze – respect weather).
- Set up hoses, water barrels, etc.
- Meet with Garden Leadership Team.

## **June, July, August**

### ***Growing Season***

- Ensure gardens are planted (reassign plots if needed). Many gardens use June 1<sup>st</sup> as their "plant by" date.
- Hold regularly scheduled work days to build community and maintain common areas of garden; most gardens hold monthly work days.
- Host social events at your garden.
- Offer educational events at your garden, e.g., gardening skills, cooking skills, theft control, etc. Provide interpreters for non-English speakers.
- Monitor weeds in plots and common areas. Contact gardeners with weedy plots and offer advice, support, ideas. Issue warnings if necessary (may need to reassign plot).
- Meet monthly with Garden Leadership Team.

## **September**

### ***Fall Water Maintenance***

- Turn off Water by September 30:
  - For hydrants, call Water Utility and return key
  - For other systems, turn off water and train 1-2 others about process.
- Meet with Garden Leadership Team.

## **October**

### ***Closing Day***

- Send postcards, emails, texts (or calls) and post reminder of Closing Day.
- Prepare for Closing Day: tools, trash bags, etc. as needed.
- Hold Closing Day: remove all garden debris, store tools, clean common spaces.
- Meet with Garden Leadership Team.

## **November-December**

### ***End of Season Events***

- Hold post-season review meeting with leadership team.
- Identify non-returning gardeners.
- Hold Harvest Gathering (potluck) to celebrate season's bounty.
- Recruit garden leadership for next year and recognize current volunteers!
- Schedule garden leadership team meetings for pre-season (Winter) planning.