The Gardens Network: Planning Your Community Garden Year

*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 gardens@communitygroundworks.org).

**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** demographic 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 1st 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.