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Street sweeping on Beacon Hill to be extended by 2 months each year starting in 2013

Posted by Matt Rocheleau November 26, 2012 05:00 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

Starting in 2013, Beacon Hill will become the third neighborhood in Boston to join an initiative in which street sweeping is extended by two months each year, city officials said.

The city's [Winter Street Sweeping program](#) runs for 10 months from the start of March through the end of December. It was first introduced in the North End in 2010 and expanded to the [South End](#) during 2012.

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In all other Boston neighborhoods, [street sweeping](#) runs for eight months from the start of April through the end of November. Cleaning the streets involves parking restrictions that, if not followed, can lead to vehicles being ticketed and towed.

The only neighborhoods that will see sweeping this December will be the North End and South End. But, those two neighborhoods will have added company in March 2013, when Beacon Hill joins the

initiative, John Guilfoil, a spokesman for Mayor Thomas M. Menino, said in an e-mail Monday.

He said crews will work throughout this winter to change signs along streets in Beacon Hill to reflect the change.

When wintertime street sweeping was introduced in the North End, protests caused city officials to [suspend their original plan](#) to try street sweeping year-round.

City officials have said previously that the additional months of street sweeping do not come at an added cost because the program is worked into the public works department's existing operations.

In recent years, the city has spent about \$4.5-million annually on street sweeping – one component of a yearly budget that hovers around \$16 million to pay to keep public ways clear of debris, including snow.

Three other neighborhoods – Dorchester, Jamaica Plain and Mission Hill – will also see some changes in the spring that city officials say will better align street sweeping schedules with trash collection.

Those changes will be communicated to residents and drivers through various neighborhood groups and flyers that will be posted at the start of next year's street sweeping season, Guilfoil said.

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Changes will only be made to the timing of street cleaning, not to trash pickup, public works officials have said. Similar rescheduling was implemented in several other city neighborhoods last year.

The city said the changes are designed to create better coordination with the trash collection program, which the city contracts out to remove and dispose of approximately 260,000 tons of solid waste and 45,000 tons of recycling annually.

Of the city's 800 miles of roadway, about 500 miles belong to a scheduled street sweeping program designated by posted signs.

Residents can sign up for the city's "No-Tow" automated alert system, which sends users reminders – via a text message, phone call or e-mail – about moving their vehicles the night before their street is swept.

Any car that is not moved during posted hours when street sweeping is scheduled is subject to receiving a ticket, which costs \$40 and is administered by the city, and being towed, which is done by private companies and generally costs an additional \$100 to \$150.

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