



North East Independent School District

Facility Maintenance and Operations

"Maintaining a Tradition of Excellence"

Community Garden Guidelines

This guide does not replace School Nutrition's "School Garden Toolkit" which is an essential tool for starting a school garden.

Introduction

School district facilities represent a significant public investment as well as safe and effective places for education. Any work, which constitutes a modification, addition or improvement to school property will require approval and oversight from various NEISD Departments such as Facility Maintenance, Engineering, Safety and Construction Management. The approval process may extend to every phase of the project and requires the final approval of the Associate Superintendent for Operations.

Facility Maintenance and/or Engineering provides project review, approval, and consultation at no charge to the campus. Funding may be required if maintenance technicians provide additional labor and/or materials. Any campus work will require an estimate and a transfer of funds, approved by a campus administrator, before the work is scheduled.

The Garden is NOT a District or Facility Maintenance responsibility:

The sponsor/campus *must* take responsibility for maintaining the common areas of the garden such as:

Tool sheds

Trees, flower beds and lawn

Pathways and courtyards

Trash containment areas

Street fronts and sidewalks

Garden Site Planning

Project Requirements:

Each project must have a school faculty member identified as the sponsor. The sponsor will be responsible for submitting the required documentation to campus administration. The campus administrator must enter this description and other pertinent information on a NEISD Work Order.

You may use the [Coordinated Project Approval Form](#) for informing the departments about their project. The form is located on the Safety Website under the Safety Coordinators and Fire Drill Coordinators page in the **downloadable forms** section.

If the project is structural or modifies any building systems, the administrator must contact the NEISD Engineering Department and Facility Maintenance and provide a drawing showing the project's location on the school site and the intended area where the work will occur on the site

Planning Considerations

When choosing the site for your garden, there are many considerations, including:

Adequate Space Sun exposure Water Drainage Water access
Level ground/not sloped too much Water run-off is away from school buildings

Shade Structures: Must contact Construction Management for guidelines

Sheds: (required for tools if garden access will occur outside of school hours)
Must be coordinated through Facility Maintenance.

Water: Any plumbing or electrical work may require a permit and must be performed by district plumbers and electricians. The campus administrator must submit a work order through the NEISD Work Order system. Before digging, it is imperative that utility easements be identified through the Facility Maintenance Department to avoid serious injury and damaging water lines, gas lines, sprinkler heads, underground cabling, etc.

Raised beds must be *at least* 15 feet from building foundations.

Initial site preparation:

Prior to construction/planting – Obtain final approval from Executive Director of Facility Maintenance and Operations

Campus administrator inputs Work order to have Facility Maintenance locate utilities and give estimate for relocate or reconfigure irrigation lines.

- School to appoint sponsor who will monitor and be responsible for garden condition.
- Maximum plot size 10' x 15'.
- Raise plot above grade using untreated cedar timbers.
- Provide and place topsoil, supplemented as required.
- During growing season maintain plot by removing dead material, weeds, selective pruning, etc.
- At the end of planting season, remove dead plant material off-site.
- Facility Maintenance will advise sponsor when irrigation will be activated and deactivated.
- **Should the plot or garden be abandoned or vacated the school shall be responsible for the cost of reclamation and restoration.**

Prohibited items and materials:

Railroad ties.

Pig, dog and cat manures, and ALL untreated manures are prohibited

Non-Organic fertilizer

Tires

Scrap metals, plastics and broken bricks and pavers

The application of herbicides (weed killers) and insecticides (bug killers) to the garden plots is prohibited by law.