

MALL CONCOURSE – TOM SKAIFE, SUPERVISOR; LAURA BAUER, LEADSWORKER

After this past summer of hot and dry weather we're seeing a lot of leaves fall early. This week we'll be putting our leaf collection apparatus onto our usual recycling truck, and we'll be switching into leaf collection mode. We expect to be collecting leaves at least through the end of the month, depending largely on what happens with the oak leaves from the Capitol lawn.

Fall banners were installed the week of September 17th. The crew always gets comments as they're working on the changeover, and while everyone appreciates the effort, the fall comments tend to be tinged with dread of the winter.

We've also completed aerating the majority of our lawn areas, including Peace Park and the grass planters around the Square. Thin or damaged areas were also overseeded. We're hopeful that this stepped-up turf maintenance program will result in healthier and more appealing grass.

The new planting program, in cooperation with the Business Improvement District, has largely been a success this year. The plants selected by Olbrich Gardens staff and planted with the help of the BID contractor have thrived in the State Street beds. They look great, and the only problems we've seen are in areas of constant pedestrian occupation, where they tend to mix with a heavy percentage of cigarette butts and look a little trampled. The plantings intermixed in the Capitol Square beds have not fared as well, perhaps as a result of the beds not having irrigation installed.

The Taste of Madison was held on September 1st and 2nd. We continue to see some damage to turf and unnecessary soiling of our sidewalk areas from cooking grease, but I believe that the situation is improving. We expect that with the cooperation of the Street Use Staff Commission and the Madison Festivals organizers, the remaining problem areas can be addressed.