

July 25, 2007

Mayor Bell and Common Council Members  
7525 West Greenfield Avenue  
West Allis, WI 53214

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

As many of you may have heard, on Monday June 18, 2007, one of the Department's refuse packer trucks was involved in an accident that resulted in substantial damage to the eleven-year-old vehicle. The accident occurred as a result of a brake failure when the vehicle was traveling on Cleveland Ave. at a speed of approximately 30 miles per hour. The driver, recognizing his inability to stop the vehicle and the danger of slamming into one or more vehicles in front of him, made a high speed turn onto S. 112 St. which, as a result of the speed, resulted in the truck tipping on its side.

While the driver's courageous maneuver most likely spared considerable damage to other vehicles and injury to the vehicle's occupants, the truck, as noted, sustained substantial damage. Due to its eleven-year age, the cost of repairing the vehicle would be far in excess of its current value.

Unfortunately, the vehicle was not scheduled for replacement until 2010, typical of the thirteen to fifteen year life expectancy we attempt to get from our refuse packers. The loss of the vehicle has created a shortage in our thirteen-vehicle refuse packer fleet that needs to be filled as quickly as possible. With a potential delivery time of six months from the placement of the order, it is critical that we minimize our exposure as a result of this loss and secure bids on a new refuse packer as soon as possible.

A new refuse packer will cost approximately \$155,000. The Department recognizes its responsibility to come up with the necessary funds rather than simply requesting a transfer of money from the Contingency Fund to cover the loss. Working with the Department's Fleet Superintendent, we have determined that delaying the acquisition of certain equipment in next year's budget and allocating those dollars to the purchase of the new packer is a workable, although admittedly, not necessarily desirable solution. To this end, we have budgeted \$54,000 in the 2008 budget for the purchase of this vehicle. The balance (\$101,000) of the funding will come from DNR Recycling Efficiency Grant funds that the Department has received (\$66,000) and is expected to receive (\$35,000) in 2008.

However, as noted above, given the lead time necessary to get this new truck on the street, the Department of Public Works respectfully requests permission to have \$89,000 transferred from the City's Contingency fund to the Department's Equipment acquisition fund. The money will be paid back to the contingency fund in 2008 from budgeted funds and the referenced REI grant.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael F. Pertmer  
Director of Public Works

cc: Gordon Paprocki, John Krzyzaniak, Gary Schmid, Paul Ziehler