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Ald. Bob Donovan
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Trash-Strewn Alleys & Gutters, Recyclables Not Getting Picked Up: What's Going On?

Ald. Donovan Calls Condition of Some City Neighborhoods "Deplorable"

Melting snow and ice have helped make trash and debris increasingly visible in many areas of Milwaukee, and the problem is being made worse by overflowing recycling carts, Ald. Bob Donovan said today.

Ald. Donovan, who represents the densely populated 8th Aldermanic District on the city's near south side, said his office has been inundated by residents calling about litter and debris – and wondering when city crews will be coming to empty their blue recycling carts. "Not only are Milwaukee's streets dangerous, but they're filthy as well," said the alderman.

"I have never seen conditions this bad before – it's absolutely deplorable," he said. "It's sad because I don't think this should ever be allowed to happen."

City Sanitation crews are responsible for monthly collection of recyclables, but the Department of Public Works is having a difficult time managing the collection operation, Ald. Donovan said, noting that DPW is directly controlled by the mayor via a cabinet-level appointment of the DPW commissioner.

"This administration seems completely unable to keep our streets clean and despite people's good efforts to recycle, the city can't seem to find the bodies needed to pick up the recyclables," he said. "I know people are having the same (recyclables) problem across all areas of the city, and it's simply inexcusable."

Ald. Donovan said he's toured most of his district in recent days to see the conditions firsthand. He said unless city crews get to work with street sweeping efforts and regular collection of recyclables, the lion's share of the cleanup effort may eventually fall to neighborhood residents and block clubs. "I'm afraid spring cleanups this year will be real eye-openers for many residents," he said.