

1312 Scheffer Ave
St. Paul, MN 55116

6-15-2026

To whom it may concern:

On Friday 6-12-2026 I received a notice from the Department of Safety and Inspection to cut tall grass and/or weeds in my yard due to a complaint. I immediately called the DSI to ensure city crews would not waste resources addressing the notice. I have spent many hours and hundreds of dollars converting the boulevard to a pollinator garden filled primarily with native species of grass and wildflowers. Each year I have converted more and more of the lawn to over 50 species of garden plants (fruit and vegetables), native species, and non-invasive plants that support birds, bees, and butterflies. Each year I spend countless hours removing weeds (dandelions) and invasive species (purple bell flowers) from my yard, boulevard, and the green areas near the alleyway.

Some grasses are decorative and planted deliberately. Grass also grows between the flowers and plants in places so there is tall grass in my yard but it is not unkempt. I maintain a path for the letter carrier, I regularly check that the sidewalks are clear and that there are no dead or swampy areas. I'm aware of the height restrictions for plants in the boulevard and near the alley and regularly trim to ensure compliance with safety requirements. If/when the tall grass dries out I trim as necessary to ensure it does not become a fire hazard.

I have carefully maintained the yard in the same manner for the past three years. This is the first time I have received a complaint. Unfortunately, I suspect the complaint is retaliation from a neighbor that was caught spraying herbicide in my yard. As a research scientist, I am aware that synthetic herbicides are neurotoxic (often the same chemicals we give to mice to make Alzheimer's and Parkinson's models). I was upset they were used on my property without my permission as such a violation is a significant health issue. I grow food in my yard and my two children play in this space. I never directly expressed my displeasure with the neighbor but believe they overheard me answering my children's questions about it while we were playing outdoors in the yard. Within days of the discussion I had with my children, I received the notice regarding grass removal. I regret that further petty behavior is likely wasting the city and my resources to address this issue.

As a single parent with minimal disposable income I do not want the city to come at my expense and mow down all my hard work. Nor is it in the best interest of the city to destroy the space I have cultivated for birds, bees, and butterflies. If there is truly a health/safety concern to some well maintained tall grass, I have the knowledge and the patience to carefully trim the grass to 8" without harming the native plants and will comply with that order should it become necessary. I own the necessary equipment and am physically capable of mowing/trimming my own yard. I don't maintain the 8" requirement at present because I enjoy the natural appearance of the grass, it's a haven for local wildlife, and without any known health or safety concerns I have better ways to spend my limited free time than maintaining an arbitrary grass height between plants and flowers distributed throughout the yard.

Thank you for your time,

The occupant at 1312 Scheffer Ave