

Street Cleaning in Vienna



City of  Vienna
Vienna is special.



Street cleaning workers

Vienna is one of the cleanest cities in the world. This success is enabled by sophisticated logistics and flexible working hours. The staff of the street cleaning division is active on Vienna's streets throughout the year – shovelling snow in winter, ensuring thorough spring cleaning, removing weeds in summer and sweeping leaves in autumn. The street network they are responsible for has a length of nearly 2,800 kilometres, which means that personnel deployment must be planned precisely while also optimising the combination of manual and mechanical work.

A clean city

Discussions about the future of our city are increasingly characterised by concern for the cityscape. The term "cityscape" assesses the urban fabric as a whole and evaluates many individual factors: broken benches, parks and playgrounds, graffiti on public toilets, vacant lots between buildings and construction sites, damaged road surfaces and, last but certainly not least, cleanliness. The cleanliness of a city contributes significantly to its inhabitants' and visitors' feeling of personal safety and hence to their overall quality of life. Municipal Department 48 (MA 48) not only combats littering very successfully with conventional measures such as the provi-

sion of a sufficient number of waste bins or street cleaning but also tries to tackle the problem with scientific methods. The phenomenon of littering is analysed in co-operation with German cities. The long-term goal lies in prevention and the implementation of promising measures. A study by the Humboldt University of Berlin concluded that the causes of littering are indifference, failure to notice waste bins, laziness and lack of interest in the environment.

Dog excrement, bulky waste and defaced waste bins are experienced as particularly irritating. This type of waste is especially unpopular when observed on or near playgrounds, footpaths and close to residential buildings.

Vienna Clean Streets Act, WasteWatchers

The Vienna Clean Streets Act took effect on 1 February 2008 and authorises the city's "WasteWatchers" to punish acts of littering and defacement of public streets and public green areas. With the coming into force of the Act, 30 surveillance organs took up their control function. In the course of the past few years, pre-existing control bodies and staff members of MA 48, MA 42 (Municipal Department 42

– Parks and Gardens) and Wiener Wohnen (municipal housing authority) were trained to enforce the Vienna Clean Streets Act. The control staff concentrates mainly on dog excrement left on the streets, illegally dumped bulky waste, abandoned shopping carts, cigarette butts and the springtime removal of grit spread on the streets in snowy winter months.



WasteWatchers

Vienna's WasteWatchers may levy an on-the-spot fine amounting to € 36.- and may also report offenders to the competent authority (Municipal Department 58 – Water Rights, fines up to € 2,000.-).

The success of the efforts to safeguard cleanliness is not only felt subjectively but manifests itself in impressive figures as well. Illegally dumped bulky waste decreased markedly over the past few years – this form of littering was reduced by over 30 percent,

i.e. from approx. 113,000 cubic metres in 2008 to 78,000 cubic metres in 2012. Before the launch of the "Clean City" campaign, more than 16,000 illegally abandoned shopping carts had to be removed in 2008; in 2012, their number had decreased to about 16,000. The number of refrigerators left behind on side-walks or in parks was even reduced to one third between 2008 and 2012 (from more than 1,800 in 2008 to 587 in 2012). Every day, approx. 47,200 pet waste bags are thrown into Vienna's waste bins.

cepts developed by the Advisory Board are to be implemented within the respective body's sphere of competence. By jointly defining problem areas, exchanging know-how and creating a fundamental understanding of the problems at hand among the Board's members, it is attempted to improve cleanliness and cleanliness standards in the Austrian federal capital.

Who is in charge of cleaning the streets?

MA 48 is tasked with street cleaning in Vienna, as prescribed by the City of Vienna in its distribution of competencies. Of course, there also exist statutory provisions and regulations on the extent of cleaning. These laws and regulations entail obligations outside the competencies of MA 48, e.g. the obligation to clean their stretch of sidewalk for frontage residents of buildings, obligations for owners of streets (private streets, Art. 53 Streets under the Vienna Building Code) and obligations of land owners (which also include those of MA 42 for its own parks).

How is street cleaning organised?

The street cleaning division of MA 48 is composed of management (in charge of executive functions, materials management, personnel, statistics and EDP) and operations. There are 12 sweeping districts,

Success of Clean City campaign

Waste reduction 2008 to 2012



Advisory Board on City Cleaning

The Advisory Board is composed of a number of enterprises and organisations authorised to clean public areas on behalf of the City of Vienna or concerned with competencies and tasks of city cleaning. The Advisory Board functions as an idea workshop and information platform for a clean Vienna. The con-

each comprising one, two or three political districts of Vienna. The sweeping districts are subdivided into 65 subsections. The night shift with three additional subsections and the sweeping force form sweeping districts 13 and 14. Each sweeping district is headed by a manager, who is supported in his task by supervisors in charge of the individual subsections. Depending on the workload at hand, the supervisors are responsible for a staff of 10 to 20 persons and, on three days per week, for workers paid by the hour (marginal employment). The areas to be maintained by each worker are shown on street sweeping maps. Moreover, the street cleaning division also provides on-duty emergency services (temporary repair of potholes, barriers for entire building façades), which are discharged in shifts around the clock and organised by a supervisor.

Services

Cleaning

The main tasks of the street cleaning division include the sweeping and washing of paved public surfaces such as traffic lanes, cycle ways, pedestrian zones and small green zones adjoining streets (tree grids and grass verges), weed control and the removal of illegally dumped bulky waste from

these surfaces. Vienna's main and secondary street network extends over approx. 2,800 kilometres, and the sidewalks to be maintained (including combined sidewalks/cycle ways), to roughly 320 kilometres; pedestrian zones cleaned by MA 48 cover an area of close to 300,000 square metres.

Events

Year after year, MA 48 handles the cleaning and co-ordination of waste disposal bins as well as other services at more than 700 events. The highlights of this work comprise the precisely planned and implemented cleaning operations after the Danube Island Festival, Vienna City Marathon and Rainbow Parade. At the latter, MA 48 is additionally very much present with its own, specially decorated vehicles.

Waste and litter bins

These are used for the collection of small waste items in the urban area and hence to keep traffic zones clean. At the moment, over 17,300 such bins with a great variety of designs (average capacity: 50 litres) are in service around Vienna. They are emptied between once a week and three times daily. Moreover, underfloor waste containers with a capacity of 600 litres are deployed in some shopping streets. According to one study, around 600

million cigarette butts are discarded annually on Vienna's streets. An ashtray to be attached to the most common types of waste and litter bins was developed as a counter-measure. Currently, approx. 12,000 of these bins feature a tube-shaped ashtray; they are complemented by approx. 850 freestanding column-type ash containers.



Litter bin

Contribution to recycling

Since 2008, the staff members of the street cleaning division also remove plastic bottles and metal cans from sweepings and litter bins. In 2012, this allowed for the separate collection and subsequent recycling of approx. 55.5 tonnes of plastic bottles and metal cans.



Pet waste bag dispensers

To make it easier for dog owners to dispose of their pets' excrements, numerous "doggie poop bag" dispensers were put up across Vienna. In 2012, around 3,000 dispensing stations had been set up; they are provided with new bags on an ongoing basis.

An incredible 47,200 (filled) pet waste bags are discarded into the litter bins every day; on an annual basis, this results in 17.2 million bags. Every year, the City of Vienna provides roughly 17,2 million bags in the dispensers (free of charge); moreover, awareness campaigns are conducted in addition to tight control by Vienna's Waste-Watchers.

Markets

19 permanent markets (e.g. Naschmarkt) and 12 special markets (e.g. Christmas markets) are cleaned, including during weekends and at night.

Recycling and waste collection centres

All 19 recycling and waste collection centres are operated by the staff of the street cleaning division. During work hours from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Mondays to Saturdays, citizens can leave recyclables, bulky waste and problematic waste from households

free of charge and under certain conditions. One centre is also open on Sundays.

Every year, approx. 160,000 tonnes of waste are disposed of at the centres, which also serve to store street sweepings, road grit and bulky waste found on public grounds on a temporary basis before further treatment.

On-duty service

As directed by various authorities, the on-duty service for emergency measures secures potentially dangerous spots on public grounds, throughout the year and around the clock.

In the daytime, two vehicles including crew are available for this service (one vehicle at night). Every year, the on-duty service handles more than 3,000 assignments to secure, illuminate or temporarily repair hazardous spots on the streets.

Vehicle fleet

In addition to its own vehicles (light lorries, flatbed vehicles, compact utility and other tractors, compact and other loaders, vehicles for litter bin emptying), the street cleaning division also uses the mechanical sweepers, street washing vehicles, suction sweepers and transport vehicles of the

MA 48 fleet, which likewise provides drivers for these vehicles.

In addition, private vehicles for street washing may be contracted as part of outsourcing efforts. By the same token, private transport vehicles, suction sweepers and skip transport services are involved whenever required.

The sweeping force

This is a 35-person, rapid mobile relief force that eliminates acute cleanliness problems. In addition to the usual tasks of street cleaning, the mobile task force e.g. cleans up recyclable collection points or removes abandoned shopping carts from the streets. The taskforce also provides services at large-scale events and for special assignments during the weekend.

Communication activities

Even if MA 48 does its very best to work for a clean city, the support and environmental consciousness of Vienna's population remains an essential factor for success, and numerous activities and campaigns are designed to appeal to the citizenry. Thus the citywide Spring Cleaning campaign involves schoolchildren, municipal workers and many other volunteers. For two weeks, the city is jointly spruced up in one

big cleaning push. After prior registration via a hotline, all participants are provided with the necessary utensils, which range from work gloves to refuse bags. In 2013, approx. 17,000 persons took part in this community campaign.

Decentralisation

In the context of decentralisation, the Municipal District Offices are authorised to

dispose of street cleaning capacities. Thus vehicles and staff are available to handle their requests with top priority.

The municipal district budgets equally serve to finance snow removal, traffic surface cleaning with street washing vehicles, the payment of marginally employed street cleaners and street cleaning with light lorries equipped with sweeping devices.



Sweeping force



Street cleaning

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