

Embark Learning Garden  
**Garden User's Handbook**

Version 3



**LEARNING GARDEN**

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## Welcome

Congratulations on taking the first step towards one of the most rewarding and challenging ways of growing food. Embark's Learning Garden is not just a place to grow vegetables. It provides an opportunity to engage in a healthy recreational activity while growing nutritious food, as well as benefiting from the connection to nature, and social interaction.

This guide was written to help Garden Users manage the garden plots and site in a way that maximizes the experience with the garden community.

## Introduction

The Learning Garden was established by Embark in March 2013 with support from SFU Facilities, the Faculty of the Environment, and SFU Dining Services. The Learning Garden is comprised of 60 gardening beds, 7 fruit trees, 5 storage boxes and a three-tier compost bin.

Garden plots are rented to campus groups such as clubs, departmental students unions, and graduate caucuses, as well as SFU departments, labs and instructors. Gardening plots are cultivated and maintained thanks to the time, initiative and resources of the Garden Users. Public workshops and community events are also held on the garden site.

## Garden Location

The Learning Garden is located on the south side of the Technology and Science Complex 1 (TASC 1).

## Garden Users

The garden is open to student groups, SFU departments, labs and instructors, and SFU community members.

## Applying to garden in the Learning Garden

People or student groups wishing to become Garden Users must complete the electronic form to be added to the waitlist. This request form is available at:

[embarksustainability.org/garden](http://embarksustainability.org/garden)

The Garden Coordinator will reply in due course by e-mail, notifying applicants when they are added to the waitlist.

## Waitlist

When there are more applicants than available plots, the Garden Coordinator will keep a wait list of people or groups who have applied for plots. With reasonable notice, applicants can request to know, and will be told, where they are on the waitlist. When a plot becomes available, the Garden Coordinator will offer it to the next person or group on the waitlist.

## Annual renewal of plot rental

Due to high demand, a MAXIMUM OF ONE (1) garden plot per person or student group is allowed.

Plots are rented for one (1) year at a time, from **APRIL 1** to **MARCH 31** and must be renewed annually. The Garden Coordinator will e-mail a renewal letter to Garden Users in February.

To renew, Garden Users must complete the electronic form and submit their annual plot rental fee no later than **APRIL 10 at 16:30**, [embarksustainability.org/garden](http://embarksustainability.org/garden)

Garden plots that are not renewed by this time will be made available for new Garden Users.

### ***Plot rental fee***

An annual plot rental fee is charged for each plot. Garden Users who do not pay the plot rental fee on or before APRIL 10 will be deemed to have abandoned their plot and will no longer be Garden Users.

Plot rental fees are set at the discretion of Embark.

Fees are paid using Paypal

If you prefer paying by cheque, make the cheque payable to *Embark*. In the case of a returned cheque, the issuer must provide a replacement certified cheque in the amount to cover both the returned cheque and the bank charge for the returned item, within ten (10) days of notification.

Please call 778-782-8763 to schedule a time to drop off a cheque in person. Our office is located at 2623 West Mall Complex, SFU Burnaby. Please confirm our availability before making a trip to our office - we have a small staff and do not always work at the Burnaby campus.

### ***What does your rental fee pay for?***

- A gardening plot
- Access to water
- Compost
- Access to communal gardening tools
- Garden Coordinator (to oversee the management and upkeep of gardens, to develop and host workshops, and other community events)

### ***Termination of plot rental***

The plot rental agreement may be terminated when Garden Users:

- Resign from the garden.
- Fail to pay plot rental fees before the deadline (April 10).
- Engage in one of the practices deemed by Embark to be grounds for plot rental termination (see 'Termination of plot rental' by Embark below).

### ***Termination of plot rental by Embark***

Embark can terminate a Garden User's plot rental agreement for:

- Failing to cultivate the garden plot by **APRIL 15** of the current season.
- Allowing plots to become overgrown with weeds at any point in the growing season.

- Unauthorized removal of produce, soil, tools or other material from another Garden User's plot.
- Unauthorized interference with another Garden User's plot.
- Damage to Embark / SFU property or common areas.
- Violating Embark policies, as defined within this handbook.
- Bullying.

Embark will not terminate plot rental without consultation with the gardener. The gardener will be given 15 days to sort out the issue. If the issue has not been addressed by the end of that time, the plot will be reclaimed and reassigned.

### ***Responsibilities of Garden Users***

Garden Users are responsible for:

- Informing the Garden Coordinator immediately in writing of a change in name, address, phone number, or e-mail address, or if they wish to give up their plot.
- Renewing plot rental and paying rental fees before the deadline (April 10).
- Following the Learning Garden operating policies, as outlined in this document.
- Participating in a minimum of two (2) hours per year at a garden work party to help maintain the garden site.
- Participating in at least in one (1) event (social gathering, workshop) organized by Embark.
- Fulfilling plot maintenance requirements (see – Plot Maintenance below).

### ***Garden User List***

Embark keeps an up-to-date Garden Users list, including the name, address, phone number, e-mail address, start date, end date and plot number for each Garden User.

### ***Plot allocation***

Garden plots are allocated in a fair and objective manner.  
Plots are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis from the waitlist.

### ***Plot transfer***

Garden Users can apply to transfer from their existing plot to a vacated plot. Embark keeps an internal wait list of Garden Users who want to transfer to a vacated plot. Garden Users on the internal waitlist have priority over people on the external wait list. Internal plot assignments are on a first-come, first-served basis. Embark holds the right to fulfill or deny transfer requests.

Requests for an internal transfer:

- Must be made in writing.

- ❑ Will only be accepted if the Garden User's existing plot conforms to plot maintenance guidelines (see Plot Maintenance below).

### ***Plot subletting***

- ❑ Plots may not be sublet.
- ❑ All plots must be gardened by the gardener, associate gardener or group members who are registered to that plot.
- ❑ Plots gardened by non-members will be reassigned through the waitlist.

### ***Plot vacancy and succession policy***

In the event of a Garden User's withdrawal for health or other reasons, or of a vacancy:

- ❑ The Garden Coordinator does not have to follow the waitlist, and can assign that plot according to the following points.
- ❑ An associate gardener sharing a plot that they have gardened for the two consecutive preceding years may succeed provided the plot was not neglected during that time.
- ❑ All other vacancies will be filled from the established waitlist.

### **Plot maintenance**

Embark staff would like to work with Garden Users and volunteers to keep up with weeding and site maintenance. If you require assistance with your plot, including watering while on vacation, please contact the Garden Coordinator at [gardens@embarksustainability.org](mailto:gardens@embarksustainability.org) to work out a plan!

Please abide by the following guidelines:

### ***Cultivation of plots***

Cultivation is defined as: "To prepare and work on land in order to raise crops; till the soil in order to grow crops." Garden Users are responsible for the upkeep of their plots.

Garden Users must:

- ❑ Begin cultivating their plots no later than APRIL 15 of the current season, with exceptions made for extreme weather. Embark can terminate rental agreements of plots that are not cultivated by APRIL 15.
- ❑ Cultivate their entire plot at all times throughout the growing season (March-October).
- ❑ Keep their plot tidy and free of excessive weeds.
- ❑ Tidy and prepare their plot for winter at the end of the gardening season. All dead plants and non-plant material (temporary supports, strings, wire, wood, metal, plastic, etc.) must be removed and disposed of through appropriate channels. The plot must be cleaned up by NOVEMBER 1, except for actively growing winter crops, cover crops or perennials.
- ❑ Store personal items/material neatly in the assigned storage box or at home, and not in communal areas.

If a plot becomes unkempt, the gardener will be given 15 days to clean it up. If the issue has not been addressed by the end of that time, the plot will be reassigned or tilled in.

### ***Abandoned plots***

In cases where plots have not been seriously worked by APRIL 15 of the current season, or where plots are overgrown with weeds taller than 12" any time during the growing season:

- ❑ Efforts will be made to contact the parties involved before any action is taken. However, it is the responsibility of Garden Users to inform the Garden Coordinator of any obstacle that prevents them from gardening in a timely and acceptable fashion.
- ❑ The plot will be considered abandoned and will be reassigned to another gardener or cleared of all growth during work parties.
- ❑ Garden Users will forfeit their right to garden at the Learning Garden in the future.

### ***Organic land care practices***

Garden Users must only use organic practices in the upkeep and operation of their garden plot. The Learning Garden is a pesticide-free and wildlife-friendly zone, so please only use organic products that are safe for people, pets and wildlife.

- ❑ Organic means "foodstuff grown or raised without synthetic fertilizers or pesticides or hormones."
- ❑ According to the USDA National Organic Standard Board, organic agriculture:
  - ❑ Is an ecological production management system that promotes and enhances biodiversity, biological cycles, and soil biological activity;
  - ❑ Is based on minimal use of off-farm inputs and on management practices that restore, maintain or enhance ecological harmony;
  - ❑ Has a primary goal of optimizing the health and productivity of interdependent communities of soil life, plants, animals and people.

### ***Plants & soil amendments***

- ❑ Organic seeds and/or plants are highly recommended.
- ❑ Synthetic fertilizers are not permitted.
- ❑ Garden Users are required to provide their own plant material.
- ❑ Please purchase compost which has been approved for organic production if you wish to amend your soil.

### ***Weed management***

A "weed" can be defined as: a plant that is out of place and not intentionally sown; a plant that is growing where it is not wanted; a plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered; a plant that is competitive, persistent, pernicious, and interferes negatively with human activity, among other definitions.

- ❑ Keep your garden plot as weed-free as possible.

- ❑ Keep weeds from going to seed (i.e. developing flowers and seeds, which then leads to plant propagation).
- ❑ Dumping of weeds into neighbouring garden plots and paths is strictly prohibited.
- ❑ Mulch is a good weed suppressant.
- ❑ Herbicide use is strictly prohibited.

If your plot is found to be populated with weeds that are going to seed or invading neighbouring garden plots, you will receive a notification to weed your plot within 15 days. If you receive two (2) notices, your plot will be reassigned or tilled in. A good way to prevent the spread of weeds is to weed every 8-10 days when undesirable plants are small.

### ***Pest management***

- ❑ Pesticide use (including insecticides and fungicides) in or around the garden plot is strictly prohibited.
- ❑ Squishing bugs is an approved pest management technique.
- ❑ Learn to manage pest problems by following integrated pest management (IPM) principles  
([http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/healthy-living-vie-saine/environnement-environnement/pesticides/lawn\\_use-utilise\\_pelouse-eng.php#a1](http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/healthy-living-vie-saine/environnement-environnement/pesticides/lawn_use-utilise_pelouse-eng.php#a1))

For further information review the Organic Land Care Standard (2013) published by the Society for Organic Urban Land Care (SOUL) - [www.organiclandcare.org](http://www.organiclandcare.org)

### ***Shrubs on garden plots***

- ❑ Planting non-fruit-bearing shrubs in garden plots is prohibited.
- ❑ Fruit-bearing plants (e.g. tomatoes, beans, peas, strawberries) must be positioned so as to not overhang paths or shade other plots during between March and October.

### ***Paths***

- ❑ Garden Users are responsible for keeping paths around their garden plot weed-free so weeds don't spread to other paths and garden plots.
- ❑ Garden Users must keep paths free of objects that obstruct them. A wheelbarrow needs to be able to pass comfortably between garden plots.
- ❑ In order to provide a safe environment for members and the public, paths that are common to all plots must be kept free of any material that protrudes beyond the plot line; including trellises, cold frames and hoses not in use.

### ***Cold frames and other structures***

Structures must comply with the following:

- ❑ Structures cannot be constructed using glass or metal.
- ❑ No part of the structure can be of a permanent nature.

- ❑ Structures can be no higher than seven (7) feet from the normal path elevation and must not cast a shadow on neighbouring plots between March and October.
- ❑ The maximum side for cold frames is 4 feet.
- ❑ Structures must be safe and in good repair.
- ❑ No part of any structure, including the roof, should overhang the walkways.

## **Water**

Running water is available for all Garden Users. Water should be conserved.

Garden Users must:

- ❑ Not leave running water unattended.
- ❑ Not use sprinklers.
- ❑ Not allow water hoses to cross other plots or drag them across others' plants.
- ❑ Roll up the hose in the storage box when finished gardening for the day.
- ❑ Turn off water line immediately upon finding any leaks or broken pipes and then report to the Garden Coordinator.
- ❑ Adhere to Burnaby municipal water restrictions  
<https://www.burnaby.ca/City-Services/Water---Sewers/Water-Conservation/Sprinkling-Restrictions.html>

TIP: mulch helps soil retain moisture.

## **Compost bins**

- ❑ There are three (3) compost bins and two (2) green bin for the collection of garden waste. Garden Users are expected to place young weeds, plants or other organic refuse pulled from the garden in compost bins. Organic refuse must be chopped, to accelerate decomposition. Weeds in flower must be disposed of in green bins.
- ❑ Dumping anything outside of your garden plot or off-site is irresponsible.

## **Common tools**

Embark provides a few common tools and members must:

- ❑ Use them responsibly.
- ❑ Clean and return tools to storage boxes when finished.
- ❑ Help to keep storage boxes tidy and clean.
- ❑ Not remove communal garden tools from the Learning Garden site – garden tools are for everyone to use.
- ❑ Lock storage boxes before leaving the garden when finished for the day.

Embark is not liable for any injuries, accidents, or harm that result from the use of the tools.

## ***Hazardous materials***

Hazardous materials must not be stored on the garden site.

For further details review the 'Hazardous waste materials: Canadian Directions': (<http://publications.gc.ca/collections/Collection-R/LoPBdP/BP/bp323-e.htm>)

## **Ground maintenance (garden site)**

Most of the maintenance of the garden site perimeter and main paths are the responsibility of Embark. Garden Users are responsible for maintaining the paths immediately around the perimeter of their garden plot.

## ***Weed control***

- ❑ Manual weeding of paths will be done as needed, and following the Invasive Species Council of Metro Vancouver removal protocol. <http://www.iscmv.ca/target-species/species-profiles/>.
- ❑ Consider volunteering to participate in weeding activities.

## ***Organic compost delivery***

- ❑ Compost will be delivered early in the gardening season. Garden Users will be e-mailed once a compost delivery date and workday is confirmed. Garden Users unable to attend the workday should inform the Garden Coordinator, who will arrange for their plot to be attended to.
- ❑ Consider volunteering to shovel compost into plots of Garden Users who can not attend.

Organic compost can not be stored onsite and must be used at once.

## ***Wood chips delivery***

- ❑ The garden may receive wood chips, depending on availability. Garden Users will be e-mailed once a delivery date is confirmed.
- ❑ Consider volunteering to spread wood chips on paths.

Wood chips can not be stored on site and must be spread at once.

## **Site management**

### ***Family***

- ❑ Teachers / Parents are encouraged to bring children to the garden and introduce them to the wonders of gardening. Please monitor the young visitors' behavior and whereabouts at all times.
- ❑ Teach children to stay on paths.

### ***Pets***

- ❑ Pets are welcome in the garden but must be leashed, must stay on paths, and must not eat or damage plants. Pick up after your pets and dispose of waste in the trash bin.

- ❑ No individual Garden Users may bring or tend honey bees on the Community Garden; orchard mason bees are permitted.

### ***Common areas***

- ❑ Learning Garden has the following common areas: gathering area, paths, watering site, garbage bins, compost bins and storage boxes.
- ❑ Any alterations to common areas must be approved by the Garden Coordinator.

### ***Recycling and waste bins***

- ❑ Garden Users shall remove garbage and debris and place them in garbage bins (black) provided on the garden site.
- ❑ Please pick up litter when you see it.
- ❑ To ensure access to garbage bins and to keep the site clean, Garden Users must not:
  - ❑ Overload the bins
  - ❑ Dump waste around or beside the bins.
  - ❑ Pile material on top of bin lids.
  - ❑ Leave material hanging over the sides of the bins.

SFU Facilities will not empty the bins if these conditions are not met.

### ***Fires***

No open fires or burning of any kind is allowed on SFU grounds. This includes Hibachis and Barbecues using charcoal briquettes.

### ***Sale of produce***

Produce grown in the gardens is for personal use and cannot be sold. The only exception to this guideline is for Embark when selling produce explicitly for fundraising purposes.

### ***Site access***

The garden can be reached through South Campus Road or Science Road.

### ***Site hours***

- ❑ The garden is open from dawn until dusk and must be vacated from sunset to sunrise.
- ❑ For your safety, only garden during daylight hours. Consider gardening in pairs or keeping a cell phone nearby if it makes feel you more comfortable.

### ***Parking***

- ❑ Parking Lot B is the closest parking to the garden site.
- ❑ Garden Users need a parking pass to use the B-Lot.
- ❑ B-Lot parking pass details:

The B-Lot parking pass is valid Monday-Friday after 4 pm, and all day Saturday, Sunday and holidays

Garden Users can obtain a parking pass either for the full season (April 1 - November 30), or for half of the season (August 1 - November 30).

To obtain a parking pass for the B-Lot:

- Complete the application form (Appendix "B")
- Arrange to have the application form signed by Erin Daly. Please arrange with Erin a time to come into the office to have it signed ([erin@embarksustainability.org](mailto:erin@embarksustainability.org)). West Mall Complex 2623)
- Visit the Parking Services office with the completed application form and required payment (see below) to obtain the permit.

Costs for the parking pass are as follows (as of February 2018)

- People who already hold a permit to park at SFU: no charge
- Non permit holders, Full Season: \$17.20
- Non permit holders, 1/2 Season: \$8.60

### **Vandalism**

- Respect the efforts of fellow Garden Users and **never** take plants or produce from other garden plots without permission.
- Report theft, vandalism and unusual activities to the Garden Coordinator via e-mail: [gardens@embarksustainability.org](mailto:gardens@embarksustainability.org)
- Report vandalism in progress to SFU Security: 778-782-4500

### **Privacy**

Personal information kept by Embark is confidential. Embark staff, Directors, and other members who have access to Garden User's personal information, such as addresses, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses will not release information without Garden User's consent.

### **Liability**

- Garden Users are reminded to be responsible and practice good personal safety when visiting the garden.
- Neither Embark nor SFU are responsible for Garden Users' actions. Garden Users agree to hold harmless Embark and SFU for any liability, damage, loss, or claim that occurs in connection with use of the Learning Garden by themselves or any of their guests.

### **Miscellaneous**

Radios. Should you wish to listen to the radio, please use headphones so as not to disturb other Garden Users.

## Garden Coordinator

The Garden Coordinator is available via e-mail Monday-Friday or in person on Thursdays to provide assistance to and answer questions. The following sections outline the major responsibilities of the Garden Coordinator.

[gardens@embarksustainability.org](mailto:gardens@embarksustainability.org)

### ***Coordinating and supporting Garden Users***

Related to the coordination and support of Garden Users, the Garden Coordinator will:

- ❑ Coordinate annual plot renewal and assignment, update a waitlist, and re-assign plots as needed.
- ❑ Keep accurate records about individuals and groups that use the garden.
- ❑ Plan and conduct an orientation for all new Garden Users and facilitate other meetings as needed.
- ❑ Circulate and enforce the Garden's Rules and Policies.
- ❑ Respond to questions and concerns from Garden Users.

### ***Garden maintenance and operation***

Related to garden maintenance and operation, the Garden Coordinator will:

- ❑ Monitor and oversee maintenance of garden facilities, ensuring they are safe, accessible and in good condition.
- ❑ Train and coordinate volunteers assisting with garden maintenance and operation.
- ❑ Maintain financial records about garden-related income (plot rental fees, donations) and expenses (equipment repairs, compost, etc.).

### **Work parties**

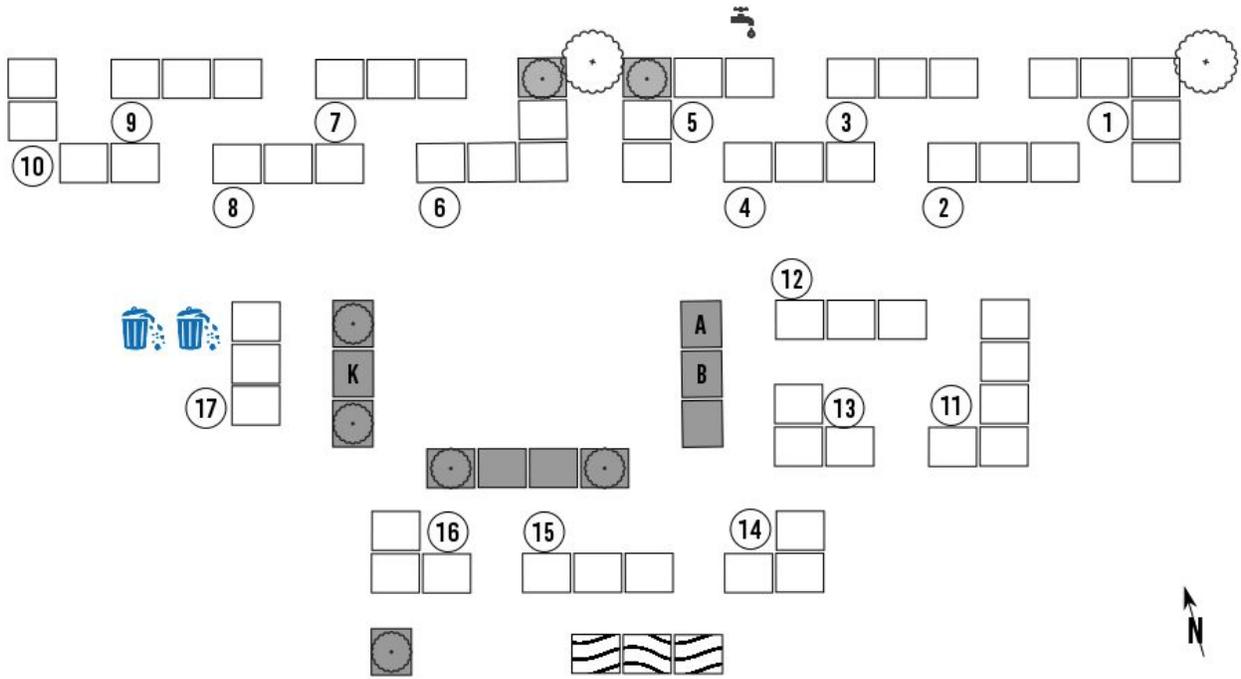
The Learning Garden has areas that are commonly used by everyone. Because they are part of the "commons", they need to be cared for by Garden Users.

- ❑ In order for the Learning Garden to succeed, support from Garden Users is needed to maintain the site, manage organic waste, deal with wildlife, help keep the site free from debris, and plan celebrations.
- ❑ **Garden Users must participate in one or more work party (minimum of 2 hours per year)** during the gardening season to keep membership in good standing and be eligible for plot renewal in the next season.

### **Correspondence**

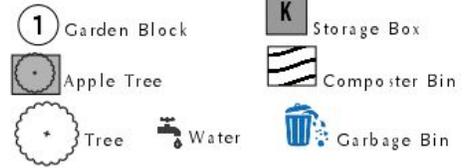
- ❑ In order to provide Garden Users with a cost-effective and efficient service, we are using e-mail for the majority of our correspondence. If you have an e-mail address which we can use for this purpose and have not already provided it, please e-mail us with your name and plot number.
- ❑ Your address will only be used in connection with Embark's Learning Garden.

# Appendix "A"



## LEARNING GARDEN Sketch Plan of Raised Beds

Updated: February 2018



## Appendix "B"

[Click here for a fillable pdf](#)

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B-nWyCRzjxGHZHZsRjRubXJSUzMweTBBMjlyRDhDVIUtWmI4/view?usp=sharing>



PARKING & SUSTAINABLE  
MOBILITY SERVICES

Maggie Benston Centre – Room 0027  
8888 University Drive  
Burnaby, BC V5A 1S6  
Tel: 778-782-5534 Fax: 778-782-5386  
parking@sfu.ca www.sfu.ca/parking

# EMBARK LEARNING GARDEN PERMIT REQUEST

### Permit Holder Information

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Prov.: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Vehicle Information (max 4)

*Please Note: Vehicles may only be registered to one permit*

	License #	Province	Make	Model	Color
1.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Signature of Permit Holder: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized By: *Print* \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*For Parking Services Use Only*

Flex Acct #: \_\_\_\_\_ Permit #: \_\_\_\_\_