

Toronto tells celebrated volunteers to stop beautifying park

'You're going to disrespect me for doing voluntary work?'

[CBC News](#)

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Two award-winning community volunteers say the City of Toronto has told them to stop whacking weeds, caring for grass and doing other work to keep a popular park spotless.

For two decades, Stickie Caddle and Blue Jays Curtis have worked at Fergy Brown Park for free.

The two have taken it upon themselves to tackle the waist-high weeds and grass, drain the pools of water and lovingly maintain the cricket pitch.

They've even won awards for making Fergy Brown Park a better place.

As a bonus, Curtis also plants and grows vegetables.



Stickie Caddle points out the cricket pitch he has looked after at Fergy Brown Park. (Colin Butler/CBC)

But the city's parks department has ordered them to stop. Not because it doesn't like what they're doing, but out of concern they might hurt themselves — and then sue.

"Any place in Barbados you could go and do this kind of work — and people would object to it? Man, they'd give you two more weed whackers," said Caddle.

Curtis is frustrated too.

"You're going to disrespect me for doing voluntary work?"

Curtis is no longer allowed to plant his vegetable garden.

"I plant it and bag it out — bag it out and give to some of the senior citizens here. I put some in my car and give to people outside," he said.

A spokesperson for the city said Thursday in an email that "the two volunteers can continue with their activities with the exception of the power-trimming and vegetable gardening."

Corrections and Clarifications

- A previous version of this story said the park manager had "declined to comment." That is not correct. The park manager spoke on the phone to CBC News and provided background detail. We were unable to arrange a recorded interview at that time. *July 26, 2012, 2:16 p.m.*