

FAQ's for Holland in Bloom Annual Tulip Dig - 2021



1. The tulips look dead, are they?
Answer: The stems and leaves may look dead, and they may fact be dead, but the bulbs are still alive and lying dormant until next spring.
2. Why do you wait so long after the petals fall off before you dig them up?
Answer: We want to give the tulips sufficient time to store energy in the bulb before we dig them up.
3. Are they are other areas that I can dig up the tulip bulbs?
Answer: No, you may only dig at Centennial Park, Window on the Waterfront, and the dedicated fields at Windmill Island Gardens
4. Is there another day I can come and dig up the tulips?
Answer: No, you are only allowed to dig on May 22, 2021 between the times of 9 to 11 a.m. It is extremely important for the Parks Division staff who will handle the summer plantings in the park that the digging is supervised and restricted to only one date and time.
5. What do I do when I arrive at either Centennial Park, Window on the Waterfront, or Windmill Island Gardens?
Answer: Check in, complete a contract tracing form, pay, receive a tag for your bucket(s), dig, and then check out.
6. If already been vaccinated, do I need to complete a contract tracing form?
Answer: Yes, this event must follow Ottawa Country Health Department guidelines. All diggers must complete the form in order to dig. No exceptions.
7. Is there a map available to see what color/variety tulip is planted?
Answer: Not this year but all tulip beds will have markers with variety and color.
8. How many tulips will fit in my 5-gallon bucket?
Answer: You should be able to fit 50-60 bulbs in your 5-gallon bucket. We ask that you not remove the leaves and stems before digging up the bulbs, however, they may simply fall off. If you choose to take off the leaves and stems (not recommended), *please dispose of them properly* and don't leave them laying around for the staff to clean up. Trash receptacles will be available.
9. Is there a specific technique to digging up the tulips?
Answer: You'll want to start digging deep enough (approximately 8" down) and loosen the soil around the bulbs, and then grab the tulip bulbs as the come to the surface.
10. I don't have a pitch fork, can I use a shovel?
Answer: Sure! A potato fork works the best but a shovel will do nicely.
11. How much does it cost?

Answer: The cost is \$10 for a 5-gallon bucket of bulbs. You need to bring your own bucket, as well as digging implement, gloves, and whatever else you might need.

12. Is this a fundraiser?

Answer: Yes, the proceeds go to the City of Holland's "Holland in Bloom" effort.

13. What is Holland In Bloom?

Answer: Holland in Bloom celebrates "the pride planted in our community", highlights our significant accomplishments as a community, and promotes civic pride in our beautification efforts while encouraging the integration of beautification, historic preservation, and environmental efforts into the fabric of our community as we move forward. The City participates in America in Bloom, an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to promoting nationwide beautification programs and personal and community involvement through the use of flowers, plants, trees, and other environmental and lifestyle enhancements.

14. Should I put the tulips in the ground when I get home or at another time?

Answer: It is best to wash the dirt off the bulb, cut away the roots and stem (but not the bulb), and then store them in a cool dry spot for planting in early to mid-October. Give them a good drink after you plant them.

15. How deep should I plant them?

Answer: Bulbs should be planted 4" to 6" deep, although you can plant them as deep as 12".

16. Should I fertilize them? When should I do this?

Answer: When you plant the bulbs in the fall, add some bone-meal according to instructions. In the spring, after they are done blooming, fertilize with a 12-12-12 fertilizer and keep the bulbs moist by watering appropriately. You do not need to dig up the bulbs for storage.

17. Do deer like to eat the tulip leaves, is there something I can do to keep them away? *What about rabbits and squirrels?*

Answer: Yes, some animals (especially deer) like to nibble at the leaves as they are coming up in the spring. Try using blood-meal or putting up a fence around your tulip plantings (but it should be 8' high).

18. I live on a tulip lane, when can I pull the stems off?

Answer: When the leaves and stem turn completely brown, you can pull them off. If you can, plant annuals for beautiful color all summer long. Under no-circumstances are you allowed to pull the tulip lane bulbs out of the ground.

19. How long will these tulips bloom?

Answer: The tulips should bloom for approximately 10 days, depending on the temperature in the spring. A tulip will continue to bloom for years as long as it's well cared for (fertilized and watered) throughout the year. After 2-3 years, a bulb will develop bulbette's (small baby-bulbs) on the tulip bulb. These bulbette's should be removed to allow your bulb to continue growing and blooming. The bulbette's can be discarded or kept for future tulips (as a young bulb, they will take years to bloom. Remember, it takes 21 years for a bulb to grow enough before it blooms.)