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**Subject:** Waste Collection Limits  
**Prepared by:** Jim Tree, Manager Roads & Water  
**Department:** Operational Services  
**Date:** April 14, 2020

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**In accordance with the Procedure By-law, any Member of Council may request that this Information Report be placed on an upcoming General Committee or Council meeting agenda for discussion.**

## **Executive Summary**

In response to the direction from Council, staff are presenting this report for information on our current residential waste collection practices. The report will elaborate in the following areas:

- There have been ongoing compliance issues on the three (3) bag limit for many years.
- Robust public awareness and education program need to inform residents on waste collection limits.
- N6 Municipalities enforcing waste bag limits and issuing “Bag Tags”.
- Education and Awareness to continue as a first step in enforcement of Waste By-law

## **Background**

The rules and processes associated with residential waste collection in the municipality are contained in the Town of Aurora By-law No. 5590-14, the Waste Collection By-law. The language in the former By-law (pre-dating the current By-law) was the same with respect to limiting the number of bags that can be placed at the curb which is three (3).

The three (3) bag limit was addressed in Report No. PW02-063 which was tabled at Council on November 5, 2002. There may have been financial and compliance issues at that time as the report refers to a fee for additional waste beyond the three (3) bag limits and stated:

“No legal enforcement of this By-law is currently in place as it was originally envisioned that the approximate 15% of residents who place more than three waste containers would voluntarily make increased efforts of reducing their waste through education.”

To date, there has been no known enforcement of the three (3) bag limit and staff have seen a rise in the level of non-compliance on this issue. This was evident based on an informal audit conducted by the Town’s Waste Coordinator over several months in the summer of 2019.

## **Analysis**

### **There have been ongoing compliance issues on the three (3) bag limit for many years**

Based on the previous reports to Council on this issue, specific to residential waste collection, there appears to have been compliance problems for many years. This may be a result of non-enforcement and a lack of public education on the matter. This, coupled with the fact that the Town continues to remove all waste placed at the curb, there is a definite expectation in the community that this is permitted.

Operational Services staff is very much aware of this issue and, as previously mentioned, the Waste Coordinator has been tracking the issue over the past twelve (12) months to gain a better understanding of the problem and its magnitude.

The Waste Coordinator has observed several residential areas and notes that while many residents do comply with the three (3) bag limit, there are many who do not. Attached to this report are photos of excess solid waste taken during the recent audit. It should be noted that during the audit process, our Waste Coordinator encountered residents who were enquiring about our presence on the street to which none were aware of any limits on the amount of waste that can be legally placed at the curb.

### **Robust public awareness and education program needed to inform residents on Waste collection limits**

As stewards of the environment, the municipality should be much more active in engaging with our residents to reduce the amount of waste entering the landfill and incineration. Staff suggest that the focus should not be aimed at a reduction in costs associated with enforcing bag limits, but rather what we can all do to reduce waste.

For example, for the past three (3) years, the Town of Aurora's total volume of solid waste exported was 6,192.30 metric tonnes in 2017, 6,193.00 metric tonnes in 2018, and 6,496.46 metric tonnes in 2019. In this day of heightened environmental awareness, it seems reasonable that the Town demonstrate leadership in striving to reduce solid waste. Introducing a "Bag Tag" program in response to allowing increased solid waste collection might be seen as counter productive to this goal.

When compared to many other municipalities in the GTA, the Town of Aurora has a generous limit on the amount of residential waste placed at the curb such that any move to enforce the current limits could quite easily be accommodated by the majority of our residents.

Taking into consideration the long history of non-enforcement or public education on the three (3) bag limit, it will be necessary to conduct a rigorous and lengthy public education campaign well before any enforcement of the By-law is contemplated.

Staff have been working with the Communications Department in preparation for a public education and awareness campaign aimed at reducing waste and informing residents on the current limitations.

Pending Council direction on this matter, staff are prepared to immediately proceed with the following action plan:

- Post information on the Town website
- Place electronic notice signs in strategic locations throughout the municipality
- Place notifications on all media screens in our municipal facilities
- Place notifications on the Town's media pylon signs at Yonge Street & Aurora Heights Drive and at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex (SARC)
- Post notifications on the Recycle Coach app
- Send out multiple notices on all social media platforms
- Deliver and place "Door Knockers" on all residents homes
- Include insert in Water and Tax bills
- Post notices in Town newspaper Notice Board during the campaign

Staff propose that the Public Education and Awareness campaign be ongoing for a period of six (6) months, whereby all of the means noted above will be employed during this time. Staff will also continue to monitor and document any feedback that we receive during notice period. Following the Public Education and Awareness Campaign, staff will be in

a better position to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

### **N6 Municipalities enforcing waste bag limits and issuing “Bag Tags”**

Through our continuing participation in the N6 Waste & Recycling Committee, Aurora is unique in that we do not have a user-pay “Bag Tag” program nor are we enforcing the current limits on waste pick up.

Some might suggest that we begin to enforce the current By-law and the three (3) bag limit and introduce a user pay “Bag Tag” program. This is entirely possible; however; staff would strongly discourage this approach as it fails to accomplish the goal of reducing Aurora’s solid waste going to landfill and or incineration. Staff recommend the focus for all municipalities should be on reduction of solid waste wherever possible. Introducing a “Bag Tag” program in response to allowing increased solid waste collection does little to demonstrate our leadership and concerted efforts aimed at reduction (attached is the N6 Municipalities solid waste collection statistics).

### **Education and Awareness to continue as a first step in enforcement of Waste By-law**

There comes a time when actual enforcement of a by-law may be the only means of gaining public attention and compliance. A reduction in the amount solid waste entering the environment, whether it be land fill or incineration, can only be viewed as a positive step. Most residents would support a reduction and react positively to any efforts aimed at education and awareness. We cannot expect complete compliance with the three (3) bag limit no matter how much notice is given. In a situation where we observe excess solid waste placed at the curbside following the Education and Awareness Campaign Staff will proceed as follows:

- **1<sup>st</sup> non compliance:** Direct the waste contractor to remove the excess waste and place a written notification at the premises indicating the non-compliance and a warning that any further excess waste may not be removed
- **2<sup>nd</sup> non-compliance:** at the same residence, a written notice of By-law violation will be delivered to the residence and the excess waste will remain at the curb

- **3<sup>rd</sup> non compliance:** In the event of a third non-compliance, the excess waste will remain at the curb and By-law Services will be requested to attend the residence and follow up with the resident which may include a charge

### **Advisory Committee Review**

Not applicable.

### **Legal Considerations**

None.

### **Financial Implications**

It is anticipated that this proposed Action Plan will result in relatively minor incremental costs for the Town for the printing and dispersal of public education materials estimated to be less than \$7,000; as well as potential increased costs arising from the new enforcement of this By-law. Much of the administration and communications related work will be conducted through existing in-house resources with no appreciable additional costs.

The continued successful enforcement of this By-law may result in solid waste collection operating cost savings for the Town over the longer term.

### **Communications Considerations**

Based on the IAP2 (International Association of Public Participation) Spectrum and the Town of Aurora Community Engagement Framework, the Town of Aurora will utilize the following level of engagement: Inform. The Town will inform the community of any changes in the waste collection limits through the Town's Notice Board, social media

feeds, website, digital screens, electronic signs, updates on Recycle Coach app, insert in water and tax bills and door knockers.

### **Link to Strategic Plan**

The above supports the Strategic Plan goal of Supporting an exceptional quality of life for all through their accomplishment in satisfying requirements in the following key objectives within this goal statement:

Investing in sustainable infrastructure: Maintain and expand infrastructure to support forecasted population growth through technology, waste management, roads, emergency services and accessibility

### **Alternative(s) to the Recommendation**

None.

### **Conclusions**

Based on the information as outlined within this report, it can be concluded that the best course of action in reducing the amount of solid waste from entering the environment would be to enforce the existing By-law 5590-14.

We also conclude that the most desirable manner in which to improve solid waste limit compliance would be through an extensive and continuous public awareness and education program on the merits of Reducing, Recycling and Reusing as many post consumer products as possible.

Once this education campaign is completed, staff will be informing GFL to limit their pick-up in accordance with our Education and Awareness Campaign effective October 1, 2020.

### **Attachments**

Attachment #1 – N6 Solid Waste Collection Information

Attachment #2 – Photos of excess solid waste take during 2019 audit

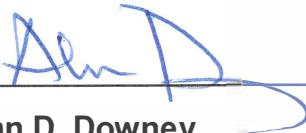
## Previous Reports

PW02-063 Waste Management User Pay Program and By-law, November 5, 2002

## Pre-submission Review

Agenda Management Team Review on March 4, 2019

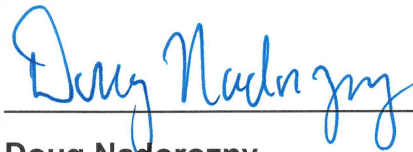
### Departmental Approval



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**Allan D. Downey**  
**Director of Operations**  
**Operational Services Department**

### Approved for Agenda



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**Doug Nadorozny**  
**Chief Administrative Officer**

## Northern Six (6) Enforcement of Bag Limits

<u>Local</u>	<u>Bag Limits</u>	<u>Enforcement</u>	<u>Outcome</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
Aurora	3 (no tags)	N/A - solid waste Contractor enforces blue box contamination with OOPs stickers  Municipal staff monitors	Contractor only enforces the blue box contamination concerns, no enforcement of bag limits-No reduction in waste	Bi-weekly waste collection Weekly blue and green
East Gwillimbury	2 (tags up to 3 more) <b>(5)</b>	Yes-contractor enforces with OOPS stickers Yes- contractor enforces with OOPS sticker, Municipal staff monitor contractor		Bi-weekly waste collection Weekly blue and green
Georgina	1 (tags up to 4 more) <b>(5)</b>	Yes- contractor enforces with OOPS sticker, Municipal staff monitor contractor		Bi-weekly waste collection Weekly blue and green
King	2 (tags up to 3 more) <b>(5)</b>	Yes- contractor enforces with OOPS sticker, Municipal staff monitor contractor		Bi-weekly waste collection Weekly blue and green
Newmarket	3 (tags up to 3 more) <b>(6)</b>	Yes- contractor enforces with OOPS sticker, Municipal staff monitor contractor	Seems to work well, tags offered to residents the option of more waste should it be necessary	Bi-weekly waste collection Weekly blue and green
Stouffville	3 (tags up to 3 more) <b>(6)</b>	Yes- contractor enforces with OOPS sticker, Municipal staff monitor contractor	Seems to work well, tags offer the residents the option of more waste should it be necessary	Bi-weekly waste collection Weekly blue and green

<b>Aurora</b>	<b>tonnages</b>	<b>cost per tonne</b>	<b>total cost</b>
<b>Year</b>			
2017	6192.30	58.58	362,744.94
2018	6193.00	96.00	594,528.00
2019	6496.66	96.00	623,677.44



Attachment #2











