



Report: TES-WMS-15-05

Region of Waterloo
Transportation and Environmental Services
Waste Management Services

To: Chair Tom Galloway and Members of the Planning and Works Committee

Date: April 14, 2015 **File Code:** E33-30A

Subject: Preliminary Service Level Options for Consideration for a New Waste Collection Contract

Recommendation:

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo approve a special meeting of the Planning and Works Committee for the evening of Wednesday, May 6, 2015, to allow for public feedback on the proposed collection service options presented in report TES-WMS-15-05, with the intent of a final service level option recommendation forthcoming in late May 2015.

Summary:

The current contracts for garbage, recycling and green bin/cart collection expire March 4, 2017. This presents an opportunity to consider and implement the diversion recommendations of the new Waste Management Master Plan (WMMP) which was approved by Regional Council in November 2013 (E-13-127). These recommendations included consideration of reduced bag limits, bi-weekly waste collection, a bag tag program, and standardizing service levels and programs in all seven area municipalities.

Extensive research and public engagement supports diversion efforts and helped to shape the service level options presented. Public and stakeholder engagement resulted in over 7,500 citizens being informed of and providing feedback on service level options, using various media such as telephone surveys, electronic surveys, home delivery information, social media, newspaper ads and coverage on local television and radio stations. Stakeholder discussions included a survey and discussions with area municipal public works and by-law enforcement staff, and consultation with the members of the WMMP Implementation Working Group, consisting

of four Regional councillors and staff involved in the WMMP. Building on the findings in the WMMP, staff also engaged municipalities outside of Waterloo Region to research their waste collection service levels, policies and practices.

This report establishes, in principle, two options for consideration for curbside service levels as part of the next waste collection contract as follows:

Option 1- (Bi-Weekly Garbage Collection)

- Four garbage bag limit per bi- weekly collection (potential to reduce to three bags);
- Unlimited weekly blue box and green bin collection;
- Bi-weekly yard waste collection (April to November);
- Bi-weekly appliance and bulky item pick-up, three item limit;
- Existing special and downtown business services; and
- Bag tag program.

Option 2 – (Weekly Garbage Collection)

- Two garbage bag limit per week (potential to reduce to one bag);
- Unlimited weekly blue box and green bin collection;
- Bi-weekly yard waste collection (April to November);
- Bi-weekly appliance and bulky item pick-up, three item limit;
- Existing special and downtown business services; and
- Bag tag program.

Both options presented would be expected to further improve residential waste diversion efforts and result in cost savings but would also provide increased levels of program complexity compared to the current curbside collection contract. Specifically, Option 1 is preferred by staff as it is anticipated to provide the greatest opportunity to both maximize diversion from landfill as well as result in net cost savings.

To allow citizens to have an opportunity to provide their final feedback on the proposed waste collection service options presented, Staff recommend a special meeting of the Planning and Works Committee be scheduled for the evening of May 6, 2015. A final recommendation report would be forthcoming in late May 2015.

Given that the contractors require a minimum of 12 – 15 months lead time to obtain resources, vehicles, and prepare the work to fulfil these contracts, staff plan to advertise for bids no later than August 2015 for award in November/December 2015.

Report:

Citizens of Waterloo Region, particularly in the tri-cities, enjoy one of the highest levels of curbside waste collection service in the Province. Participation in waste diversion programs is voluntary, with a strong emphasis on public education as a means of diverting waste from landfill. Attachment A outlines the curbside collection services currently available to citizens and while convenient for citizens, they generally do not

encourage citizens to divert waste or to fully utilize the diversion options available to them. Waste composition audits completed in 2013 estimate that over 50 per cent of the contents of garbage bags by weight could go in the green bin and 14 per cent could go in the blue box. Additional waste diversion of these “resources” that still remain in the garbage stream for beneficial re-use/recycling will reduce environmental impacts (i.e. leachate production and landfill gas odours) as well as extend the life of the landfill.

In November 2013, Regional Council approved an updated Waste Management Master Plan, which included the following primary recommended action regarding waste diversion:

- Consideration of curbside collection policy changes to increase diversion (e.g. bag limits, bi-weekly garbage collection, standardized Regional residential waste collection), and consider “user pay” options (e.g. bag tags)

With the pending expiry of the current waste collection contract on March 5, 2017, this presents the optimal opportunity to consider and implement the diversion recommendations of the new WMMP.

Citizen and stakeholder engagement

Citizen feedback was an integral part of the WMMP, with over 600 citizens responding to questions about diversion programs, and this feedback shaped the diversion recommendations of the WMMP. Nevertheless, it was recognized that any potential change to curbside collection practices would have considerable impact on citizens receiving curbside collection. Additional public feedback and education was required to ensure citizens were engaged and informed. Staff undertook a second public engagement initiative from November 2014 to January 2015, which included a telephone and online survey, public advertisements, home delivery of information, staff presentations and extensive media coverage. Over 7,500 citizens provided more feedback on the diversion options highlighted in the WMMP, and also provided over 6,000 additional comments on services and programs. Findings of the public engagement initiative include:

Waste set out

Citizens were asked about the type and amount of waste they put to the curb weekly:

- Average garbage bag set-out is 1.7 bags
- Average set out for green bin users is 1.5 bags, average for non green bin users is 1.8 bags
- Larger households set out more garbage, their average is 2.4 bags

- 86 per cent of citizens are putting out less than three bags per week, regardless of household size, green bin use, etc.
- 50 per cent of citizens report using the green bin and 97 per cent the blue box at least once per month

When asked what a reasonable garbage bag limit would be for weekly collection, the majority of respondents (68 per cent) indicated one or two bags. The bag limit preferences are slightly more conservative than current set out rates actually show.

The garbage bag set out rates reported by citizens in the survey is reflective of the set out rates obtained by staff through curbside waste audits. These curbside waste audits, done separately as part of the WMMP study, show that the average household set out is 1.7 bags as well (1.3 bags for green bin users), and that 84 per cent of citizens are putting out less than three bags per week.

Bi-weekly garbage collection

Citizens were then asked whether their household could manage bi-weekly garbage collection, if unlimited blue boxes and green bins continued to be picked up weekly. Exactly half of the citizens surveyed reported that their current practices would allow them to manage bi-weekly garbage collection, while half were opposed to it. Support for bi-weekly collection is strongest among green bin users.

Citizens were asked their thoughts on a reasonable bag limit for bi-weekly garbage collection. The majority of citizens (66 per cent) would be served by a bi-weekly four bag limit, which corresponds with the reported current set-out rates of approximately two bags per week.

When asked about possible issues with the bi-weekly collection of garbage, respondents listed smell, storage and animals as their top three concerns.

Extra waste

Finally, citizens were asked how, in the case of bag limits, they would prefer to handle having more waste than the limit allows. Citizens were given the choice of three options, all or some of which are in use by other municipalities: purchase a bag tag to allow for items to be collected curbside; store items and wait until a few times a year when bag limits are increased; or take items to the transfer station.

Citizens closely preferred either bag tags (41 per cent) or storing items until amnesty/double-up days (37 per cent) over bringing items to the transfer station (22 percent). Citizens preferred the options which allowed for the convenience of curbside collection of additional waste.

Further details on the December 2014 waste survey are attached in Attachment B.

While residential waste collection is the responsibility of the Region, area municipalities are involved and impacted by the services the Region offers and the interests of citizens mutually served. Staff initiated a survey and subsequent discussions with area municipal staff involved in public works and by-law enforcement to obtain their feedback on diversion challenges and opportunities unique to their municipality. Opportunities such as standardization of services across the Region, weekly bag limits and changes to bulky/appliance collection frequency were generally acceptable, with some implementation challenges and repercussions identified. These included the potential for increased road side dumping, bag limits at off-campus rental properties, enforcement, and downtown waste collection limits and collection frequency. As a first step, bi-weekly garbage collection was not recommended by area municipal staff, and an intensive public education and promotion program was cited as critical to success. Not unexpected, bag limits and collection frequency of bulky/appliance collection were less of a concern in the townships, as these are current, well established practices in those municipalities.

The WMMP Working Group, consisting of Regional Councillors Tom Galloway, Jane Mitchell, Joe Nowak and Karl Kiefer and staff, with a mandate to implement the recommendations of the Master Plan, also reviewed and considered various diversion options and curbside collection practices, as presented in this report.

Service level and/or service frequency recommendations

Staff recommends that residential waste service levels and collection frequencies be standardized across Waterloo Region, providing all eligible homeowners with the same curbside collection and waste diversion services. As seen in other communities, the following curbside collection policies/practices have proven to be the most effective in increasing residential diversion rates:

- unlimited weekly recycling and green bin collection with *bi-weekly* collection of a limited number of garbage bags/containers (option 1); or
- unlimited weekly recycling and green bin collection with *weekly* collection of a limited number of garbage bags/containers (option 2).

Additionally, limiting the number of garbage bags is an established best practice to drive waste diversion results. The WMMP identified that a minimum of three bags per property per week is required to support any type of waste diversion program, and recommends a two or less bag limit to encourage citizens to more actively participate in the diversion programs available to them. Based on curbside audits and the public engagement survey findings, the set-out of two bags (or less) per week is already occurring in the majority of households in Waterloo Region.

Each collection service level option will require additional resources to implement and administer the new program. Particularly in the tri-cities, citizens are not accustomed to

garbage or collection frequency restrictions and generally everything they place out for collection is picked up. Additional program impacts/costs for the Waste Division would include additional staff to handle increased phone calls, on-street customer service, an extensive public education program, and an increased, one-time inventory of blue box and green bin containers. Ensuring the availability of free blue boxes and green bins at the start-up of the new collection contract will support citizens in transitioning successfully to the new reduced garbage bag/container limits while also ensuring their participation in diversion programs.

For comparison purposes, Attachment C outlines the collection services and resources in place at other municipalities of similar size and with similar programs. As identified, those municipalities with reduced bag limits or bi-weekly garbage collection frequencies collect significantly more organic materials.

Therefore, based on extensive research of programs undertaken in other comparable municipalities and through the public engagement activities undertaken, two service level options have been developed for consideration and are as follows:

Option 1- (Bi-Weekly Garbage Collection)

Service	Current Level of Service	Proposed	
		Standard	Collection Frequency
Garbage	– Weekly collection (10 – 3 bags depending on municipality)	4 bag limit per property (to 3 or less) - New standard	Bi-weekly – New standard in the tri-cities and townships
Blue box	– Weekly or bi-weekly (rural townships)	Unlimited quantities	Weekly - New standard in rural areas of the townships
Green bin	– Weekly or no service (rural townships)	Unlimited quantities	Weekly - New service in rural areas of the townships
Yard waste	– Bi-weekly or no service (rural townships)	Unlimited quantities	Bi-weekly (April to November) - New service in rural areas of the townships
Bulky items and appliances	– Weekly unlimited (tri-cities) or monthly	3 item limit - New standard in the tri-	Bi-weekly - New standard in the tri-

	5 item (townships)	cities and townships	cities and townships
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Option 1 involves Region-wide bi-weekly garbage collection, with a four bag limit and the opportunity to reduce to a three bag limit. Service levels to over 5,500 homes in the townships will increase to weekly blue box and green bin collection, and bi-weekly yard waste collection. All township citizens will see increased bulky/appliance collection to a bi-weekly service, and tri-city citizens will move from weekly to bi-weekly service. Ultimately, all citizens will have a new three item bulky/appliance limit per collection period. Yard waste collection would continue to be collected bi-weekly, on alternating weeks from the bulky/appliance collection, thereby increasing efficiency.

While public engagement feedback noted that many citizens could make bi-weekly garbage collection work at their home, staff recognize that a shift from weekly garbage collection to bi-weekly, in addition to the other proposed service level and frequency changes, represents a significant change for citizens. Generally, other municipalities transitioned from weekly garbage collection to bi-weekly collection after applying stringent bag limits, and after their citizens had incorporated the full spectrum of diversion programs in their day-to-day waste disposal habits. Option 1 would be expected to have a high impact on diversion and result in greater potential for cost savings in comparison to Option 2. However, it will also require significantly more resources for public education, and to implement, administer and enforce the new service levels and standards. While the actual costs and any resulting savings will not be known until the new collection tender is awarded in late fall of 2015, staff estimate that the net annual budget impact would result in savings estimated to be between \$500,000 and \$1.5 million. This estimate is based on experiences observed in comparable size municipalities and discussions with collection contractors.

Option 1 is staff’s preferred option, with the potential for a five to ten per cent increase in residential diversion anticipated (or approximately 15,000 tonnes per year diverted from landfill). Most of the diversion is expected to be green bin organic material that would eventually be expected to maximize our current processing capacity/availability.

Option 2 – (Weekly Garbage Collection)

Service	Current Level of Service	Proposed	
		Standard	Collection Frequency
Garbage	– Weekly collection (10 – 3 bags depending on municipality)	2 bag limit per property (to 1 bag) - New standard	Weekly

Blue box	– Weekly or bi-weekly (rural townships)	Unlimited quantities	Weekly - New standard in rural areas of the townships
Green bin	– Weekly or no service (rural townships)	Unlimited quantities	Weekly - New service in rural areas of the townships
Yard waste	– Bi-weekly or no service (rural townships)	Unlimited quantities	Bi-weekly (April to November) - New service in rural areas of the townships
Bulky items and appliances	– Weekly unlimited (tri-cities) or monthly 5 item (townships)	3 item limit - New standard in the tri-cities and townships	Bi-weekly - New standard in the tri-cities and townships

Option 2 involves continuing weekly garbage collection, initially with a two bag limit and an opportunity to further reduce to one bag, thereby balancing diversion through stringent bag limits with the collection frequency citizens are most familiar with. As in Option 1, service levels to over 5,500 homes in the townships will increase to weekly blue box and green bin collection, and bi-weekly yard waste collection. All township citizens will see increased bulky/appliance collection to a bi-weekly service, and tri-city citizens will move from weekly to bi-weekly service. All citizens will have a new three item bulky/appliance limit per each collection period. Yard waste collection would continue to be collected bi-weekly, on alternating weeks from the bulky/appliance collection, thereby increasing efficiency.

This option is expected to have a moderate (2 bags) to high (1 bag) impact on diversion and would also likely result in contract savings but not as significant as Option 1. Staff estimate moderate impacts on resources for promotion and education, implementation and ongoing contract administration. As previously mentioned, while the actual savings will not be known until the new collection contract is awarded in late fall of 2015, staff anticipate net annual cost savings is estimated to be between \$250,000 and \$750,000 based on results of comparable service level collection contract awards in other municipalities and discussions with collection contractors.

Option 2 is estimated to increase residential diversion by three to five per cent, or approximately 8,000 tonnes per year diverted from landfill. Again, most of this diversion is expected to be green bin organic material.

User pay options (i.e. bag tags)

Most communities also offer a bag tag program when stringent bag limits and/or bi-

weekly garbage collection is implemented. A bag tag program acknowledges that there are situations where more waste than the allowable limit is generated, but still provides citizens with the convenience of curbside collection.

Bag tags also support the concept that the individual user bears some cost of the collection of their additional waste rather than spreading that cost across all taxpayers in Waterloo Region.

Staff recommend launching a phased approach to a bag tag program with the provision of a limited number of “free” bag tags for the first twelve months (March 2017 to February 2018) of the new collection contract followed by a fee based bag tag program thereafter (with consideration of exemptions for special circumstances such as residents with medical considerations, home daycares, etc.).

This has been common practice in other municipalities with bag tag programs and by requiring a bag tag, albeit initially a free one, the intention is to build awareness of the waste generated and encourage full participation in available diversion programs. Staff will report back to Planning and Works Committee in the fall of 2016 with a detailed report on how a fee based bag tag program could be implemented.

A report to Council, Waste Management Funding Models (E-13-136), provided some general information on user pay systems and waste utility options.

Existing business and special collection services

The proposed garbage bag limits or collection frequency options may not be appropriate for certain areas that currently receive municipal collection. Examples include eligible properties with multiple units (six and under), twice per year collection at off-campus student rental properties, and business improvement areas that have more frequent garbage collection and in some cases, a larger bag limit. These areas represent a very small percentage of the overall collection contract and staff are proposing no change to current bag limits (10) and/or in some cases, the collection frequency.

For some materials, such as carpet replacement and construction and demolition debris, the new limit would require citizens to work with their retailer or installers to dispose of this waste. Alternatively, citizens would still have the option of utilizing the closest waste transfer station for materials not eligible for curbside collection.

Next steps

After the special meeting of the Planning and Works Committee meeting to solicit citizen input, Staff will prepare a final curbside collection service level recommendation report incorporating citizen feedback and Council direction. This report would be expected to be presented in late May 2015 and would form the basis of the next curbside collection contract that will commence in March 2017.

Once the final curbside service levels are approved by Council, further staff reports would include details on the design and implementation of a garbage bag tag program (including exemptions where applicable), and a Region-wide public education and promotion plan to support citizen transition to the new waste collection service levels.

Corporate Strategic Plan:

This report has been prepared consistent with the Corporate Strategic Objective of Focus Area 1 “Environmental Sustainability: Project and enhance the environment” and particularly action 1.3 “Reducing the Amount of Waste Requiring Landfill.” Waste reduction is a core priority for the Region of Waterloo.

Financial Implications:

While the actual savings of either Option 1 or Option 2 will not be known until the new collection contract is tendered and awarded in the fall of 2015, staff have provided projections based on savings achieved in other comparable municipalities and from discussions with the collection contractors. The savings resulted from the proposed changes in the collection standards and frequency in the new collection contract with either Option 1 or Option 2 are expected to result in net savings of approximately \$250,000 to \$1.5 million. It is anticipated that the collection contract savings will assist with off-setting the additional resources (i.e. staff) and costs associated with responding to the more restrictive curbside collection standards and frequency. The additional costs are based on experiences in comparable municipalities with similar curbside service levels. Additional program costs/impacts include increased resident phone calls, on-street customer service, an extensive public education program, increased potential for roadside dumping and bylaw enforcement. An additional inventory of blue box and green bin collection containers is also provided for resident encouragement and is considered a best practice at the launch of any new initiative such as this.

Further refinement of the financial implications will be presented as part of the final service level recommendation report in late May 2015.

Other Department Consultations/Concurrence:

Staff from the Corporate Services Department have been consulted and provided input toward the preparation of this report.

Attachments

- Attachment A: Current waste collection service levels
- Attachment B: Waste management survey results: possible curbside changes
- Attachment C: Waste collection services comparison between municipalities of similar size and/or service levels

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Approved By: Thomas Schmidt, Commissioner, Transportation and Environmental Services



Attachment A

WHAT ARE OUR CURRENT COLLECTION SERVICES?

DID YOU KNOW...
 Collection crews make over 1.5 million stops each month to provide these curbside services

Residential Waste Collection Services on Garbage Day

	Blue Box Recycling	Green Bin	Garbage per property	Large Items	Yard Waste
Cambridge Kitchener Waterloo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly collection 10 bag limit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> April - November Every second week
North Dumfries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly collection Every second week in rural areas 	If you receive weekly blue box collection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly collection 6 bag limit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly 	If you receive weekly blue box collection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every second week, April - November
Wellesley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly collection Every second week in rural areas 	If you receive weekly blue box collection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly collection 3 bag limit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly 	If you receive weekly blue box collection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every second week, April - November
Wilmot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly collection Every second week in rural areas 	If you receive weekly blue box collection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly collection 4 bag limit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly 	If you receive weekly blue box collection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every second week, April - November
Woolwich	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly collection Every second week in rural areas 	If you receive weekly blue box collection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly collection 3 bag limit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly 	If you receive weekly blue box collection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every second week, April - November





Region of Waterloo

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Attachment B

Waste management survey results: possible curbside changes

Background

Following the endorsement of the WMMP Diversion recommendation:

- Consider curbside collection policy changes to increase diversion (e.g. bag limits, bi-weekly garbage collection, standardized Regional residential waste collection) and consider "user pay" options (e.g. bag tags)

Regional Council directed staff to conduct ongoing public awareness and more community engagement on the potential changes. In the fall of 2014, staff engaged in a number of activities, culminating in a survey, with the following goals:

- Inform residents of pending changes endorsed through WMMP;
- Educate residents about possible curbside changes and what they mean;
- Encourage public feedback on options endorsed through WMMP; and
- Use resident feedback to help develop curbside policy recommendations.

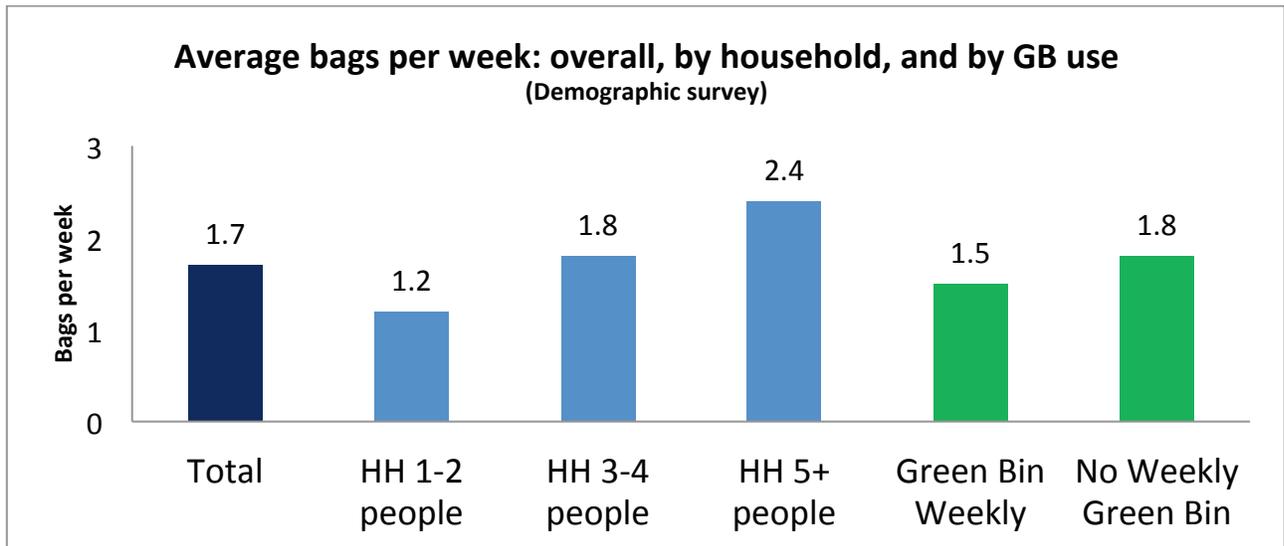
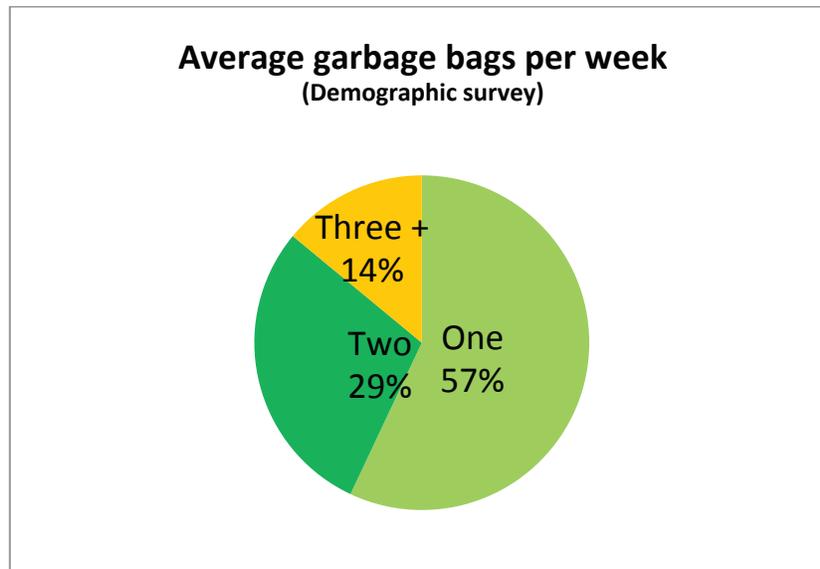
The survey was conducted in two ways:

1. Demographically representative (2011 Census) of 511 single family households across Waterloo Region ("demographic survey"). This group would serve as a control group, to balance concerns that a random survey is mainly completed by self-selected parties interested in waste management.
2. Online survey (could also complete via telephone through the call centre) promoted and randomly open to all residents of Waterloo Region; over 7,000 responses ("random survey").

While the random survey respondents provided valuable comment and input, they do skew slightly "greener" in their results. In order to prevent any bias, the results presented below are mainly based on the demographic survey, which is meant to be representative of the average citizen of Waterloo Region.

Survey Results

Garbage set out

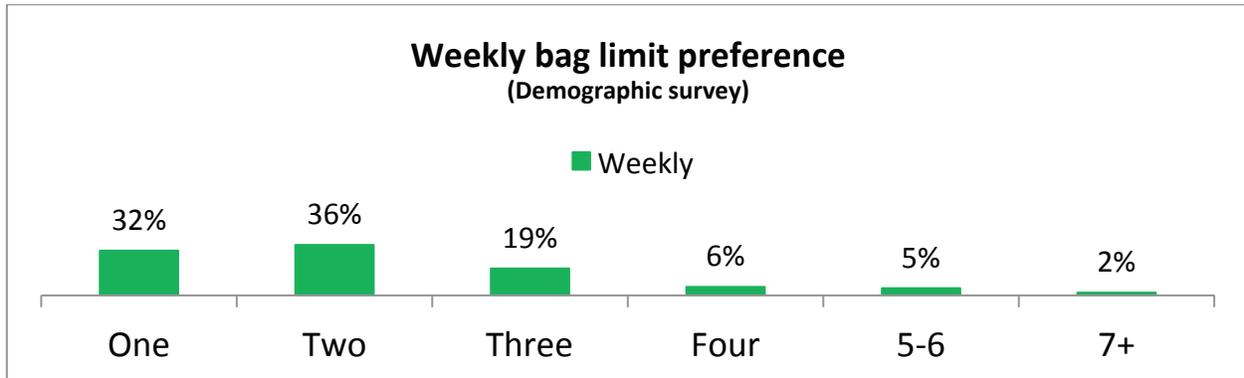


Current waste set out habits in Waterloo Region:

- Average bag set-out is 1.7
- Average set out for green bin users is 1.5, average for non green bin users is 1.8
- Larger households set out more, their average is 2.4 bags
- 86% of residents are putting out less than three bags per week, regardless of household size, green bin use, etc.

- 50% of residents use the green bin and 97% the blue box at least 1x per month

Weekly bag limits

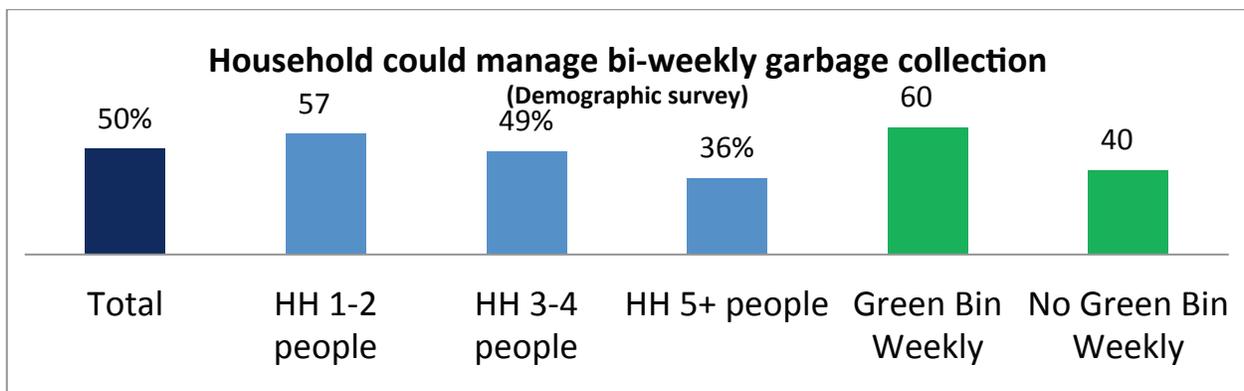


When asked what a reasonable bag limit would be for weekly collection, the majority of residents (68%) indicated one or two bags. The bag limit preferences are slightly more conservative than current set out rates. Even residents who regularly put out only 1 or 2 bags can likely think of occasions when they had additional waste, and may want to ensure they have capacity for that additional curbside set out.

Based on the self-reported set out rates, only 14% of residents are putting out 3 or more bags of waste. A 2-bag limit would serve 86% of residents, given current set-out habits and practices. It is worth noting that of 150,000 household served, 14% is still a significant number, representing about 21,000 households who would have to adjust their waste habits, and will likely require customer service calls requiring education, assistance and possibly enforcement.

Bi-weekly collection

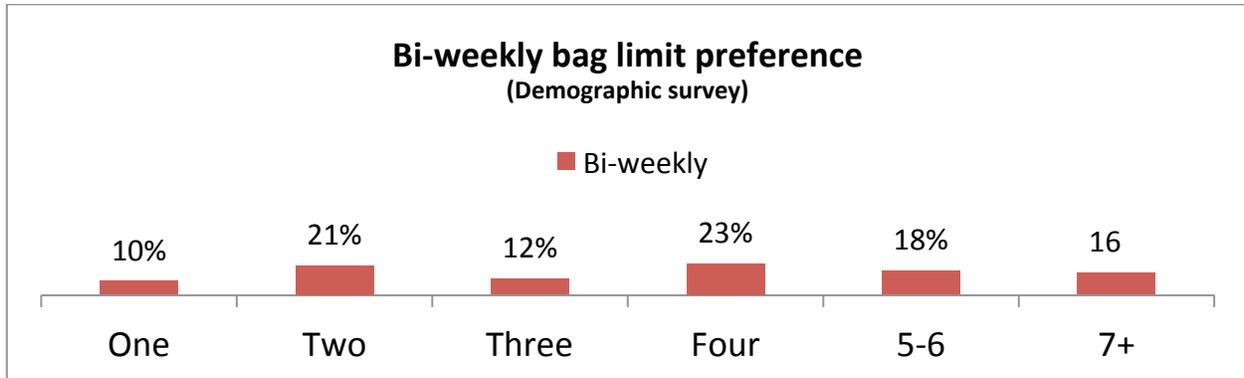
Residents were asked whether their household could manage bi-weekly collection:



Half of residents surveyed reported that their current practices would allow them to manage bi-weekly garbage collection. Support was highest among smaller households and green bin users, while larger households or those not using the green bin reported the largest potential impact from bi-weekly collection.

Bi-weekly bag limits

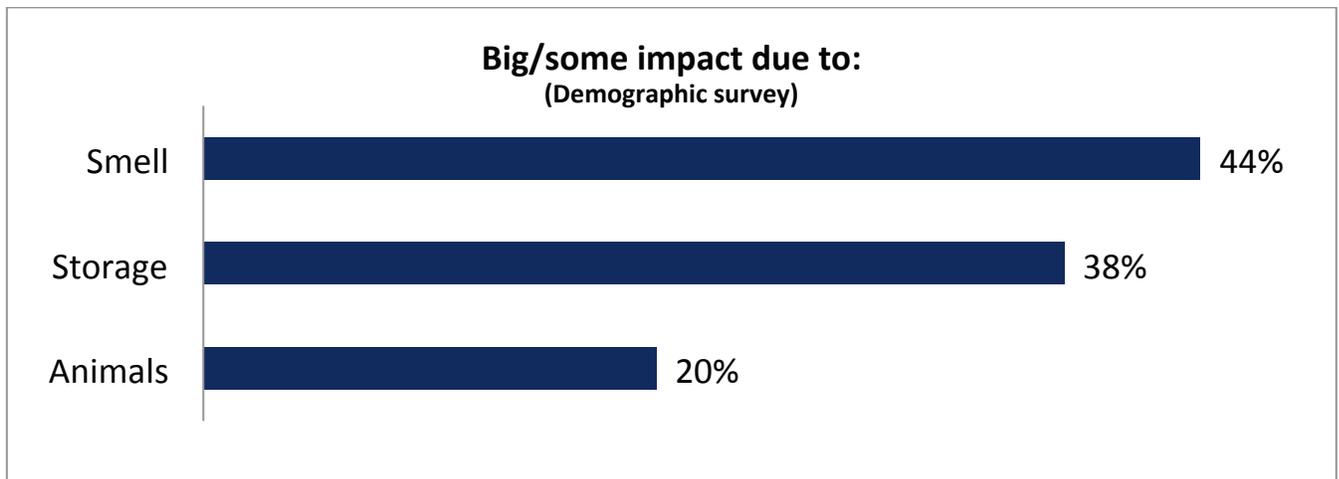
Residents were asked their thoughts on a reasonable bag limit for bi-weekly garbage collection:



The majority of residents (66%) would be served by a bi-weekly four bag limit, corresponding to current set-out rates of approximately two bags/week. Again, this reflects current waste habits of residents. Support for bi-weekly collection is strongest among green bin users.

Concerns with bi-weekly collection

Residents who reported that bi-weekly collection would have either a big or some impact on their household were asked why, and their concerns were recorded. The top three concerns mentioned were the same as those reported through the online survey (although the numbers varied slightly).

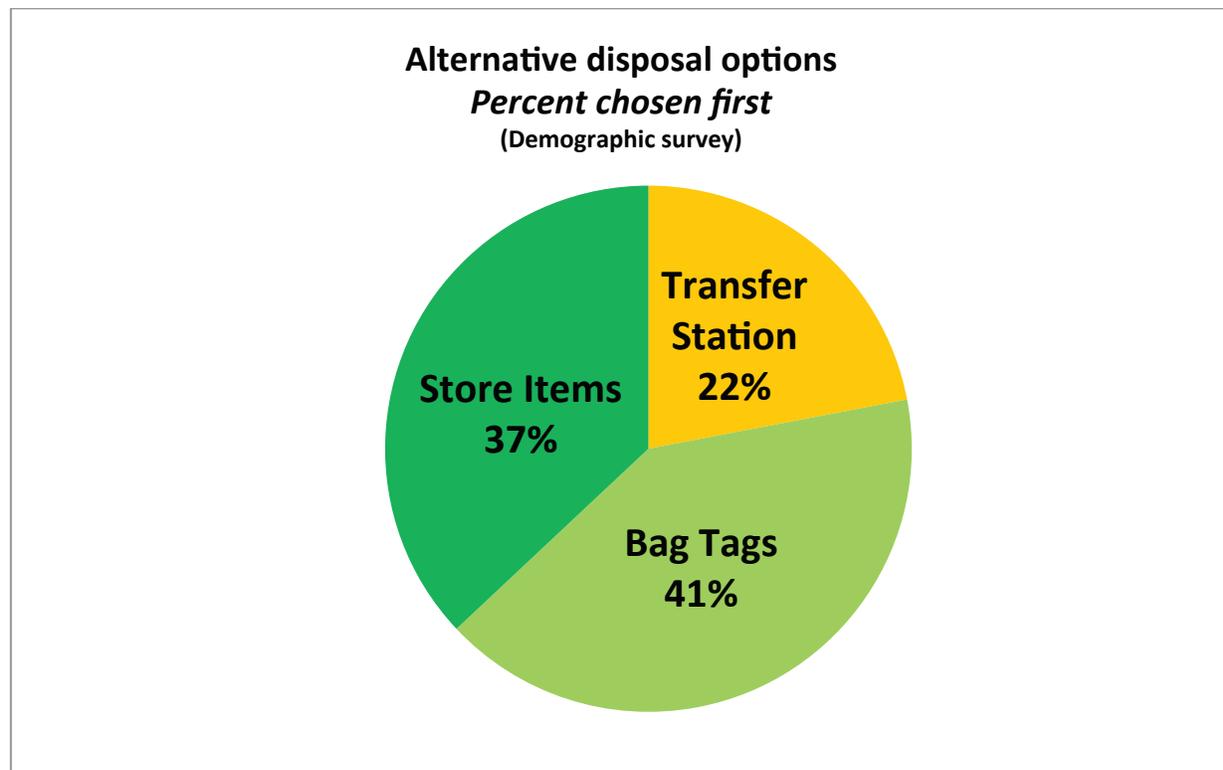


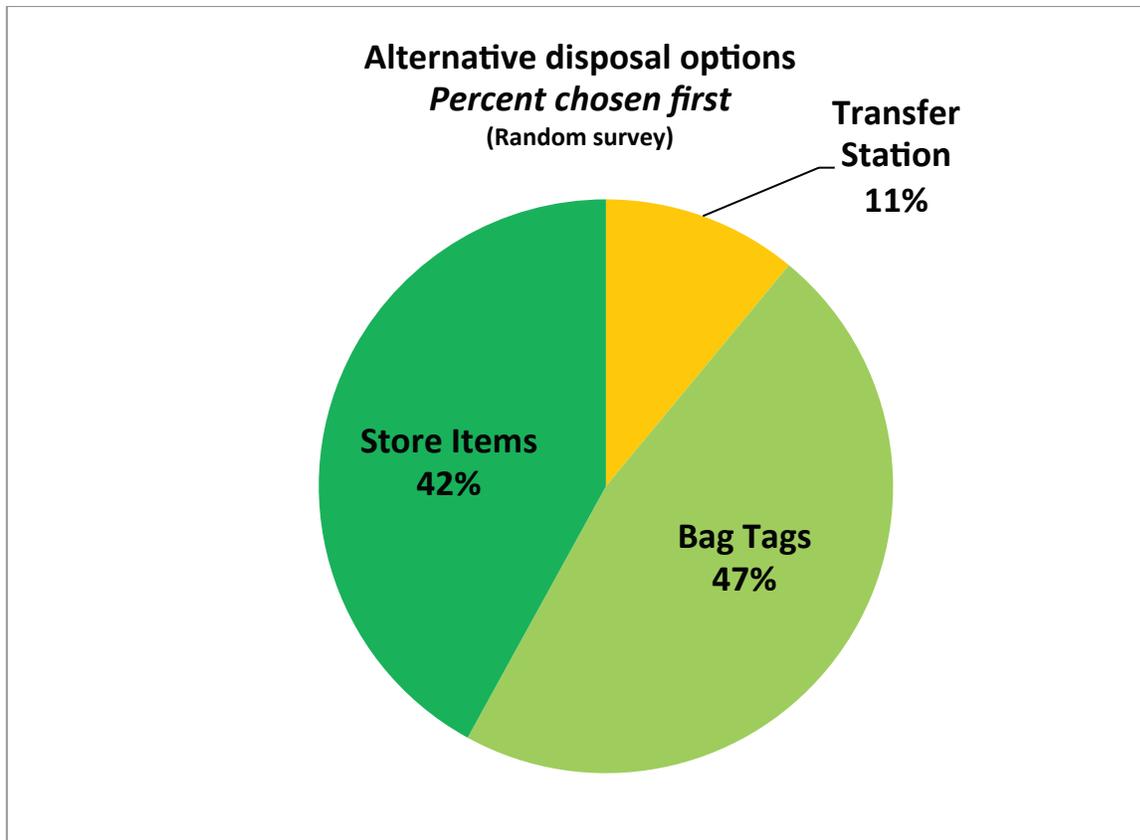
These issues, while all valid when it comes to handling waste, should be manageable for residents if they use the blue box and green bin weekly. It is apparent from write-in comments that many of these concerns have to do with storing garbage containing food waste among non green-bin users, and diapers/personal hygiene products among those who do use the green bin. These concerns can all be addressed through education.

The more engaged households reported being in diversion programs (i.e. blue box and green bin) the more likely they were to support bi-weekly collection.

Extra waste

Finally, residents were asked how, in the case of bag limits, they would prefer to handle having more waste than the limit allows. As the issue of what to do with extra waste beyond the bag limit affects all residents regardless of current practices, the results of the online survey are included here as well. Residents were given a choice of three options, all or some of which are in use by other municipalities: purchase a bag tag to allow for items to be collected curbside; store items and wait until a few times a year when bag limits are increased; or take items to the transfer station.





In the case of both surveys, residents closely preferred both bag tags and storing items until amnesty days over bringing items to the transfer station. These two options reflect both a user-pay (bag tag) and no-cost option, but overwhelmingly, the majority of respondents preferred the option that allowed for the convenience of curbside collection. Write-in comments also reflects many residents who do not drive, rely solely on public transit, or otherwise may not be able to get to a transfer station.

Additional observations

The majority of set out information reported by residents in the demographic survey is reflective of the set out rates obtained by staff through waste audits. Curbside waste audits show that the average household set out is 1.7 bags (1.3 bags for green bin users), and audits further show that 61% of households put out 1 bag, 23% put out 2 bags, and 16% put out 3 or more bags (compared to 57%, 29% and 14% respectively for the survey responses).

While self-reported green bin use through the survey is higher than that reported in audits (50% versus 19-35%) there could be several reasons for the discrepancy. Users of the survey were asked if they had set the green bin out at least one time in the last month; this occasional use of the green bin would account for lower participation rates in the weekly snapshot of the curbside audits. It may also be that survey respondents were reluctant to report not using the green bin when asked directly as part of a waste survey.

Self-reported blue box participation rates are also slightly higher than those reported in audits (97% versus 82%) but the same reasons for discrepancy in green bin participation percentage may apply.

The concerns that residents have with bi-weekly collection (smell, storage, animals) can nearly all be addressed with proper green bin use. Outside of items that can be handled by the green bin, the items most likely to cause concern are diapers and personal hygiene products. According to various public health departments (including ROW Public Health) these items are safe to hold for two weeks if properly handled/stored.



Waste Collection Services Comparison between Similar Municipalities

Attachment C

Municipality	Garbage			Recycling	Organics		Yard Waste	Bulky/ Appliances	Customer Service/Contract Management			
	Freq.	Bag Limit	Bag tags?	Freq.	Freq.	Weight*	Freq.	Freq.	Total Calls	Sent to Waste	In-office Staff	On-road Staff
Waterloo Region – tri-cities	weekly	10	no	weekly	weekly	9,000	bi-weekly	weekly	28,000	11,000	3	2
Waterloo Region – townships	weekly	3 to 6	no	weekly**	weekly**		bi-weekly	monthly				
Niagara Region (427,000 population)	weekly	1	yes (\$2)	Weekly Two-stream	weekly	28,000	weekly	Apt. for appliances, weekly bulky	not available	not available	6	5
City of Hamilton (520,000 population)	weekly	1	yes (free)	Weekly Two-stream	weekly	35,000	weekly	Apt. for bulky, no appliances	102,000	51,000	6	5
Region of Peel*** (1.3 mil population)	weekly	2	yes (\$1)	Weekly One stream	weekly	32,400	bi-weekly	Appliances for fee, weekly bulky	97,000	31,000	2	10
Halton Region (518,000 population)	bi-weekly	3	yes (\$2)	Weekly One stream	weekly	26,000	bi-weekly	Apt. for appliances, 3 bulky bi-weekly	56,000	17,500	3	4
City of Ottawa (820,000 population)	bi-weekly	6	no	Bi-weekly**** Two stream	weekly	55,000	bi-weekly	bi-weekly bulky, no appliances	not available	90,000	4	7

Notes:

* Weights in tonnes; 2011 or 2012 data; some municipalities allow small amounts of yard waste.

** Region of Waterloo - township recycling /green bin collection is weekly in settlement areas; rural areas receive bi-weekly recycling and no green bin collection.

*** Region of Peel - 2016 collection changing to cart based weekly organics and biweekly waste & recycling collection.

**** Alternating Recycling Collection Service: first week containers, second week fibres.