

## **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE- FEBRUARY 7, 2005**

### **SET OUT RESTRICTIONS FOR LEAF AND YARD WASTE MATERIAL COLLECTION & ADDITIONAL MATERIAL BAN FROM GARBAGE COLLECTION**

#### **Recommendation**

The Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works recommends amendments to the City's Waste/Recycling Collection By-law 350-94 as follows:

1. That By-law 350-94, section 1, subsection (o), be amended to add '*Used Beverage Containers*' to the list of materials defined as 'Non-Collectible Waste'.
2. That By-law 350-94, section 6 ('Approved Receptacles') be amended to add '*Leaf and yard waste material must be set out in kraft paper bags designed for leaf and yard waste and/or designated open top rigid containers with a size no greater than 0.5 m (18") in diameter and 0.9 m (2'7") in height. Other receptacles such as plastic bags and oversized containers shall not be used.*'

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to revise by-law 350-94 to reflect an additional non-collectible item and to amend set out restrictions for leaf and yard waste material.

#### **Background - Analysis and Options**

a) Used Beverage Containers banned from the garbage stream

The Region of York has entered into various contracts for the provision of waste disposal for municipally collected residential waste. As part of their contractual obligations, the Region is required to ensure that the waste hauled to various landfills, specifically the Michigan landfills, for disposal, is in strict compliance to all applicable Certificate of Approvals, local regulations, and contractual disposal agreements.

As of January 1, 2003, these landfills (2 landfills in the State of Michigan and 1 landfill near St. Thomas, Ontario) started receiving the Region's waste. In mid-2004, the State of Michigan brought in new legislation concerning the level of prohibited waste ("De Minimis Quantities") that would be accepted in each load. As a result of this new legislation, the Region of York had to submit an application of 'Certification of Equivalent Landfill Disposal Prohibitions'. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) approved the Region's application, which permitted the Region of York to continue to send its residential waste to Michigan. Although the Region is permitted to continue to send its residential waste to Michigan, there are new rules with respect to the inspection and enforcement to ensure that the Region's waste does not contain prohibited material. Prohibited waste includes the following 12 items:

1. Used deposit beverage containers
2. Whole motor vehicle tires
3. Used Oil
4. Lead Acid battery
5. Yard Clippings
6. Medical Waste
7. Low-level radioactive waste
8. Hazardous waste
9. Liquid waste
10. Sewage
11. PCBs
12. Asbestos

Eleven of the twelve items on Michigan's prohibited list are currently banned in the City's garbage collection program. "*Used Deposit Beverage Containers*" is the only item on the list that is not specified as 'non-collectible waste' in the City's current waste/recycling collection by-law. The Region has defined Used Beverage Containers as "*Any container including, but not limited to: Aluminum, Steel, Glass, PET # 1 plastic containers used to store or contain beverages.*"

In accordance with the MDEQ enforcement requirements, a waste load will be considered out of compliance if they find one bag of prohibited waste. More specifically, a single bag, containing only prohibited waste in it, may result in the rejection for the entire load.

The impact of this change to the by-law should not be too significant if residents fully participate in the City's recycling collection program.

#### b) Ban of Plastic Bags in the Leaf and Yard Collection Program

In response to contractual obligations between the Region of York and Halton Recycling Ltd., the Region has banned plastic bags from the leaf and yard waste material stream effective January 1, 2005. This ban is region-wide and affects all municipalities in the Region of York.

The purpose of the ban is twofold: reduced processing costs for the Region of York and a higher value for the finished product for Halton Recycling Ltd. This ban has, in essence, already taken place in the Asian Long Horned Beetle (ALHB) Regulated Area in Vaughan, as the Region's temporary ALHB compost facility banned plastic bags at the start of the 2004 leaf and yard season. The affected residents in the Regulated Area amount to approximately 20,000 households – almost 30% of the total number of households in Vaughan. Many large municipalities, such as Toronto, have successfully banned plastic bags from their leaf and yard collection programs.

The options for residents will be to use either kraft paper bags designed for leaf and yard waste material, or a designated open top rigid container(s) within a specified size. Residents who express concern about the cost of kraft paper bags (a minimum of approximately \$0.60 per bag) will be encouraged to use a 'designated open top rigid container'.

In order to ensure that the rigid containers can be easily identified as leaf and yard waste by the collection crews, a program will be undertaken to educate residents to place their leaf and yard waste material in a designated pile, separate from their garbage. Public Works will be providing stickers to the residents that say "Leaf and Yard Waste" that the resident can adhere to their designated open top rigid container.

Staff is also making a concerted effort to educate residents on other ways to manage their leaf and yard waste. Grasscycling and backyard composting will be the primary options for managing the waste on site. Grasscycling encourages residents to leave their grass clippings on their lawn to decompose naturally, and Backyard Composting encourages residents to divert their organic material (kitchen and yard) through the use of a backyard composter.

#### c) Promotion and Education of the above changes

To inform residents of the additional material ban in the garbage and of the set out requirements for the leaf and yard material, the City of Vaughan and the Region of York will launch a vigorous education/promotion campaign. This will involve any or all of the following:

- a section in the 2005 garbage/recycling collection calendar highlighting the changes;
- the provision of "leaf and yard waste" stickers that can be adhered to the residents' open top rigid containers (avail. Spring 2005). This will make it easier for the collection crews to identify a leaf and yard set outs;
- 39 mobile signs strategically located at major intersections throughout the City of Vaughan;
- updated information on the City's web site;
- advertisements in local newspapers;

- the use of door hangers and/or fluorescent orange stickers to be placed on bags not in compliance;
- working with the Corporate Communications Department, and the Region of York on additional promotion/education literature; and,
- hosting public information sessions and displays at Vaughan Public Libraries

### **Conclusion**

Due to disposal and processing restrictions at the facilities receiving the City of Vaughan garbage and compostable material, it is necessary for the City to ensure that the City's waste/recycling collection by-law reflects the ban of "used beverage containers" from regular household garbage, and, specify the acceptable set out requirements for leaf and yard waste material. Revising the by-law as set out in the recommendations of this report will accomplish this.

### **Attachments**

N/A

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