

**STAFF REPORT:           Engineering & Public Works Department**



**REPORT TO:**            **Infrastructure and Recreation Committee**  
**MEETING DATE:**      **March 8, 2011**  
**REPORT NO.:**         **EPW.11.023**  
**SUBJECT:**             **Continuous Improvement Fund - Waste  
Collection Indicator Program**  
**PREPARED BY:**       **Adam McMullin, Environmental Initiatives  
Coordinator**

**A. Recommendation**

THAT Council support the implementation of the Waste Collection Indicator Program as outlined in report EPW.11.023 entitled “Continuous Improvement Fund – Waste Collection Indicator Program”, and

THAT Council authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute an Agreement with Waste Diversion Ontario.

**B. Background**

Waste Diversion Ontario (WDO) provides grants and loans to Municipalities through the Continuous Improvement Fund (CIF) to execute projects that will increase the efficiency of Municipal Blue Box Recycling.

Staff applied and received a grant under the ‘Best Practices’ category to improve recycling collection from stationary waste boxes by implementing a collection notification system.

Many residents utilize a stationary waste box to place their garbage and recycling for collection. This practice requires the collection contractor to check every box for pick-up. Frequently the box is empty, reducing the collection efficiency. Some residents place a rock or other signals on the stationary boxes as an indicator, while other residents do not.

Staff propose implementing a universal collection indicator system for stationary waste boxes. The CIF grant provides an opportunity to conduct a preliminary roll-out of the initiative and assess the effectiveness of an indicator system on a sample population within the Municipality.

## **Program Elements**

### ***Scope***

Staff will install the indicators at 350 residences in Craighleith and other selected rural areas within the Town. The goal is to include a variety of resident types - seasonal, part-time, full-time – to assess the effectiveness of the system based on the differing needs of these residents. A large number of the rural and Craighleith residences utilize the stationary waste boxes and provide an ideal location for the program.

The initiative will run for 8 months, commencing in June, 2011 and ending January 2012, a period that captures winter and non-winter conditions.

### ***Indicator System***

The indicator, a 10 cm by 10 cm coloured sign, is attached to a chain and affixed to the waste box. Residents are instructed to place the sign(s) outside of the waste box when leaving recycling and/or garbage for collection. The collection agent will flip the sign(s) back into the waste box after picking up the waste. Two indicator signs, one for recycling and one for garbage, will be utilized.

### ***Public Engagement, Participation & Communication***

Town Staff will put together a clear communication piece for the residents in the collection study area. The communication will explain the significance of their participation to the success of the study, but also the efforts we are taking to create a more efficient (financial and environmentally) collection program.

The correspondence will also indicate the following:

- The Town's need to have the resident consent (by return mail or email) to placement of the signage on the resident's waste box, by means of drilling and fastening by Town Staff;
- That Town Staff will be following up with residents that do not respond by a set date;
- An explanation of the procedure for using the signage;
- Participants will be requested to complete an online survey regarding the initiative, an incentive prize will be offered for those that complete the survey;
- Residents will be encouraged to contact staff regarding the effectiveness of the indicators.

The goal will be to get 100% participation rate, to generate reliable data, information and feedback that can be used to assess the effectiveness of the program. For residents that may not agree to the placement of signage or with locations that Staff can not make contact with, a list of those locations will be provided to the collection contractor to ensure those boxes are checked every week.

The program provides an excellent opportunity to engage residents through a two-way dialogue and encourage feedback on the program. It will also allow staff to begin compiling data relating to collection box usage and waste collection habits.

***Measurement, Assessment and Evaluation***

A baseline of existing conditions will be established by auditing the number of the stationary waste boxes in the sampling area. Additionally, an observational audit during waste collection will quantify the number on empty boxes that are opened during a collection shift. The collection contractor will be interviewed to provide additional insight on the program. Following the implementation of the program a follow-up observational audit of the waste collection will be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the program.

Participants will be asked to complete two surveys, at the commencement and end of the program, to garner public feedback on the initiative and request suggestions for improvement.

***Anticipated Outcomes & Benefits***

The introduction of the universal indicator system will improve waste collection efficiency and service. The program will reduce the frequency of missed pickups and decrease associated complaints from residents, saving staff time. The contractor will decrease the number of stops, saving fuel, costs, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This may translate to reduced contractor cost in the future, as the improved collection efficiency may produce lower bids for services.

Improving service for residents may increase recycling capture rates, especially for occasional weekender residents that take home their recycling to their primary residence. Increasing the capture rate will generate more revenue from the blue box program.

**C. The Blue Mountains' Strategic Plan**

Improving waste collection efficiency furthers the Town's Strategic Goal #2 "Addressing the Town's municipal infrastructure needs" and Strategic Goal #3 "Preserving and enhancing natural and environmental features, and cultural heritage of the community".

**D. Environmental Impacts**

Improving waste collection efficiency reduces idling and vehicle running time, saving fuel and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Enhancing recycling capture rates will move the Town's diversion rate closer to achieving the goal of 60% waste diversion.

**E. Budget Impact**

The project budget is as follows:

<b>Project Budget Summary</b>		
<b>Staff Service Time</b>	Hours	
Installation	90	
Project administration	60	
Public engagement	20	
Auditing	25	
Staff Hours:		195
<b>Materials</b>	Units	Cost
Indicators, chains, bolts (\$10/sign x 2 per box)	700	\$7,000
Notification Letters and informational material	350	\$700
Installation expenses (fuel)		\$300
	Total Costs:	\$8,000

The anticipated cost for the materials and installation is \$8,000. The estimated staff time is 195 hours.

The CIF has provided \$4,000 in funding to be utilized towards the recycling cost component of the project. The remaining \$4,000 will be funded from the 2011 waste diversion budget.

**F. Attached**

None.

Respectfully submitted,

**Adam McMullin**  
Adam McMullin  
Environmental Initiatives Coordinator

**Reg Russwurm**  
Reg Russwurm  
Director of Engineering & Public Works

For more information, please contact:  
Adam McMullin  
[amcmullin@thebluemountains.ca](mailto:amcmullin@thebluemountains.ca)  
(519) 599-3131 x264