



Waste Diversion (Blue Box) Communications Plan

The Blue Mountains

2015 – 2020

Introduction

In an effort to clearly identify and plan promotions and education efforts associated with waste diversion in the Town's waste diversion system this document has been created. The plan outlines intended actions and annual monitoring of actions against tonnage of material collected.

Promotion and education is critical to the success of a program, it delivers basic system understanding and details nuances of the local program to households and system users. This information must be coordinated well with service delivery and specific dates.

Actions and Timing

Among promotion efforts is an annual print guide. This guide conveys most aspects of the various programs for the coming year in a summarized 4 page format. This guide has been in the past over 15 pages and was the largest cost source related to guide printing. Starting in 2016 the Town will be moving away from the magazine format of communication and into a more digital effort.

For 2016 the Town is working with Recollect to develop a waste app and widget. The app will be specific to the Town's programs and give households information specific to their address. The app will have all program information embedded in it and those details can be updated anytime. This is a real advantage over print which once mailed out quickly can become dated.

The Waste Resource paper guide will continue to be mailed out in 2015 and starting in 2016 the guide will be reduced in size and the printing cost savings will be transferred to the cost of establishing and maintaining the app and widget.

The Solid Waste Division is also stepping back from newspaper print ads that might typically communicate holiday collection. The cost versus benefit is not being realized and the quality of ad copy (legibility) is often poor. The dollars formally spent on newspaper ads will be directed towards the cost of the new app.

The Town continues to maintain email "blast" communications with over 1000 subscribers. The email blast is an Town wide email news feed sign-up program. Each week the Town sends out information on Town and local items. Waste management programs are often included and this becomes a low cost but effective method of conveying information.

The Solid Waste Division has its own twitter account which has over 100 followers. Tweets from this account (TBM Recycles@Mr.WasteWatcher) are tagged to the Town's account that has over 1,500 followers again giving greater exposure to waste programs and events.

A significant advantage of the email and twitter notices is the direct and timely nature of the information. Twitter feeds can be timed to coincide with Sunday evening of a long weekend, so residents wondering about holiday collection will have the information when they need it.

The Town also makes use of the website for information posting under various solid waste related tabs. The new app will also use the Town site as a home for the web app widget.

Web Application (App)

Over this next planning and communications period (2015-2020) the Town will focus the communications budget and efforts on promotion of the waste app. The apps features are many and highlights are listed below:

- Collection Calendar – based on house address that can link to electronic calendars or be printed;
- Notice and Reminder Subscriptions – weekly email, text or phone call of the pick-up schedule and what else might be available at the depot. The message can include education pieces that can be targeted to collection routes or days;
- Emergency Messaging – if weather or service delays occur a special message can instantly be sent out to subscribers;
- Waste Wizard – type the item into the search and the wizard shows the resident where it goes – if it is an item not yet in the wizard a message can be sent to add that item;
- Multiple Platforms
 - Online a widget is located on the Town website
 - Mobile app available in the Apple and Android stores customized and branded to TBM
 - Text to cells phones and Robo-calls to land lines;
- Analytics – Monthly and real-time reports of app use and sign-ups; and
- Accessibility – Ontario AODA compliant.

Mascots and Regional Efficiency

For the launch of the Town's Green Bin Program in 2015 a Green Bin mascot was designed and custom made. This mascot is shared with the Municipality of Meaford in a partnership to share the use of TBM's "Binjamin" and Meaford's "Bluey" blue box mascot. The mascots are used together at events to promote the diversion programs and raise awareness of the diversion options in the Town.

Table 1: Promotions and Education Summary

App	Website	Social Media	Events/Mascots	Print/Signage	Radio
Launch "TBM Waste Resource" app	Continue maintaining waste pages on Town site	Continue tweeting holiday notices and tagging Town	Municipal Works Days	Only newspaper ads for Christmas and New Year's	Promote App
Promote notification sign-ups and app download	Add app widget to waste collection page	Promote app through twitter and Facebook	Fall Fair	Maintain signage at depot	
Use notification system monthly for education	Continue Email blasts for holidays and upcoming programs		School Tours of Disposal Site	Print one page guide in-house and mass mail	
Use emergency notices for snow days and other	Put PDF form of print guide on site		School Visits	Use of Town Hall T.V.	
Keep waste wizard and calendar updated					

Budget

The approved 2015 budget included approximately \$10,300 for solid waste related promotions and advertisements. The spending area for these dollars will likely shift away from printing costs and print ads to the development and promotion of digital based information dissemination – a waste app.

Town Staff do most of the graphic design work for the print guide and website posts. Having in-house abilities to generate content and the annual guide saves contract costs but also occupies staff time. The Town also has a Communications Coordinator which assists with sending and messages. The Public Works Clerk also assists with answering collection and waste inquiries and maintaining information and distributing information.

Monitoring

Promotion and education activities are tracked and compared against tonnages collected annually. The seasonal nature of the TBM area is likely the strongest influence on weekly or monthly changes in tonnage however viewing promotion events with tonnage over multiple years may help to reveal trends. The waste app will be a powerful tool for monitoring its use compared to program participation.

Contact

This plan is prepared and reviewed as part of the Town's integrated waste diversion program, any questions or comments related to this plan should be directed to:

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