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**MEMORANDUM**

**PWC-C 38-2020**

**Subject: Update on Public Education Campaign and Contract Implementation**

**Date: Tuesday, October 13, 2020**

**To: Public Works Committee**

**From: Susan McPetrie, Waste Management Services Advisor and Jennifer Wilson, Waste Management Supervisor**

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The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an update on the progress of the public education campaign that is currently underway to raise awareness of the collection service level changes that will occur with the commencement of the new waste collection contracts on October 19, 2020. This memorandum also provides an update on the status of activities related to the implementation of the new curbside collection contracts in October.

**Overview of Campaign Implementation Phases**

As outlined in PWC-C 14-2020 and PWC-C 29-2020, implementation of the campaign began in June and will continue until November 2020. The campaign was designed to be delivered in three phases:

*Phase 1: The Pre-Change Campaign – June to September 21, 2020*

The focus of this phase is on educating the public about the upcoming changes and why the changes are being made, particularly through direct mail communication pieces to all residents and businesses in Niagara.

*Phase 2: The Build-Up - September 21 to October 19, 2020*

In the month before the waste collection changes take effect, outreach and communication activities will ramp up, to encourage residents to prepare for every-other-week garbage collection by picking up a Green Bin and downloading the waste collection mobile application, currently in development.

*Phase 3: The Launch and Post-Launch - October 20 to November, 2020*

The final phase of the campaign will feature messages focusing on compliance and illegal dumping, while at the same time recognizing and expressing appreciation to residents and businesses that have embraced and adapted to the changes.

The memorandum, PWC-C 29-2020 outlined the campaign activities completed in June and July and the following sections will summarize activities completed in August and up to September 17, 2020, results and upcoming activities. Appendix A contains a full, detailed list of these completed and upcoming activities.

**Summary of Campaign Activities Completed Between August and September 17, 2020**

Since the beginning of August, a range of promotional activities have been implemented to increase the visibility and reach of the campaign messages. Although COVID-19 restrictions have presented challenges to in-person outreach, unstaffed banner displays with take-away postcards containing information on the upcoming collection changes have continued to be set up at twenty-five (25) locations throughout the region. There have also been staffed displays provided at eight (8) local farmers' markets.

Advertisements indicating that starting October 19, Blue/Grey Boxes and Green Bins will be collected weekly and garbage will be collected every other week were installed on five (5) buses and fifteen (15) billboards. These advertisements will all be in place until October 18. Visitors to Regional landfill sites will also see these messages on outdoor banners set up at the sites and will be offered take-away postcards at the scale house. There are also seven (7) Regional Waste Management vehicles with magnets advertising that changes are coming October 19.

In addition to a series of radio advertisements that are running daily until October 18<sup>th</sup>, regular print advertisements are running in Niagara's weekly and daily newspapers. Online promotion has included social media posts, programmatic advertisements and digital advertisements with Metroland Media.

Appendix B provides some examples of graphics and messages used in campaign.

Following these communication tactics, there has been continued calls about the collection changes to Niagara Region's Waste Info-Line. There were 55 calls in August compared to 56 calls in July. Applications for diaper exemptions and for waste related to

medical conditions continue to be submitted with 356 received from August 1 to September 16, 2020.

Green Bin distribution data continues to suggest that residents are beginning to prepare for the start of every-other-week garbage collection in October. Between August and September 16, 2020, 2,032 Green Bins have been delivered to distribution sites. This is a 68% increase in Green Bin distribution compared to the same time period in 2019.

### **Upcoming Campaign Activities**

Campaign activities will continue as the start date of the new collection contract approaches. Key tactics that will take place in the upcoming months include outreach to businesses through presentations for organizations representing businesses (i.e. Business Improvement Associations and Chambers of Commerce), a reminder letter to all businesses and ICI/MU/MR property owners, dedicated e-blasts to Chambers of Commerce and in-person delivery of Designated Business Area collection guides. Collection Guides will be mailed out directly to low-density residential properties and apartments with 2-6 units.

Print advertisements will continue in the weekly and daily newspapers, along with continued social media posts. New animated and live videos have been created to promote messages about the upcoming changes, increasing diversion and reducing illegal dumping. These will be posted online and on social media.

Other new tactics include bus shelter advertisements, takeover advertisements on the Weather Network, radio and YourTV interviews and media events. Refer to Appendix A for a detailed list of upcoming campaign activities.

### **Contract Implementation Update**

Since January, Niagara Region has continued to meet regularly with GFL and (Contractor's) to discuss various aspects of the implementation of the upcoming waste collection contract (Contract) transition on October 19<sup>th</sup>. The sections below provide a high level update on major items/tasks.

#### **GFL & Miller Yards**

GFL's office and yard is located at 411 Glendale Avenue in St. Catharines, which is the current yard of Emterra Environmental (Emterra). GFL only has access to the upper

floor of the operations building at this time, renovations are near complete and the compressed natural gas (CNG) rails have been installed for fuelling trucks. Technical Standards and Safety Authority (TSSA) testing and sign off on the CNG rails is scheduled to occur during the first week of October.

The Miller yard, located at 335 Townline Road in Niagara-on-the-Lake, is currently undergoing renovations to the parking lot. Work is scheduled to be completed October 1, 2020.

### Collection Vehicles

GFL has confirmed two (2) of 31 trucks have arrived and they are being equipped with cameras and GPS system. The remaining fleet (27 vehicles) are expected to arrive by the end of September through to the second week of October. As previously communicated, GFL is still reporting delays of four (4) collection vehicles due to COVID-19, which are scheduled to arrive just before and after the Contract start date. In lieu of the delayed vehicles, GFL will support their Niagara fleet with six (6) additional vehicles from within the company to ensure a successful Contract transition. GFL's collection vehicles will be fueled with CNG. GFL and its sign contractor are presently working on creating proofs for decal installation.

Miller has confirmed 25 of the 61 trucks have arrived in Niagara. Miller and their sign contractor are presently working on decal installation. Miller has recently informed Niagara Region that the manufacture of five (5) side load collection vehicles is delayed due to COVID-19. The five (5) delayed trucks are scheduled to arrive during the first few weeks of the Contract. Miller will replace the delayed collection vehicle with five (5) new, 2020 Miller trucks from its company fleet until the new trucks arrive. The four (4) additional rear load vehicles that were ordered following the confirmation of enhanced services, are expected to arrive after the commencement of the contract. These vehicles are expected within two to four weeks after contract commencement. Miller will use vehicles from their company fleet until the new vehicles arrive.

As both Contractors will be using existing fleet resources to supplement their Niagara fleet, until they have full truck compliment, there will be a period of approximately one (1) month when some of the collection vehicles will be painted the Contractor's respective colours. These temporary trucks will not be compliant with Contract requirement which stipulates, brand new, freshly painted white trucks.

### Collection Routes

No collection day changes will be occurring in Area Two (Miller). In Area One (GFL), all of Wainfleet will be collected on Monday and in Pelham, the area currently collected on Wednesday will be collected on Monday, effective October 19, 2020.

As previously communicated, Wainfleet, Pelham, Thorold, West Lincoln, St. Catharines, NOTL, and Fort Erie will receive garbage collection on Week One (1), during October 19-23, 2020, of every-other-week collection.

Lincoln, Grimsby, Niagara Falls, Welland and Port Colborne will begin to receive every-other-garbage collection on Week Two (2) - October 26-30. Residents and businesses in these municipalities will not receive garbage collection during the week of October 19. No local municipality will be divided between week 1 and week 2, allowing for clear communication to residents and businesses.

### Staffing

Both collection contractors have hired their Operations Managers, whom have been working cooperatively with Niagara Region staff as part of the Contract implementation process. Both Contractors will have their customer service office set up one week prior to the start of the Contract. Customer service staff will be available for residents to schedule large item collection during the week of October 12 -16.

GFL has indicated 100% fulfillment of their staffing plan, where all staff are full-time employees. GFL has an agreement with two agencies that will assist with hiring temporary staff for dedicated leaf and yard collection and to address any gaps in staffing. GFL has a staff orientation session scheduled for October 17, 2020. GFL has committed to becoming a member of the Ontario Living Wage association in early October.

Miller has indicated 90% fulfillment of their staffing plan. Miller continues to issue job offers, as the contractor works to have 100% of the staff hired as Miller employees. Temporary staff will be hired for leaf and yard waste collection and to address any gaps in the staffing plan. Miller has staff orientation sessions scheduled for September 19 and 20.

Regional staff have attended orientation sessions on Saturday September 19 and Sunday September 20 to support Miller with staff training. Staff will also attend GFL's orientation on Saturday, October 17, 2020.

#### Enhanced Containerized Waste Collection

Miller and GFL are coordinating with the current collection contractors to facilitate the removal and replacement of front-end dumpsters as part of the collection Contract transition. The contractors are working cooperatively to ensure the service transition is successful and that the properties receiving this service experience no service interruptions. The enhanced in-ground containerized waste collection has been subcontracted to a third party by Miller and GFL. This is a new service and Niagara Region is communicating with the local area municipalities to finalize collection days and schedule.

#### **Next Steps**

Niagara Region staff have scheduled meetings with both Contractors right up to the start date of the Contracts. Niagara Region will have resources on the road during the first two weeks of the new Contract to assist residents and businesses with the service level changes.

Respectfully submitted and signed by

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