
MEMORANDUM

WMPSC-C 4 2021

Subject: Discontinuation of the Broken Container Exchange Program

Date: Monday, February 22, 2021

To: Waste Management Planning Steering Committee

From: Lucy McGovern, Collection and Diversion Program Manager

As part of the Region's Budget Planning Strategy to help mitigate budget pressures in 2021 and mitigate requisition increases on taxpayers, a number of items were put forward to ensure a reasonable budget increase was presented for 2021. One of these items is Niagara Region's recycling and green bin broken container free exchange program. This free exchange program will cease on April 1, 2021.

In 2019, \$338,108 was spent to purchase recycling boxes and green bins. It is estimated that \$111,346, or 33%, was spent to exchange broken containers for residents.

The elimination of the free exchange program was introduced to the Budget Review Committee of the Whole (BRCOTW) on November 26, 2020 in report CSD 66-2020 and was approved by Regional Council on December 17, 2020.

Broken Container Exchange Program

Since 2009, Niagara Region has exchanged broken recycling and green bin containers at no fee to residents to:

- Encourage participation in curbside diversion programs;
- Decrease the volume of waste to Regional landfills;
- Decrease greenhouse gases generated by the disposal of organic waste in landfills;
- Promote neater, more efficient collection at the curbside through the use of functional containers; and,
- Extend a sense of benefit to residents from the revenues recognized by the Region from the sale of the collected recyclables.

It should be noted that Niagara Region continues to provide recycling and green bin containers at no fee to homeowners and renters within 12 months of moving into their new home.

Alternatives to Broken Container Free Exchanges

If residents have a broken recycling box, green bin or kitchen catcher after April 1, 2021, two options are available to them:

1. Residents may use any other rigid plastic container for organics and recycling, so long as the material is sorted correctly. The alternate container must be obvious to collection staff (i.e. clearly labelled or have an open top so sorted materials are visible). The alternate container must have handles and must not exceed 91 cm (36 inches) tall, 61 cm (24 inches) wide or 22.7 kg (50 pounds) when full.
2. Residents may purchase replacement containers on the [Niagara Region website](http://www.niagararegion.ca/waste) (www.niagararegion.ca/waste). Recycling boxes are \$6; Green bins are \$17 and Kitchen Catchers are \$4. Taxes are included. Residents can select their preferred pick up location and pick up date.

During the current pandemic, containers may be obtained through contactless pick-up at the Region's Recycling Centre in Niagara Falls, at the Humberstone Landfill Reuse Centre in Welland, at the Niagara Road 12 Landfill and Reuse Centre in West Lincoln or at the Bridge Street Waste and Recycling Drop-off Depot in Fort Erie. Some participating municipal offices are still open to distribute containers by appointment only for curbside pick-up. Residents may contact their local municipal office over the phone to see if they can make an appointment to purchase containers under COVID safety protocols. A list of all of the container distribution locations can be found on the Niagara Region website.

Next Steps

Niagara Region will communicate the program change to all participating municipal, retail and Regional distribution locations. A 'Frequently Asked Questions' document to support any enquiries from the public will be provided to our program partners.

Promotional and educational channels including the Region's web page, the Niagara Region Waste App, social media and a media release will be issued to communicate the program change before April 1, 2021.

Staff will reconsider the broken container exchange fee in 2022 dependent on budget availability.

Respectfully submitted and signed by

Lucy McGovern
Collection and Diversion Program Manager