

Details of 2018 Promotion and Education Outreach

Let's Talk Waste Campaign

An extensive stakeholder consultation was conducted by Waste Management Services with various groups (i.e. residents, business owners and associations etc.) to obtain input on the proposed garbage collection service options being considered for the next curbside waste collection contract (i.e. garbage, recycling, organics). Input from this consultation process will be used to help determine whether there is sufficient support for the proposed collection options.

The proposed options will affect all properties that use Niagara Region's curbside collection services. However, curbside collection services provided by the Niagara Region differ by sector and location and therefore not all of the proposed collection options will apply to every property. Please refer to report PW 3-2019, for more detailed information on the proposed collection service options, rationale, etc.

The slogan 'Let's Talk Waste' was developed, along with campaign branding to make the campaign more recognizable. Please refer to Appendix B for samples of the Let's Talk Waste campaign advertisements and promotional material.

Web-based content

A campaign URL and webpage was developed to educate and inform residents of the proposed service options. This page included a breakdown of the service options being considered and a link to the associated online surveys. Also included were the justifications for the proposed service options being considered, and the times and locations for all open houses and community booths. To help drive traffic to this webpage, the banner on the Waste Management home page was also changed to advertise the survey and direct the public to the campaign webpage. The campaign URL was launched at the end of October and received a total of 26,838 page views. The page is still active with the proposed service options, and will be used to provide an update once the report and analysis have been finalized. Web graphics were also developed and shared with Local Area Municipalities to further promote on their websites and link to the campaign webpage.

Meetings with Stakeholders

Waste Management staff met with each of Niagara's Business Improvement Associations (BIAs), Chambers of Commerce, the Niagara Industrial Association and Tourism Partnership of Niagara in August and September of 2018 to provide a presentation on the proposed service options. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss the proposed collection options, obtain preliminary input on the proposed options and discuss how to further engage their members. A total of 3,474 letters were mailed out in October to

businesses inside and outside the Designated Business Areas (DBAs) and to Multi-Residential properties with a link to the online survey to provide their feedback. A follow-up email was also sent after the meetings to request formal feedback.

In addition to meeting with the Industrial, Commercial and Institutional (IC&I) sector, staff provided letters to Local Area Municipalities (LAM) Clerks and Public Works Officials (PWO) advising of the proposed options and requesting comments. Presentations were also made to PWO, and Niagara Region staff attended five (5) LAM Committee or Council meetings to deliver a presentation.

Telephone Survey

A ten (10) – twelve (12) minute random telephone survey was conducted for low-density residential properties (LDR) and multi-residential (MR) properties up to six (6) units to receive their feedback on the proposed collection service options. A total of 1,253 surveys were completed, which included a representative sample of responses from all municipalities. At the regional level, the results of this residential telephone survey can be considered accurate to within $\pm 2.8\%$, 19 times out of 20 (95% Confidence Interval). A pre-test was conducted to ensure the survey process was working properly and residents understood the questions. The telephone survey questions were similar to those from the online survey.

Online Survey

A variety of online surveys were promoted in order to receive feedback from all stakeholder groups, addressing the collection changes that would affect that particular group. A total of three (3) surveys were developed for LDR and MR properties up to six (6) units, MR properties with 7 units or more, and businesses and mixed-use (MU) properties inside and outside the DBA. The online surveys were promoted at the open houses and community booths, where staff were equipped with tablets to assist interested residents in completing the survey. It was also promoted with a direct link on the campaign webpage and the social media ad, with reference to the link on the handout cards and newspaper ads. A total of 6,639 online surveys were completed for LDR, which is the highest number of responses to a Niagara Region survey to date. An additional 38 online surveys were completed for MR and 166 surveys for IC&I/MU properties. Due to the self-selecting nature of online surveys, these results cannot simply be combined with the more statistically representative random telephone survey, nor can a margin of error be assigned to online surveys. However, if this had been a random probability sample, the results for the online survey could be considered accurate to within $\pm 1.5\%$, 19 times out of 20 (95% Confidence Interval).

Open Houses

Open houses were conducted in each municipality during the month of November from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. Included as part of the open houses was a presentation at 6:30 p.m. as a way to further educate the public on the proposed service options, and to provide an opportunity for a question and answer session. Staff were available to assist residents and businesses in filling out an online survey to provide their feedback after the presentation. A total of 67 attendees came out to the open houses.

Community Booths Displays

Community booths were used in each municipality as a way to engage with the public to further discuss the proposed service changes in the event that they were not able to attend an open house. A table with educational material and poster boards with information on proposed options were set up in public spaces, including malls, arenas, community centres and libraries. Residents had the opportunity to ask questions, clarify information, and fill out the online survey with the assistance of a staff member. Staff engaged with a total of 450 attendees as part of the community booth outreach.

Promotional handout cards

Promotional handout cards were used to inform attendees at the community booths of the proposed collection service options, and to provide them with a link to the survey should they want to complete it in the comfort of their home. These cards were also provided to municipal offices to further promote the survey and educate residents on the proposed collection service options.

Poster Boards

Poster boards were utilized as a visual aid, addressing all the proposed collection service options, separated by residential service options versus business service options. These boards were used at the open houses and community booths to summarize the proposed collection service options.

Social Media

Social media (Facebook and Twitter) was successfully used to promote the online survey and the proposed collection service options. A total of 24 social media posts were used from Oct 30 – November 28 to promote the open houses and community booths, with a daily post reminder to encourage the public to attend. Facebook was also used to create scheduled events, where residents could receive all the information pertaining to that event. A Facebook paid ad ran from October 25 – November 28, asking residents to complete the survey. This post received a total of 271,397 impressions, 6,633 clicks and 1,467 comments.

Newspaper Advertising

Newspaper ads were used encourage the public to participate in the online survey, with a link to the campaign webpage. A total of eleven (11) newspaper ads were placed in daily and community newspapers, coinciding with the open house dates in each municipality to encourage residents to attend. The link to the campaign webpage was included to encourage residents to take the online survey.

Online Advertising

Online advertising was utilized in twenty-four (24) hour, one (1) week, and two (2) week time intervals from October 30 – November 30 on the daily and community newspaper websites to encourage residents to visit the campaign webpage to learn more and take the survey. Big box takeovers were also booked online from October 30 – November 20 as the main advertising on the newspaper websites.

IC&I Recognition Program

The IC&I Recognition Program aims to encourage diversion and waste reduction practices at small IC&I businesses in Niagara that are participating in the Niagara Region's waste diversion programs. These businesses are invited to take an online pledge to one of three levels of recognition; gold, silver and bronze, with an escalating level of commitment to waste diversion at each level. Businesses will be recognized with a decal indicating their level of commitment to display on their store window, in addition to having their logo displayed on our external website. Promotional material was developed in 2018 to onboard businesses in 2019.

Multi-Residential Textile Recycling Program

The Multi-Residential Textile Pilot Program was launched in late 2018 to enhance service to the multi-residential sector, divert textiles from landfill and further support local non-profit organizations. Site visits were conducted in early 2018 and twenty-two (22) properties were recruited for the Pilot. These properties were divided among the non-profit organizations (Diabetes Canada, Goodwill Niagara and Big Brothers, Big Sisters). Textiles collected as part of the Pilot will generate revenue for the local charities and divert textile materials that could not be reused or resold from the landfills. Phase two of this pilot project is expected to begin in January, which involves expanding the program to additional buildings now that program implementation has been completed at the initial twenty-two (22) properties.

Illegal Dumping Awareness Campaign

The Illegal Dumping Working Group continued their efforts to mitigate illegal dumping in Niagara, with an increase in the number of illegal dumping reports received and offence notices issued. In 2018, Niagara Region increased the number of illegal dumping signs, pop-up banners and advertising, including the addition of arena boards to further raise illegal dumping awareness and provide tools for ease of reporting. In addition, Crime Stoppers of Niagara featured the Regional Chair on their Cogeco TV segment addressing the issue of illegal dumping in Niagara and what residents can do should they witness someone illegally dumping material. Refer to WMPSC-C 4-2019 for further program details

Litter Bin Blitz

The litter bin blitz was initially implemented in 2012 as a way to communicate that illegal dumping into public litter bins is not permitted, to increase awareness on which items should be diverted from our landfill and to decrease costs associated with investigating and removing illegally dumped materials. Waste Management on-road staff conducted a blitz in 2018 to further combat illegal dumping. A total of 704 litter bins were inspected for household garbage and other non-compliant material. As a result, enough evidence was found to issue 43 warning letters to suspected generators. Promotion and education material was provided in the form of a Sorting Guide and Illegal Dumping brochure to communicate that illegal dumping into a public litter bin is not permitted, and to increase awareness on which items should be diverted through existing programs and services.

Gold Star Recycler Awareness Campaign

Visual curbside audits of Blue and Grey Boxes are currently being conducted at 1,000 randomly selected homes throughout Niagara Region over a one-month period. These properties are being audited to determine if recyclables that have been set out at the curb were being properly sorted and prepared for curbside collection.

Niagara Region staff look for the following proper recycling practices while conducting the visual curbside audits:

- Use of Blue Box, Grey Box and Green Bin;
- Only one bag/can of garbage (no additional bags with garbage tags permitted);
- No obvious stream mixing of Blue and Grey materials;
- No garbage was found in either the Blue or Grey Box;
- No major sorting errors (i.e. disposable hot beverage cups found in recycling boxes, loose plastic bags/film in either the Blue or Grey Box, juice/milk cartons found in the Grey Box, etc.)

Perfect or near perfect (less than three minor errors) results on material preparation and separation will receive a Gold Star decaled Blue Box embellished with the phrase 'I'm a Gold Star Recycler' to recognize their efforts. A Gold Star promotional door hanger will also be distributed with Gold Star boxes to congratulate residents on the proper preparation of their recyclables as a visible, tangible reward and recognition for their waste diversion efforts.

Broken Spoke Bicycle Recycling

The program was developed through a partnership between the Niagara Region and Port Colborne High School's Broken Spoke program. As part of the Broken Spoke program, students refurbish and repair bicycles for reuse as part of the Special Skills Credit Program. Niagara Region uses their operational opportunity to collect bicycles at its Drop-off Depots for the Broken Spoke program to promote reuse. The objective of the program includes educating the general public about reuse options for unwanted bicycles or bicycles in need of repair and diverting material from landfill/lower-tier recycling operations. In 2018, a total of 1,709 bikes were collected at the Regional Drop-off Depots and donated to the Broken Spoke program, increasing the overall total to 4,542 bicycles donated since the inception of the program in 2016. This program continues to be promoted at our information booths with 'Recycle your Bicycle' print material, and through social media, letting residents know about the program and where they can donate bikes.

Collection of Large, Rigid Plastics at Drop-off Depots

Large, rigid plastic materials that are not acceptable in the curbside Blue Box recycling program are collected through the Waste and Recycling Drop-off Depots in a designated bin for these materials to be recycled. These large, rigid plastic materials were accepted from residential and IC&I customers, free of charge. As a result of removing these hard plastics from the waste stream, landfill space is protect and the hard plastics are recycled into pellets to make new consumer products. This program continues to be promoted in the collection guide, and at Waste Management information booths.

Special Events Recycling and Organics Program

The Special Events Recycling and Organics program provides the attendees of public special events, such as community festivals and fairs, free access to recycling and organics collection services. The aim of this program is to divert more materials from landfills and increase public awareness of the Niagara Region's waste diversion programs to create consistent diversion options between home and in the community. The Special Events Recycling and Organics program continues to be promoted through the Niagara Region's website and promotional handouts for event contacts and vendors, receiving additional promotion through the online event service request form that includes all potential Niagara Region services available for their event. In 2018, the Special Events Recycling and Organics program diverted more than 45 metric tonnes of material through

program promotion in the spring Green Scene. Refer to WMPSC-C 6-2019 for further program details.

Keen on Green Desk-Side Waste Diversion Program

The Desk-Side Waste Diversion program provides easy and accessible tools for staff to more carefully separate their waste. It is also a constant visual reminder of the obligation that we each have to manage our office waste materials. As part of the corporate-wide rollout, the same educational tools were supplied in this rollout as for the rollout at Niagara Region Headquarters, the Environmental Centre and Niagara Region Police Headquarters. These Desk-Side Waste Diversion Kits, which include a small Grey Box for paper recycling, a small Green Organic Caddy for food/other compostable waste, and a mini garbage container, will support staff education on how to source separate their waste materials. The kits also include print material to further support staff on participating in this program, including a sorting guide and FAQ document.

As part of the corporate-wide rollout, a total of 77 buildings received their Desk-Side Waste Diversion Kits and have implemented the program. There are an additional four (4) buildings that are under construction, and the rollout of the program will take place once construction is complete. Rollouts were customized based on the needs of the building and to adhere to the Waste Management By-law, and were provided with promotion and educational material to meet their waste sorting needs.

Household Hazardous Waste Depots

The Orange Box program was designed to raise awareness of proper collection and disposal of household hazardous waste material, and to promote the permanent Household Hazardous Waste Depots. Orange Boxes are 16 gallon recycling containers designed for residents to store their household hazardous waste and transport it to the depot. The boxes include instructional stickers and brochures on acceptable materials and depot locations. These Orange Boxes were distributed at information booths as a way to engage with residents and promote Niagara Region's depots. In addition, the permanent depots were also advertised and promoted in the Collection Guide, through social media, newspaper advertising, and promotion and education materials distributed at events.

Information Booths and Presentations

This year, 247 presentations were done to promote the Niagara Region's Waste Management programs and the importance of waste diversion to a variety of schools, community groups, and organizations. Presentations allow staff to directly engage with and further educate residents on the waste diversion programs and their associated benefits. These presentations can be requested through the Niagara Region website. It

is estimated that staff reached over 13,475 people through our presentation outreach efforts. Additional outreach extended to 56 information booths that were staffed by interns throughout the year at home and garden shows, festivals, fairs and open houses.

Summer Camps

During the summer, Waste Management interns attended 23 summer camps during the months of July and August. A total of 53 presentations were completed, reaching approximately 1,255 campers. There were two (2) presentations that were offered to summer camps, based on age groups:

- Explorers of Recycle Reef (ages 3-7); and
- Waste Diversion Heroes (ages 8-12)

Parades

Niagara Region Waste Management interns attended three parades this year:

- Niagara Falls Canada Day parade;
- Niagara-on-the-lake Santa Claus parade and;
- Niagara Falls Santa Claus parade

Participation in community parades is an excellent opportunity to promote the Niagara Region's Waste Management services by involving our mascots as well as Niagara Region vehicles with applicable promotional graphics.

Curbside Battery Collection

The fifth annual region-wide curbside collection of batteries took place in April of 2018. Leading up to April, curbside battery collection was promoted using Niagara Region's in-kind newspaper advertising, digital billboards, mobile traffic signs and social media. This year, Niagara Region partnered with the local Fire Prevention Officers to combine messaging for daylight savings, encouraging residents to change smoke and carbon monoxide alarm batteries and save them for curbside battery collection, utilizing their in-kind radio advertising. As a revenue-generating material, the on-going education and awareness for residents of this one-week program continues to be a key campaign promoted through both print and social media advertising. The program saw a 21% increase from 2017, collecting over 7,403 kg.

Compost Awareness Week

Niagara Region held its annual spring compost giveaway to promote Compost Awareness Week. Beginning May 7 and running until May 12, Niagara residents could collect up to three (3) bags of compost per household in exchange for a cash or non-perishable food donation to support Fort Erie COPE (Community Outreach Program – Erie), Grimsby Benevolent Fund, Goodwill Niagara, and Project Share. Promotion and communication of the giveaway included information posted on the Waste Management webpage, web communications through social media and public service announcements.

Earth Week

In recognition of Earth Week, Niagara Region offered two (2) guided tours of the Recycling Centre that had a total of 40 participants, in addition to exposure from Cogeco TV as a feature for Earth Week. Niagara Region also held a 'Household Hazardous Waste Depot' contest to promote the year-round depots, and encourage residents to bring an item of household hazardous waste to any of the depots. Household hazardous waste items dropped off at any of the depots received a ballot to enter a draw for a VISA gift card. A total of 351 ballots were received. Three (3) information booths were offered at the following locations; Niagara Region Headquarters, Niagara Regional Police Headquarters, and the Pen Centre. Also part of Earth Week promotions were container sale/swap, reusable container contest, and a free cookie promotion in the Niagara Region cafeteria with the use of a reusable mug. This year also included the first Shred Day event, where residents were able to receive free shredding services. A total of 310 kg of paper waste was shredded and a total of \$73.40 and 40 pounds of food donated to local charities.

Waste Reduction Week

Residents were invited to attend a guided tour of the Recycling Centre and Walker Environmental Organics processing facility to discover what happens to their Green Bin material once it leaves their curb. There were a total of 15 participants for both tours offered to the public.

Residents were offered the chance to win one of two (2) VISA gift cards when bringing a reusable item to one of the Niagara Region's reusable good depots. A total of 54 ballots were collected as part of the contest.

There were information booths set up at Niagara Region Headquarters and the Pen Centre, and other activities included container sale/swap, book swap, and a reusable container contest for staff using any type of usable container, at five (5) different office locations. A total of 597 ballots were received. This year also included a textile reuse/recycling campaign with Diabetes Canada. Both 8 cubic feet (2ft x 2ft) boxes were filled.

Annual Collection Guide Distribution

The Collection Guide detailing the Niagara Region's Waste Management programs and services is mailed annually to all single family homes, farms, and apartment buildings up to six (6) units in Niagara. Approximately 175,000 copies are included in the mail out.

Multi-Residential Collection Guide

Volume five (5) of the multi-residential waste and recycling Collection Guide was distributed to specifically educate residents in buildings with seven (7) or more units on the Niagara Region's recycling and organics programs. In 2018, the Collection Guide was mailed directly to 23,279 residents.

Green Scene Newsletter

This newsletter is distributed bi-annually to all homes, farms, and apartments with six (6) units or less throughout Niagara and continues to include content from Public Works, but maintains a Waste Management component comprising of seventy-five per cent of the overall content. Over 171, 000 copies of the newsletter were distributed.

Social Media

With 16,623 people following Niagara Region's Facebook page, Waste Management Services continues to use this platform to inform residents on programs and services, and as an avenue to further educate. Social media posts for this year have included disposal of portable propane cylinders, holiday collection changes, branch collection, promoting Earth Week and Waste Reduction Week, etc.

Niagara Region Website

The Niagara Region website is a crucial tool used to educate and inform Niagara residents about the Region's Waste Management programs. The Waste Management webpage remains one of the most viewed pages on the Region's website with 867,607 page views, 17% of all traffic to the site in the last year. As of December 2018, Waste Management Services also has the third and fourth highest traffic pages on the Niagara Region website, which includes the waste collection schedule page and the large item request form page.