
Subject: Set-Out Service Review and Options to Add Leaf and Yard Waste Collection to the Service

Report to: Waste Management Planning Steering Committee

Report date: Monday, June 20, 2022

Recommendations

That the Waste Management Planning Steering Committee **RECOMMEND** to Public Works Committee the following:

1. That the current set-out collection service level **BE MAINTAINED** and not be expanded to include leaf and yard waste materials.

Key Facts

- In response to the April 11, 2022 Waste Management Planning Steering Committee Minute Item #7.2, staff reviewed the option of adding leaf and yard waste collection to the current set-out service program.
- Currently, the set-out collection services for the collection of garbage, Blue and Grey Boxes and Green Bins are available to person(s) who are incapable of carrying their waste materials to the curb for collection and the materials are collected at a pre-determined location such as front door, side of property, etc.
- Residents must meet the eligibility requirements and be approved by Niagara Region to receive this service. There are 221 properties currently receiving set-out collection services.
- Staff provided the following three (3) service level options to the collection contractors in order to obtain pricing for the addition of leaf and yard waste (excluding brush) to the set-out service collection program and estimated the annual cost for options where pricing was received:
 - Weekly unlimited leaf and yard waste collection - pricing was not provided due to concerns expressed by collection contractors regarding the ability to provide this service without limits on quantity of leaf and yard waste set out per week.
 - Limit of two (2) leaf and yard waste bags per set-out, collected weekly at an estimated annual cost of \$88,109 (excluding net HST).

- Unlimited leaf and yard waste collection during branch collection (four (4) weeks in spring and four (4) weeks in fall) at an estimated annual cost of \$31,773 (excluding net HST).

Financial Considerations

The collection contractors provided an annual price to collect leaf and yard waste from properties (excluding brush) with set-out services. Staff further refined these prices using 2021 data to estimate how many set-out services may be added or removed per year. Table 1 provides a summary of these costs per service option.

Table 1: Estimated Annual Cost for Addition of Leaf and Yard Waste to Set-Out Service

Service Change Description	Estimated Annual Cost (excluding net HST)
Addition of leaf and yard waste to the materials collected as part of the set-out service. Limit of two (2) leaf and yard waste bags per set-out, collected weekly.	\$ 88,109
Addition of leaf and yard waste to the materials collected as part of the set-out service during branch collection (four (4) weeks in spring and four (4) weeks in fall).	\$ 31,773

Annual costs would also be subject to contract escalations and any additions and/or deletion of properties in future years. These costs do not include processing costs for leaf and yard waste material.

The current estimated annual cost to provide set-out collection service, as is (without leaf and yard waste), to the 221 properties that receive the service is \$163,118. The above estimated costs would be in addition to the current cost.

Properties are added and deleted as required and there is a monthly cost/deduction to add or remove properties from the set-out service program. In Collection Area One (1), the monthly cost is \$15.24 per property and in Collection Area Two (2), the monthly cost is \$68.22 per property. If leaf and yard waste was added to the current set-out service program, the incremental cost per property, per month increase from \$25 to \$68.22 depending on the service option as noted above and collection contractor.

Analysis

Niagara Region provides special set-out collection services to person(s) who are incapable of carrying their waste materials to the curb for collection and have been approved by Niagara Region. In order to qualify for a set-out service a doctor's signature is required confirming that the person(s) are incapable of carrying the material to the curb for collection. The resident(s) must have no other person living in the home that is capable of carrying the material to the curbside. This service is available for residents living in low density residential properties (one (1) to six (6) units).

Niagara Region's collection contractors collect the standard limit of garbage containers, Green Bin material, and Blue and Grey Box material from each property's set-out collection location (such as side door or front porch, not at the back of the property) on the scheduled collection day. The contractors then return the receptacles to the original location in a neat and orderly fashion. This service currently does not extend to the set out of leaf and yard waste and brush. Prior to the 2011 collection contract, set-out collection services was an enhanced level of service and only provided by a limited number of local area municipalities. Set-out collection became part of the base level service and available to all residents in 2011. Since the late 1990's/early 2000s, the collection of leaf and yard waste (and large household items) has never been part of the set-out collection service as generally those unable to place their materials to the curb, hire or ask others to complete any yard work and remove this material or place at the curb for them

Currently there are 28 properties with set-out service in collection area one (1) (Grimsby, Lincoln, Pelham, Thorold, Wainfleet and West Lincoln) and 193 properties with set-out service in collection area two (2) (Fort Erie, Niagara Falls, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Port Colborne, St. Catharines, and Welland).

Staff have engaged with the collection contractors to explore expanding the special set-out service collection to include leaf and yard waste (not including brush) and have requested pricing for this change. Both GFL and Miller Waste Systems were asked to provide pricing for the following options.

Option	Description of Additional Services Considered
Option 1	Addition of leaf and yard waste to the materials collected as part of the set-out service, collected weekly.

Option	Description of Additional Services Considered
Option 2	Addition of leaf and yard waste to the materials collected as part of the set-out service. Limit of two (2) leaf and yard waste bags per set-out, collected weekly.
Option 3	Addition of leaf and yard waste to the materials collected as part of the set-out service during branch collection (four (4) weeks in spring and four (4) weeks in fall).

The collection contractors expressed concerns with collection staff providing this service. The following feedback was gathered from discussions with contractors;

- Option one (1) proposes no limit to yard waste collection. This option was contemplated as it is in line with curbside collection limits to all low density residential properties. Miller did not provide pricing for this option as they felt they would be unable to offer the service, due to the uncertainty of how much material may need to be collected from the set-out location.
- Option two (2) weekly collection of leaf and yard waste from set-out service location with a limit of two (2) bags per week was proposed as an option to provide limited service, which would allow the contractors to provide service at a lower cost. The set-out service program requires the contractor to walk up to a properties set-out location and move bags back to the curb. The two (2) bag limit would allow the contractor to complete this extra service in one or two trips. With an unknown quantity of bags to be collected the time on-site would be more difficult to gauge. The 2020-2021 four season waste audit found single family homes set out an average of 1.96 full bags of leaf and yard waste per set out. In general calls to enquire about leaf and yard waste have been regarding small quantities of leaf and yard waste, such as one (1) or two (2) bags.
- Both contractors expressed health and safety concerns for collection staff moving often large leaf and yard bags from a set-out location.
- The contractors noted that leaf and yard bags can become wet and tear, which is a concern when they are being moved longer distances from a set-out location to the collection vehicle.

Staff have received a limit number of complaints regarding leaf and yard waste not being part of the set-out service. When complaints have been received staff have encourage residents to use an additional Green Bin for small amounts of leaf and yard waste. Alternatively, businesses providing the yard maintenance service to residents will

generally remove yard waste as part of the service agreement, or may place it at the curb for collection.

Alternatives Reviewed

Alternatives include adding leaf and yard waste collection to the set-out service program at an estimated annual cost (excluding HST) of \$31,773 for seasonal service or \$88,109 for annual service with a limit of two (2) bags/containers per collection. This change is not recommended due to the following reasons:

- results in increased costs;
- there have been a limited number of inquiries/complaints; and
- staff have directed residents, who have small amounts of yard waste, to use Green Bins.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

This report supports Council's Strategic Priority of Responsible Growth and Infrastructure Planning.

Niagara Region will continue to provide the set-out service to residents who are incapable of carrying their garbage, Green Bin, Blue and Grey Box to the curb without incurring additional costs for the addition of leaf and yard waste collection.

Other Pertinent Reports

PW 65-2019 Pricing of Successful Proponents and Review of Optional Services for Waste Management Collection Contract. (Confidential)

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