

Memorandum

WMPSC-C 1-2025

Subject: Illegal Dumping 2024 Year End Summary

Date: February 24, 2025

To: Waste Management Planning Steering Committee

From: Tiana Dominick, Contract Supervisor

This memorandum provides an update to the Waste Management Planning Steering Committee on illegal dumping activities in 2024 and outlines the mitigation measures planned for 2025 to address illegal dumping in the Niagara region.

Summary of Illegal Dumping Incidents in 2024

In 2024, a total of 1,027 illegal dumping incidents were investigated, marking a 52% increase from the 673 incidents investigated in 2023. The rise in documented incidents, follow-up investigations, and enforcement activities is attributed to the annual public education campaign, the litter bin blitz, and proactive monitoring by staff. Additionally, a supervisory position was restructured into a Waste Collection and Diversion Advisor role in 2024, enhancing staff capacity to monitor and investigate incidents more effectively compared to the previous year.

A summary of the incident sources is provided below, with further details in the full report:

- 32 incidents were reported by local municipal staff.
- 720 incidents were reported via the Waste Info Line, the Online Reporting Tool, and Crime Stoppers.
- 275 incidents were identified through proactive monitoring by staff.

A detailed breakdown of illegal dumping investigations by area municipality can be found in Appendix 1.

2024 Illegal Dumping Enforcement Activity

Waste Management staff investigate all incidents of illegal dumping on public property. When evidence of the material's origin is identified, a Part I Provincial Offence Notice is issued for contravention of the Niagara Region Waste Management By-Law.

To issue a Part I Provincial Offence Notice, certain conditions must be met, including a 30-day prescribed period and in-person contact. If these conditions are not fully satisfied (e.g., inability to make in-person contact, the individual has moved, insufficient evidence, or the individual cannot be located), staff will issue a warning letter based on the available evidence.

In 2024, evidence of the suspected generator was found in 107 incidents, representing 10% of all illegal dumping cases. As a result, 32 Part I Provincial Offence Notices were successfully issued, and 75 warning letters were delivered.

The outcomes of the 32 offence notices are as follows:

- 9 defendants were sentenced during early resolution or trial.
- 13 cases are still active and pending in the Provincial Offences court system.
- 7 defendants voluntarily paid the set fine associated with the Provincial Offence Notice.
- 2 cases were withdrawn, and 1 case is awaiting trial.

Update on Dumping in Public Space Litter Bins and the Annual Litter Bin Blitz

Waste Management staff continue to monitor public space litter bins and respond to reports of illegal dumping in or around these bins. In 2024, 26% (264) of illegal dumping investigations were related to materials illegally dumped in or around public space litter bins.

As part of ongoing efforts, Waste Management staff conduct the annual Litter Bin Blitz, during which public space litter bins are audited for illegally dumped materials. If evidence is found during the blitz, staff attempt to issue a Part I Provincial Offence Notice.

The 2024 Litter Bin Blitz took place from November 4–8, 2024. As a result, six individuals were issued a Part I Provincial Offence Notice for illegal dumping, which are included in the total count of Provincial Offence Notices for 2024.

Illegal Dumping Rewards Distributed in 2024

To encourage residents to report illegal dumping, Niagara Region, in collaboration with Local Area Municipalities, offers a reward system. If an individual's report leads to an act of compliance or a conviction under the Waste Management By-law, the person who made the report is eligible for a reward of \$50 or \$200, depending on the violation.

Currently, staff are preparing to issue six (6) rewards to Niagara residents for reports that resulted in successful convictions in Provincial Offences Court. Additional rewards may be issued based on the outcomes of ongoing Provincial Offences Court proceedings related to 2024 illegal dumping investigations.

Public Education and Annual Campaign

In November 2024, staff launched an Illegal Dumping campaign across various social media platforms, including Facebook, X, Instagram, YouTube, and Snapchat. The campaign led to a dramatic 3,289% increase in visits to the Illegal Dumping page on the Niagara Region website between November and December 2024. A campaign is planned for 2025 to continue to encourage residents to report incidents of illegal dumping.

Next Steps

On average, Niagara Region incurs approximately \$24,000 annually in staff time to investigate and follow up on illegal dumping incidents. It is essential that staff continue to prioritize the investigation and mitigation of illegal dumping in the region. While the issuance of tickets may not always occur, it is important to recognize that consistent enforcement, monitoring, and deterrence are crucial in preventing further violations. These ongoing efforts support the long-term health of our environment, help preserve public spaces, and foster a sense of community pride.

In 2025, staff will maintain a strong presence and continue collaborating with community partners to address illegal dumping. Staff will also proactively monitor public space litter bins and conduct the annual Litter Bin Blitz. Additionally, staff will continue to utilize an app-based Geographical Information System (GIS) tool, which enables real-time data collection and precise tracking of illegal dumping hotspots, enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of enforcement activities.

Respectfully submitted and signed by

Tiana Dominick
Contract Supervisor, Waste Management Services

Number of Illegal Dumping Reports by Municipality

