
Memorandum

WMPSC-C 8-2026

Subject: Waste Collection Guide: Digital Transition Overview

Date: April 27, 2026

To: Waste Management Planning Steering Committee

From: Amber Schmucker, Waste Engagement & Policy Program Manager

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an overview of the planned transition to a primarily digital distribution model for the Niagara Region Waste Collection Guide beginning in 2027.

This transition was included in the 2026 Waste Management Services operating budget (CSD 56-2025 Waste Management 2026 Operating Budget Presentation) and aligns with the Niagara Region Waste Strategy, which identifies digital engagement (CE1 Implement Digital Public Education) as a priority action.

Overview of the Planned Change

Beginning with the 2027 cycle, the Region will transition from mass - mailed distribution to a digital model. Under this approach, digital tools will serve as the primary source of information, while printed guides will continue to be available through approximately 35 community pick - up locations and by-request mailing to ensure continued accessibility for residents who prefer or require non-digital options.

A transition to digital distribution supports the Region's strategic direction and provides several benefits, including:

- Modernized service delivery, consistent with the Waste Strategy's digital engagement priorities.
- Reduced printing and postage costs. Every year, the Region mails around 183,000 guides to low - density residential properties and 26,500 flyers to multi-residential properties, totaling approximately \$100,000 annually (including non-recoverable HST).
- Reduced environmental impact, by lowering print volumes and distribution-related emissions.
- Supports broader adoption of exiting digital tools that deliver more accurate, timely, and customizable information than a static printed guide.

Current resident usage of digital tools demonstrates readiness for this transition. Since 2020, the Waste App and online tools have recorded more than 153,000 address searches, 2.3 million material views, and 91,000 collection reminders.

Maintaining Accessibility for Residents

Although mass- mailed guides will be discontinued, maintaining access to printed copies remains an important part of the initial transition. To support service continuity, printed guides will continue to be stocked at public locations across all municipalities, and residents will be able to request a mailed copy beginning January 2027.

Communication materials will clearly outline these options, so residents understand how to access the guide.

A coordinated communication campaign will begin in fall 2026. Messaging will:

- Clearly inform residents that mass-mail guides will be discontinued.
- Outline how to access digital tools.
- Identify locations where printed guides can be picked up.
- Explain how to request a mailed copy.

Communications will be delivered through the Niagara Region website, Waste App, signage at pick- up locations, social media messaging, and Local Area Municipality channels. An FAQ will support Waste Info- Line and frontline staff.

Next Steps

Waste Management staff will undertake the following actions:

- Fall 2026: Finalize updates to digital resources, confirm print quantities, and establish community pick- up locations.
- Fall 2026: Provide Council with a reminder of the transition and communication approach through Council Weekly Correspondence Distribution.
- October 2026 to January 2027: Launch the public awareness campaign to inform residents of the transition and available access options.
- January 2027: Launch the digital distribution model and distribute printed guides through pick- up locations and by- request mailing.
- Throughout 2027: Monitor digital usage and demand for printed copies to inform future distribution levels.

These steps will support a smooth transition while maintaining access to waste collection information for all residents.

Respectfully submitted and signed by

Amber Schmucker
Waste Engagement & Policy Program Manager