
Subject: Weekly Diaper Collection Service for All Households, Regardless of the Number of Children

Report to: Public Works Committee

Report date: Tuesday, May 12, 2020

Recommendations

1. That this report **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to respond to the Councillor Information Request made at the February 11, 2020 Public Works Committee (PWC) meeting to provide a report respecting weekly diaper collection for families regardless of the number of children.
- Confidential Report PW 69-2019 – Managing Diaper Waste Under Every Other Week (EOW) Garbage Collection was approved by Budget Review Committee of the Whole on November 28, 2019 and included the provision of weekly services as follows:
 - Curbside diaper collection at eligible low-density residential (LDR) households with two (2) or more children under the age of four (4) in diapers,
 - daycares, and
 - medical waste.
- The 2020 Waste Management operating budget, as approved, includes the cost for this weekly collection service.
- LDR households with only one child under the age of four are not eligible for the weekly service.
- This report provides two options to include those households with only one child under the age of four.

Background

Niagara Region's Current Curbside Diaper and Medical Waste Exemption Programs

Niagara Region currently has the following curbside diaper and medical waste exemption programs in place. In order to be eligible to receive these exemption programs, properties need to pre-register with Niagara Region by completing either an

on-line application or mailing in an application, for approval. If approved, properties would need to reapply for these exemption programs, on an annual basis.

i) Curbside Children's Diaper Exemption Program:

- Provided to Eligible LDR properties, up to six (6) units:
 - One (1) clear bag of children's diapers per unit collected per week, for households with two (2) children in diapers under the age of four (4), without a garbage tag.
 - Two (2) clear bags of children's diapers per unit collected per week, for households with three (3) or more children in diapers under the age of four (4), without a garbage tag.
- Provided to daycares operating out of LDR properties, up to six (6) units:
 - Two (2) clear bags of children's diapers collected per week, without a garbage tag.
- The clear garbage bag must only contain diapers and weigh less than 22.7 kg.
- The diaper exemption application process is annual.

ii) Curbside Medical Waste Exemption Program:

- Medical waste must be contained in opaque garbage containers affixed with a medical waste garbage tag.
- Provided to LDR Properties, up to six (6) units, including homes for adults with disabilities, or individuals with a medical condition:
 - Residents can receive either 52 or 104 free medical waste garbage tags annually, depending on the approval from their doctor.
 - Additional tags will be made available, on a case-by-case basis, subject to an annual application process and doctor's approval, every seven (7) years.

- Provided to group homes, homes for adults with disabilities and homes for assisted living:
 - Residents receive 52 free medical waste garbage tags annually.
 - If the group home has individuals with medical conditions, then the group home can also apply for a medical exemption for each eligible individual, in addition to the group home exemption. The group home can apply for the additional medical exemption for each eligible resident and shall note how many additional bags (i.e. 1 or 2) are required to satisfy the medical needs of each resident, each week. The additional medical exemption request is documented on the agency letter head in the form of a letter sent in with the application. No physician approval is required in this case.

Changes effective with new Curbside Collection Contract

Confidential Report PW 69-2019 was approved by Budget Review Committee of the Whole on November 28, 2019, which included the provision of curbside collection of children's diapers and medical waste at eligible LDR households during the off-weeks of EOW garbage collection, resulting in the provision of weekly collection, on a year-round basis.

Those eligible LDR households, which were approved to receive the additional collection of children's diapers and medical waste as noted above, include the following:

- i) Collection of one (1) additional clear garbage bag of children's diapers would occur for those LDR households with two (2) children in diapers, under the age of four (4).
- ii) Collection of two (2) additional clear garbage bags of children's diapers would occur for:
 - LDR households with three (3) or more children in diapers, under the age of four (4); and
 - Daycares operating out of a LDR household, which are either operating under an agency that is provincially licensed, or otherwise can provide documentation to prove that income is generated through childcare.

iii) Collection of one (1) or two (2) additional opaque garbage containers of medical waste, affixed with a medical waste garbage tag, would occur for:

- LDR households that have an individual living with a medical condition (physician's signature is required); and
- Group homes, homes for adults with disabilities and homes for assisted living. The group home to submit a letter on their letterhead stating which residents need a medical waste exemption, and how many additional bags (i.e. 1 or 2) are required each week, for each eligible resident.

In order to be eligible to receive these exemptions, these residents will need to pre-register with Niagara Region by completing an on-line application or mailing in an application for approval. If approved, these residents would need to reapply for these exemption programs every year.

As a result, those LDR households with only one (1) child under the age of four (4) will not be eligible to receive collection of one (1) additional clear garbage bag of children's diapers during the off-weeks of EOW garbage collection, on a year-round basis.

At the February 11, 2020 Public Works Committee (PWC) meeting, a Councillor Information Request was brought forward to provide a report respecting weekly diaper collection for families regardless of the number of children.

Financial Considerations

The annual cost to provide curbside collection of children's diapers to eligible LDR properties with two (2) or more children in diapers, daycares, and medical waste during the off-weeks of EOW garbage collection is \$146,763, which was approved as part of Confidential Report PW 69-2019, with three (3) months of the annualized cost included in the approved 2020 Waste Management operating budget. This cost will be subject to annual contract escalations, and is based on current usage, which could increase in the future, depending on how many eligible LDRs apply for this service.

Under the new collection contracts, the cost to add each eligible LDR property would be \$5 per month, or \$60 per year.

Additional Cost to Provide Curbside Collection of Diapers to Eligible LDR Households with Only One (1) Child During the Off-Weeks of EOW Garbage Collection

The estimates below are based on the City of Ottawa's program usage, which were applied to Niagara Region's number of households with only one (1) child 0-5 years old, and multiplied by the annual cost to add an eligible LDR property, for each Collection Area.

The costs to provide this service to these additional households have not been included in the approved 2020 Waste Management operating budget. If this additional service is approved by Council, it would represent a pressure on the 2020 operating budget starting in October 2020 with the start of the new collection contract.

Based on multi-year estimates, the overall net waste management budget increase for 2021 is anticipated to be 18.5%, without any reserve mitigation. This increase is mainly due to the increased collection contract costs. With the new collection contract to start October 2020, the approved 2020 budget included an estimate of anticipated collection costs under the new contract for the last three (3) months of the year only, with the full impact of the new collection contract included in the 2021 multi-year budget estimate.

Through the 2020 operating budget process in CSD 70-2019, staff recommended a mitigation plan to assist in phasing in the increased costs of the new collection contract, which includes significant use of Waste Management Stabilization reserve funding over 2020, 2021 and 2022. The intent of the reserve funding was to limit the annual increase to 9.8% over the next three years, adjusted to 9.9% for 2020 and 10.2% for 2021, with the inclusion of weekly diaper and medical waste collection service for eligible households under the current program. Note that this recommendation would be subject to the availability of future year reserves and approval of Council for each of 2021 and 2022. However, staff is projecting that the balance of the Stabilization reserve is insufficient to mitigate further budget increases resulting from additions to the current program, and therefore the increase to the local area municipalities would be greater than the 10.2% previously recommended for 2021 and 2022, as noted in each option below.

Option 1 – Provide Weekly Curbside Collection of Diapers, on a Year-Round Basis

Collection costs for Option 1, which would provide eligible LDR households with only one (1) child with curbside collection of diapers during the off-weeks of EOW garbage collection, resulting in the provision of weekly collection, on a year-round basis, are estimated to be between \$107,215 per year (Scenario 1) and \$150,931 per year (Scenario 2), depending on usage (Refer to Appendix 1).

As noted above, the cost to provide this service to these households has not been included in the approved 2020 operating budget, but is estimated to represent an increase up to approximately \$31,500 for 2020, based on the City of Ottawa's usage. The estimated 2021 budget increase would go from the projected 10.2% with reserve mitigation to an estimated 10.6%.

Option 2 – Provide Weekly Curbside Collection of Diapers, for the Period Between April 1 to October 31 Only

Collection costs for Option 2, which would provide eligible LDR households with only one (1) child with curbside collection of diapers during the off-weeks of EOW garbage collection, resulting in the provision of weekly collection, for the seven (7) month period between April 1 and October 31 (warmer months), are estimated to be between \$62,542 per year (Scenario 3) and \$88,043 per year (Scenario 4), depending on usage (Refer to Appendix 1).

As noted above, the cost to provide this service to these households has not been included in the approved 2020 operating budget, but is estimated to represent an increase up to approximately \$18,000 for 2020, based on estimated the City of Ottawa's usage. The estimated 2021 budget increase would go from the projected 10.2% with reserve mitigation to an estimated 10.5%.

Analysis

City of Ottawa's Special Consideration Waste Program

The City of Ottawa's Special Consideration Waste Program was created for residents requiring collection of children's diapers and incontinence products on weeks without scheduled garbage collection.

Participating Ottawa households can place one (1) bag of waste children's diapers and incontinence products out for collection, on the alternating week from garbage collection. Residents must renew their registration annually.

According to Statistics Canada's 2016 Census data, the City of Ottawa had a total of 26,080 LDR households with one (1) or more children from 0 to 5 years old. City of Ottawa staff reported that annual registration in this program ranges between approximately 7,000 households (27%) and 10,000 households (38%), annually.

Options to serve Niagara Region's LDR Households with Only One (1) Child Under the Age of Four (4) in Diapers

Provided below is a breakdown of Niagara's estimated number of LDR households with only one (1) child under the age of four (4), which could potentially be using this additional collection service. These estimates are based on the City of Ottawa's program usage of 27% and 38%, as the City of Ottawa is the only other Ontario municipality, which has a similar curbside diaper exemption program to Niagara Region.

- According to Statistics Canada's 2016 Census data, Niagara had a total of 6,505 LDR households with only one (1) child from 0 to 5 years old.
- Based on the City of Ottawa's program usage of 27%, Niagara's total estimated program uptake for those LDR households with only one (1) child from 0 to 5 years old could be 1,756 households (Scenario 1).
- Based on the City of Ottawa's program usage of 38%, Niagara's total estimated program uptake for those LDR households with only one (1) child from 0 to 5 years old could be 2,472 households (Scenario 2).

Option 1 – Provide Weekly Curbside Collection of Diapers, on a Year-Round Basis

Option 1 would provide those eligible LDR households with only one (1) child with curbside collection of diapers during the off-weeks of EOW garbage collection, resulting in the provision of weekly collection, on a year-round basis.

In order to be eligible to receive this exemption, these residents would need to pre-register with Niagara Region by completing an on-line application or mailing in an application, for approval. If approved, these residents would need to reapply for the exemption every year.

Based on current practice, the additional collection of diapers would include the following:

- i) Collection of one (1) additional clear garbage bag of children's diapers would occur during the off-weeks of EOW garbage collection, on a year-round basis, for those LDR households with one (1) child in diapers, under the age of four (4).

Based on the City of Ottawa's program usage, the additional cost to provide Option 1, as noted above, would range between \$107,215 per year (Scenario 1) and \$150,931 per year (Scenario 2) (Refer to Appendix 1).

Option 2 – Provide Weekly Curbside Collection of Diapers, for the Period of April 1 to October 31 Only

Option 2 would provide those eligible LDR households with only one (1) child with curbside collection of diapers during the off-weeks of EOW garbage collection, for the period between April 1 to October 31 only. The additional service would be provided in a manner parallel to that of Option 1 above.

Based on the City of Ottawa's program usage, the additional cost to provide Option 2, as noted above, would range between \$62,542 per year (Scenario 3) and \$88,043 per year (Scenario 4) (Refer to Appendix 1).

Administration Support

In 2019, a total of 624 diaper exemption applications were processed by Niagara Region. Scenario 1, as shown in Appendix 1, would result in an additional 1,756 eligible LDR households with only one (1) child applying for year-round diaper collection service (see Appendix 1), which is an increase of approximately 281% in the total number of applications to be processed for Niagara Region's diaper exemption program. It is anticipated that this work can be accommodated with current staff support; however, additional resources may be required in the future if the workload associated with processing applications becomes too great for existing staff to manage.

Alternatives Reviewed

Staff have presented two options in this report for the provision of curbside collection of diapers only to eligible LDR households with only one (1) child during the off-weeks of EOW garbage collection, for Committee's consideration.

Alternatively, Niagara Region implements the recommendations as presented in CSD 70-2019 – 2020 Budget-Waste Management Services Operating Budget and Requisition – REVISED, which includes the cost for weekly collection of diapers and medical waste for those households with two (2) or more children under the age of four (4) in diapers, daycares, and medical waste during the off-weeks of EOW garbage collection.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

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

Other Pertinent Reports

PW 69-2019 – Managing Diaper Waste Under Every Other Week Garbage Collection

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Additional Cost to Provide Curbside Collection of Diapers Only to Eligible
LDR Households with One (1) Child During the Off-Weeks of EOW
Garbage Collection

Appendix 1 – Additional Collection Cost to Provide Curbside Collection of Diapers to Eligible LDR Households with Only One (1) Child During the Off-Weeks of EOW Garbage Collection

Option 1 – Year-Round Service:

Scenario	Estimated Number of Households (Hhlds)	Annual Cost per Household (including net HST)	Additional Annual Cost (including net HST)
Scenario 1 (Based on 27% Uptake)	1,756	\$61.06	\$107,215
Scenario 2 (Based on 38% Uptake)	2,472	\$61.06	\$150,931

Option 2 – Seven (7) Month Service (April 1 to October 31):

Scenario	Estimated Number of Households	Cost per Month per Household (including net HST)	Additional Seven (7) Month Cost (including net HST)
Scenario 3 (Based on 27% Uptake)	1,756	\$5.09	\$62,542
Scenario 4 (Based on 38% Uptake)	2,472	\$5.09	\$88,043