
**WASTE MANAGEMENT LEVEL OF SERVICE AND RATE STUDY (LOS/RS)
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

1. What are the advantages of every other week waste collection. What are the gains to the taxpayer?

- Helping to achieve waste diversion target of 65% by 2012;
- Increased funding from Waste Diversion Ontario/Stewardship Ontario for increase in recyclables captured;
- Reducing Net Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions based on potential for reduced fleet;
- Some waste collection cost reduction is expected:
 - This will not be known until tender process is complete (tender will include pricing for both options);
 - Overall expected to experience less of an increase in waste management costs;
- Preserve landfill capacity;
- Promoting and participating in environmentally responsible and sustainable behavior (in increasing diversion);
 - Conservation of nonrenewable resources;
 - Net GHG emissions reduction through 3R's hierarchy (reduce, reuse, recycle).

2. How does the proposed Level of Service (LOS) align with Council's affordability targets?

Potential savings from the reduced frequency of waste collection/lower container limits could occur. However, the savings would be offset by other rising costs that would occur regardless of the LOS:

- Overall collection contract cost increases due to increase in fuel and labour costs, new vehicles, increase in number of households, etc.;
- Fixed and new capital costs;
- Increase in organics collected but potential offsetting costs reductions realized through decrease in waste being landfilled;
- Public outreach and enforcement activities;
- Council's affordability targets will be considered as programs are implemented and costs are finalized. Council approval occurs with tender awards, capital projects etc.

3. If garbage is collected every other week, the garbage will smell, especially during hot summer months. Why then would the Region consider changing garbage collection to every other week?

Studies have shown that collecting waste every other week is helpful in reducing the amount of waste being taken to landfills, which is important in Niagara as most of our operating landfills will be closing within the next few years. Recycling (alternately Blue and Grey Box) and organics (Green bin) would continue to be collected weekly.

As organics will be collected weekly, there should not be any 'smelly' materials in the waste stream that would be collected every other week. Items you may put in your Green Bin include; fruit and vegetable peelings, table scraps and plate scrapings, meat, fish, dairy products (solid), bread, pasta, sauces and gravy, bones, paper towels and napkins, tissues etc.

4. Why is the Region considering reducing the number of garbage containers/bags that will be collected without requiring a garbage tag?

Based on recent waste audits conducted throughout Niagara Region, it was determined that the average household currently places out less than two (2) full garbage containers/bags each week for collection. Waste audits also show that the average householder still places recyclables and organic materials in the waste stream. By reducing the garbage container limit, the Region hopes to encourage residents to participate more fully in the recycling and organics programs.

5. Why are you trying to make people separate the organics from the waste? I don't use the Green Bin now, and I really don't want to, it's too much trouble.

Niagara Region's landfills will be at capacity and closing within the next few years. In order to extend the remaining life of our landfills, we need to reduce the amount of garbage being disposed. By using the Green Bin for organics, we can reduce the amount of waste being sent to our landfills by over 40 per cent.

6. Will there be a reduction to my property taxes as a result of the reduced frequency of waste collection and/or lower waste container limits?

The changes in service options are planned for the benefit of the environment and to meet Regional Council's waste diversion goal of 65% by 2012. Industry-wide, the costs for waste management services are increasing, so any potential savings from the reduced frequency of waste collection/lower container limits may be offset by increasing costs.

7. If the garbage container/bag limit is reduced and/or garbage is collected every other week, will that not cause more illegal dumping?

Studies have shown there is no direct correlation between long-term illegal dumping activities and program changes. Regardless, illegal dumping is an ongoing issue and Waste Management Services is revising its Illegal Dumping Management Program to deal with potential issues through the following:

- Education: Public awareness and co-ordination with area municipalities;
- Enhancement: Clean-up and monitoring, reduced access to common dumping locations;
- Enforcement: By-law officers and fines are in place to deal with violators. The By-law is being updated to increase fines.

8. Why is the LOS/RS looking at expanding the organics collection (Green Bin) program into West Lincoln and Wainfleet?

Currently, organics are collected, on a weekly basis, in most municipalities, with the exception of West Lincoln and Wainfleet. Based on the decision of these two municipal Councils, their municipalities were not included in the original organics program roll out in 2003. As a result of the feedback received from these residents, and to assist the Region with achieving its goal of 65 per cent waste diversion by 2012, the LOS/RS is considering expanding organics collection into Wainfleet and West Lincoln. Collection services will then be consistent across the Niagara.

9. What will happen to the landfill sites after they close?

As part of Niagara Region's Service Level Review/Rate Study, a recommendation has been made to continue to operate a public drop-off depot for residents and small businesses at some of the closed landfill sites to allow for the drop off of waste, recycling and organics.

10. How can we increase student recycling?

Niagara Region's school boards employ a full-time school waste management co-ordinator who visits all public elementary and secondary schools in the Niagara Region to teach students about recycling. The Region works closely with the Coordinator to promote Regional waste management programs. Brock University has the second best institutional recycling program in the province; an estimated 2.5 tonnes of material are collected each week at the University.

11. Is there a limit as to how much recycling and organics I can place at the curb?

There is no limit for residential recycling and organics placed at the curb. Businesses are permitted to place residential volumes to the curb as well. Materials must be placed at the curb properly no later than 7 a.m. on your designated collection day.