

Waste Reduction Report

During the June 12 council committee meeting Phil Reddin, Director Solid Waste, presented his report. This section deals with Waste Reduction.

Staffing/Events:

2 Summer students started the first week of May. Both are re-turning and needed little time to get back to work which included litter picking around the communities/roadways, battery pickups and green cart deliveries. With over 30 new civics being submitted by Property Information each month, new builds and new tenants mean new carts for delivery.

A fully funded 15-week Clean Intern was awarded to work with the Waste Reduction Team from the Clean Foundation. Their role is to lead curbside audits and MRF audits. At the curbside, the role is to continue to educate residents of the Municipality on how well they sort, or where there is room for improvements. At the MRF, they will help generate reports for haulers from Colchester County, and the other regional municipalities to give feedback on their recycling loads.

Staff from Waste Reduction put on a community paper shredding event at the RECC on Saturday May 24th. From 9am to 12pm, staff expertly guided and unloaded 201 residential cars were able to shred 11,177 lbs of sensitive material on-site.

Education

Staff have been very busy with presentations: the Education Officer had 3 School presentations and headed to the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture Lunch and Learn and Strokes Club Truro for a refresher presentation. Staff continue to promote Divert NS Girl Guide Litter Champion crest by doing presentations for the girl guides and then register for a litter clean up and submit their data cards. There were two Girl Guide presentations (Embers and Sparks). Staff had a wonderful Earth Day event at Truro Middle School where staff saw over 500 students. The Education Officer conducted two VON adult day programs in Tatamagouche and Truro and an online presentation for the Stewiacke's Councillors.

The Solid Waste Educator was invited to 2 Career Fairs (Truro Middle School 320 students and Agricultural Expo 700 students). Staff had great conversations with students not only about what the waste educator does but also other job opportunities within Solid Waste.

The Provincial Housing Agency reached out in a bit of a panic as their material was rejected by their hauler. They requested an emergency presentation. Staff were able to squeeze them in within days of their request. The apartment was a senior's apartment. The Waste Educator inspected their bins and garbage/recycling room and noticed a few things. They had all the receptables, but signage wasn't visible, so residents were throwing material blindly into the bins. The presentation was conducted, and the tenants were asked to identify their challenges and majority of them said there was no signs on the bins. The plan going forward is that SW will work with them and update their signage with signs on bins and on the walls just over the bins and "No plastic" stick for the green bins. Staff will follow up in 1 month to see how that works with feedback from tenants and haulers.

Truro Home Show - 713 individuals stopped and engaged with us. Staff used this opportunity to focus was on What Goes Where and new programs (Electronics diversion expansion, lightbulbs, etc.).

Staff continue to do online education by posting What Goes Where Wednesdays posts across all social media platforms taking our numbers mainly from ReCollect numbers/Calls.

Colchester Clean launched on March 15th, and had 744 individuals who signed up to participate in the program. A total of 20 Sport teams/Non-profit who also signed up to participate. The program was extended (due to weather) - allowing more time for already registered individuals to have the opportunity to go out and do their part in keeping Colchester clean. Data cards are coming in slowly and so far, the program has 413 individuals volunteering 121.5hrs of their time, cleaning approximately 95km resulting in the collection of 350 bags of garbage and 90 bags of recycling.



Solid Waste Compliance:

Reporting Period: February to June 2025

Collection Related Issues and Follow Up:50
Illegal Dumps and Follow-up:8
Accumulation of SW and Follow Up:5
Commercial Related:8
Tax Sale:8

Collection Issues/Follow Up:

Whether it be Helpline or Hauler driven, follow ups are made to address collection issues such as education being required or due to non-compliance within our regulations.

During the period February and June 2025 there were 50 visits made.

50 collection issues/educational visits and follow ups were made. The breakdown of these visits is as follows:

Pre-Collection Inspection:13
Garbage/Recycling Box/Material Too Far from Curb: . .7
Missed Collection:5
Material Rejected Improperly:4
Sorting Issue:3
Add Signage to Box (# of Units):3
Plastic in Green Cart:2

Remainder of visits were made for reasons such as Christmas tree pick up, bags too heavy, cart too heavy and road assessments/issues pertaining to collection, scavenging and new collection location.

Illegal Dump by Area:

Bible Hill:3
East Mountain:1
East Village:1
North River:2
Valley:1

Accumulation of SW Locations:

Truro Heights:Truro Heights Rd
Bible Hill: Main St

Lornevale Rd GV: Follow up visits working with a non-complaint resident; clean up set for June 3rd

**From the enforcement side, when complaints are received about solid waste being an issue on a given property, Section 14 - No Accumulation of Solid Waste, is used to bring the property back into compliance. This section of the Solid Waste By-law is easier to navigate through enforcement to compliance as staff are dealing with specific properties and property owners.*

***When dealing with illegal dumping complaints there are many times staff are unable to determine the culprit when dealing with property owners who didn't dump the material themselves. For sites of smaller quantities, the material is sifted through and taken away to avoid further litter and dumping. If sites are comprised of larger piles on private property, the property owner is brought in on the cleanup plan as Municipal and Provincial legislation holds property owners accountable for their property. For situations where large clean ups are required, tipping fees can be reduced or waived to help with the cleanup cost.*

Wastewater Compliance:

Public Works is working on and will be providing an updated grease trap educational information to be distributed during wastewater/grease trap visits. Once this has been created visits will resume to locations flagged by Public Works.

Tax Sale Posting:

Working with the Property Tax Clerk, those properties that are set to go to tax sale are posted with a notice as a last measure of education prior to the sale. These are done under the guidance of the Property Tax Clerk and are posted on the dwelling or the land in question. If posted on a dwelling, it is practice to talk to someone onsite prior to posting, if possible, to ensure they are aware of what the posting means.

Green Cart Program:

The green cart program is in place to ensure all residents who are eligible for curbside collection have access to a green cart for onsite organics. Solid Waste delivers new carts as well as repairs existing carts to extend the life of as many as possible before replacement is required.

Shown below is a table green cart program jobs per fiscal year since 2013.

MUNICIPALITY OF COLCHESTER GREEN CART PROGRAM		
YEAR	TOTAL GREEN CART JOBS COMPLETED (FISCAL YEAR TOTALS)	JOBS/MONTH AVERAGE
2013-14	667	56
2014-15	571	48
2015-16	731	61
2016-17	615	51
2017-18	735	61
2018-19	824	69
2019-20	840	70
2020-21	1014	85
2021-22	1095	91
2022-23	1072	89
2023-24	1083	90
2024-25	1209	101

**The above table includes cart repair jobs for the time in question. • From a pure cart delivery/drop off standpoint here are the replacement/new build cart numbers from the last two years without repair jobs included:*

2023/2024: Replacements = 823 New Build Deliveries = 122
2024/2025: Replacements = 768 New Build Deliveries = 311

Helpline Numbers:

For the last reporting period (March to May 2025), the total Helpline calls included a total of 2019 calls and 336 emails.

Trends in call volumes can be seen below.

In addition to general questions above, the Helpline stays in constant daily contact with the collection contractor's road Supervisor. Complaints and missed collections are addressed in real time, or followups as required to come to solutions for residents. Bulky items have been a highly used option for residents, especially at this time of year. The collection contractor has mobilized a second full time bulky truck to assist in the large amounts of material generated at this time of year.

Any questions, concerns or comments are always welcomed.
Phillip Redden, B.Eng. Director of Solid Waste



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