

Waste Diversion Officer Report:

April 1st, 2020 – September 30th, 2020



Waste Diversion Officer Update

April 1 – Sept. 30, 2020

HHW

Household Hazardous waste had a significant increase in customers over this reporting period. With residents spending more time at home and some not able to work it gave everyone an opportunity to do spring cleaning. Throughout the reporting period we were getting on average 15-20 customers per day that we were open. I had the site completely emptied in March 2020 leading up to summer which could normally carry us through to December, but on September 28th I sent out 18 lab-packed barrels (itemized and separated due to classification), with an additional 2 pallets with a total of 48, 5L pails of oil, paint, thinner and fiberglass resin. We also filled our 12 paint boxes that were shipped out on the same day. The paint boxes I have shipped twice already this year, versus last year where we had 2 loads go out for the full year.

With items being added to the list for HHW diversion (Paint cans, oil containers, filters, rags) we decided to open HHW for 3 Saturdays this summer. The numbers were consistent with our typical Monday's, but what was exciting was that the customers who accessed the site on the Saturday's were providing feedback on how great it was as they are otherwise working on the traditional Monday HHW. We had 52 customers over the 3 days it was offered, with people bringing up to a truck-load full of chemicals/propane tanks.

Covid-19 didn't impact our operations at our HHW and writer maintained social distance, asked customers to just leave the chemicals on the ground by the gate for this writer to take into the enclosure to lab-pack. The battery return program had been suspended but is operational now and I will be focusing on back-logged battery packing in the next reporting period.

We will be hosting our "Roaming" Household Hazardous Waste and Electronic Depot on October 3rd in Lockeport, setting up by the bleachers where we set up last year, we will be bringing 2 trailers as last year we filled our trailer more than twice over with the amount of electronics we received.

I completed the Annual report to the Department of Environment this reporting period, detailing the amount of chemical we received and shipped, and we are currently in compliance for our permit.

RMRF

RMRF this reporting period underwent the biggest changes within the Waste Department. We prepared an RFP for the Brush Remediation at the site. The project was completed on August 7th, 2020. We also are charging \$40 per Metric Ton for commercial users who are bringing us brush. We have stopped accepting Stumps as there is no market for such material, nor will

there be remediation options moving forward for this material. We have promoted this on our Facebook page and the Municipality website, an order has been placed to put in signs at the site to identify 2 different drop cells in the brush area, one for clean brush, and one for yard waste, to assure that brush remains clean and separate from sediment that may be brought in with a load of yard waste.

We have had chronic issues with our scale over this reporting period. Part of the concerns were due to the company All-Weigh not being responsive to the operational needs of the program. We contacted them due to a potential load-cell issue in mid-July and they were not responsive until early September. In the time it took for them to answer our calls (This writer called them every 2 days throughout July/August with no response). We reached out to other operators within the region and this writer prepared comparative data for pricing, service, and accessibility with 3 different scale companies. As of September 24th, Weigh-Tronix out of Dartmouth were at our site to assist in diagnosing our scale concerns and currently our scale is producing an accurate weight across all 3 decks. We will be looking at doing technological upgrades for producing scale data early in the next reporting period.

Covid-19 did impact our operations at the C&D site, we started with limiting the availability to 2 days a week and took a staggered approach to re-opening the site to assure it was done in a safe manner and under proper provincial protocol. For a time, we were not accepting payment, but instead taking billing information from residents and customers to assure only the scale house operator had access to the scale house. Once the site was open for full operation again in June, we had a tray in place for those who pay debit to allow them to do so without entering the scale house and assuring 6 feet of physical distance. We had a cleaner come to the site 2 times per week to do a full cleaning/sanitization, we discontinued this in September and the site operator is responsible for cleaning and sanitization measures moving forward.

Covid-19 also impacted our operations at the C&D site when other sites in the province closed for public access. This resulted in an influx of out of region customers who were not familiar with our program and were bringing us materials that are not accepted at our RMRF site. One example of many, was a resident of Chester who came to the site with 3/4ths of the material we didn't accept, when turned away he mentioned he would not be driving back to Chester with his waste and that he would find a "side-road" to dispose of the remainder of the load he brought. Our staggered approach to re-opening followed in the steps of the other sites in the Province to assure we would not continue to have an influx of out of region waste that would contribute to illegal dumping.

Education, Solid Waste Removal & Enforcement

The education portion of the report is a bit limited due to Covid-19 measures and social distancing. We are now doing our "door-knocking" education when we see rejectable materials on curbside for pickup, however, other educational opportunities are limited, such as attending schools in the area. R-6 has been working on webinars as well as online presentations to try

and bridge the gap, however, with school just getting underway we will be trying creative ways to engage the youth of the importance of what happens to solid waste and the ever-lasting impact it will have on our environment.

In this reporting period I have fielded 993 calls and responded to 208 Facebook queries that is an increase of about 400% from the last reporting period. A lot of the calls initially were a result of the change in hours and operations to the RMRF site. Most calls in April/May/June were pertaining to service changes, or updates on services. If each phone call took up 1 minute of time that would equate to 16.55 hours on the phone, not counting contractors or co-workers. That is just resident calls. There was a lot of information that came from media outlets regarding blue bag collection stopping in some regions and that they were temporarily putting recyclables in landfills, so residents were rightfully confused and some were holding onto their blue-bag recyclables so they wouldn't go in landfill.

I attended 27 residences within this reporting period, 2 for conflict resolution amongst neighbors with regards to garbage boxes not being cared for and overflowing with garbage. The rest was education pertaining to item placement (items not accepted curbside). I investigated 4 illegal dump sites in this reporting period, 3 of which we identified the perpetrator and were able to find resolution moving forward through education. That is not counting our Bylaw officer's illegal dumping numbers, they will be provided in our Enforcement report that will be reflected in the next reporting period.

Another opportunity for education is green cart deliveries and red bag deliveries. I completed 84 green cart deliveries; Darrell completed 8 green cart deliveries in this reporting period. Alicia was also kind enough to assist with developing a new tracking system through the Microsoft Access Program for green cart deliveries and complaints/concerns to centralize our information as a one-stop shop as well as to assure that we are not duplicating service and in turn assisting with efficiency. I have completed 17 Red bag deliveries for community cleanup in this reporting period as well. We decided to do the Red bag deliveries as we were not able to facilitate the community cleanup in the spring, due to permitting issues with the Department of Transportation while under a state of emergency. Once the state of emergency is lifted, if there is still time in the fall we will try and see if there is a community appetite for this, the groups that had contacted me pre-Covid are currently not interested due to the colder weather, as well as it being a group activity, due to social-distancing provisions.

This writer and Angela Taylor with R-6 went to 9 businesses in the Town of Lockeport and the Town of Shelburne on September 16th to remind business owners that on October 30th, 2020 as planned by the Provincial Government that the plastic bag ban will be in effect. With Covid there has not been a provincially led strategy to remind business owners to not purchase or stock anymore plastic bags and to convert to paper bags. The reception was fantastic as most businesses we spoke with started to prepare when it was announced. We will continue with the remainder of the businesses in mid-October the next time our schedules will permit.

Changes in Services

RMRF not accepting stumps, charging commercial users for brush. *See RMRF portion of this report for more information.*

Increased accessibility through summer hours at the Household Hazardous Waste site. *See HHW portion of this report for more information.*

Plastic bag ban on October 30th, 2020. *See education portion of this report for more information.*

UPCOMING:

1. Freon Removal “hands on” training to be able to provide for our residents. (in the next 2 quarters once we hit the winter months)
2. Continuing our black bag inspections as it is still a concern within our Shared Services area (communal pickups big focus this quarter).
3. Plastic Bag ban October 30th, 2020.
4. Continued education and conflict resolution provided throughout the Shared Services area.
5. Data entry and tracking systems for all relevant programs.
6. Lockeport HHW/Electronic pickup.
7. Fall Metal Collection – October 13-23
8. Waste Reduction Week – October 19-23