

The Regional Municipality of York

Committee of the Whole
Environmental Services
June 15, 2023

Report of the Commissioner of Public Works

Weight-Based Waste Depot Fee Increase

1. Recommendations

1. Council authorize an increase to the weight-based fee for garbage and other chargeable waste loads at depots to \$170 per tonne, effective September 25, 2023 in accordance with 2023 approved budget, which amount shall be subject to annual increases in accordance with CPI as set out in the Region's Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 2020-04, as amended or replaced.

2. Summary

This report seeks Council authorization to increase weight-based depot fees at all York Region waste depots and Community Environmental Centres. The last depot fee increase occurred in 2018. York Region's curbside collection program is a convenient and affordable option for disposal. Waste depots offer locations to drop off items not accepted for pick-up during regular curbside collection and curbside compliant materials. This depot fee increase promotes financially sustainable operations through cost recovery while maintaining service levels.

Key Points:

- A [weight-based fee](#) of \$125 per tonne for residual waste and other chargeable items, such as concrete, drywall, untreated wood and yard waste, and a minimum flat rate of \$10 at waste depots, was implemented on January 1, 2018. The weight-based fee applies to both residential and commercial customers
 - The proposed weight-based waste depot fee of \$170 per tonne will offset the recent rise in contract costs and align with the [City of Toronto](#) (\$171.25 per tonne) and [Halton Region](#) (\$185 per tonne)
 - In February 2023, the waste depot fee increase was approved as part of the multi-year budget for 2023-2026, and in accordance with the [Fees and Charges for Services and Activities Bylaw](#) Section 3, Council authority is required to implement this proposed fee increase
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- Staff recommend the weight-based waste depot fee increase annually with CPI starting in 2024. This adjustment will be conducted through Corporate Finance Schedule of Fees and Charges for Service annual CPI update

3. Background

High satisfaction ratings and growing use demonstrate value of investing in the Region’s waste depots as a complementary service to curbside programs

Local cities and towns provide residents with accessible weekly curbside collection of recyclables and green bin materials, bi-weekly collection of residual waste materials, and yard waste collection over the summer months. All local municipalities offer curbside collection service for bulky items, including sofas, mattresses and carpets, on the same collection day as residual waste. The Region’s waste depots complement these curbside programs and offer disposal options for materials that cannot be collected at the curb, including household hazardous wastes such as paints, pesticides, solvents and batteries.

Waste depot visits have increased by 26% since 2018 and tonnes of waste materials including residual waste, yard waste, untreated wood, concrete and drywall increased by 17% since 2018. In 2022, more than 250 customers completed a waste depot customer satisfaction survey. Overall satisfaction was scored 4.48 out of 5, exceeding the target of 4 out of 5. Table 1 lists the Region’s waste depot services and enhancements added since 2018.

Table 1
Customer Service Enhancements at York Region Waste Depots

Facility	Core Services	Enhancements since 2018
Elgin Mills Community Environmental Centre	Dedicated and mixed loads of concrete, drywall, garbage, untreated wood (for a fee)	Addition of textile collection bins to all depots
Georgina Transfer Station	Blue box recyclables, textiles, cooking oil, electronic waste, household hazardous waste, scrap metal, refrigerated appliances, shredded paper, tires	Implementation of line-up traffic camera at Georgina Transfer Station
McCleary Court Community Environmental Centre	Blue box recyclables, textiles, cooking oil, electronic waste, household hazardous waste, scrap metal, refrigerated appliances, shredded paper, tires	Addition of a Bike Reuse Pilot and Implementation of Yard Waste collection service (for a fee) both at McCleary Court Community Environmental Centre
Household Hazardous Waste Depot - East Gwillimbury	Blue box recyclables, textiles, cooking oil, electronic waste, household hazardous waste, scrap metal, refrigerated appliances	Addition of textile collection bins

4. Analysis

Proposed depot fee increase will help offset recent rise in contract costs and allow continued service levels at waste depots

In [November 2017](#), Council authorized a weight-based fee of \$125 per tonne for residual waste, with a minimum flat rate of \$10 at waste depots, effective January 1, 2018. The fee was implemented to improve financial and operational performance, and customer experience at waste depots. Since this last depot fee adjustment, inflation has increased contract costs for all contracts at waste depots. Other factors impacting contract costs are a result of changing economic conditions affecting the domestic economy including contract staffing costs and supply chain issues. In 2022, the contract price for the first year of the new two-year agreement for the Region's household hazardous waste depot operations was 30% higher than the first year of the previous contract in 2017 for the same services. While the Region receives funding from producers for the hazardous waste program, not all costs are recovered. Similarly, the non-hazardous waste depot operations contract that commenced in November 2022 increased 22% from 2018 pricing.

Market scan shows proposed increase to weight-based depot fee aligns with other municipal and private sector disposal services

Staff conducted a jurisdictional scan of neighbouring municipalities' waste depot fees to determine if current fees were aligned. Most municipalities have a minimum fee and a weight-based fee for loads exceeding a specified threshold. An increase in waste depot fees from the current \$125 per tonne to \$170 per tonne would align with fees applied in the City of Toronto and Halton Region. Durham Region has a \$125 per tonne fee which has not increased since 2016.

Private waste facilities in Toronto and Markham charge weight-based fees for garbage disposal and average \$168 per tonne. Waste disposal fees for renting a 20-yard bin which can hold up to three tonnes of mixed waste, from private companies in Georgina, Vaughan and Richmond Hill, when adjusted per tonne, averaged \$183 per tonne. Some companies charge an additional fuel surcharge that is applied to the rental fee. The proposed waste depot fee will be lower for residents compared to the cost of renting a 20-yard bin from a private waste disposal company.

Most residential customers use services for free or pay the minimum \$10.00 fee

The weight-based per tonne fee is applied to dedicated loads of concrete, drywall, garbage, untreated wood, yard waste or mixed loads. Customers with 100 kilograms or less of residual waste will continue to pay the existing minimum flat rate of \$10. In 2022, the \$125 per tonne waste depot fee was only applied to 32% of residential customers. Most residential customers used services free of charge or paid the minimum \$10 fee. In 2022, 67% of all commercial customers were charged the per tonne fee.

At this time an increase is not recommended for the \$10 minimum fee that is applied to loads weighing 100 kilograms or less, however Consumer Price Index (CPI) increases will apply beginning in 2024.

Increase to weight-based depot fee would be communicated to residents in advance of implementation date

A communications plan would be developed to advise residents and waste depot customers in advance of the proposed service fee increase effective September 25, 2023.

Communications would include rationale for the increase and reinforce the broad range of services offered at the Region's waste depots. If approved, a communications campaign would begin July 24, 2023, to provide eight weeks of advance notice to depot users.

An anti-littering campaign to mitigate any litter and illegal dumping issues ahead of the proposed weight-based depot fee increase would be undertaken. Roadside dumping activities would be monitored following the fee increase to determine if higher incidences of litter or illegal dumping have resulted.

5. Financial

Proposed weight-based depot fee increase has been incorporated into 2023-2026 multi-year budget

In [February 2023](#), as part of the 2023-2026 multi-year budget, staff proposed and Council approved waste depot fee increase from \$125 per tonne to \$170 per tonne. The waste depot fee has not increased since 2018 and therefore the fee has not kept pace with CPI increases and other contract cost pressures. An increase above \$200 per tonne would be needed to avoid using tax levy to subsidize operations of waste depots. This service fee increase would be effective September 25, 2023 to be aligned with the budget approval. Communications will be released in July to provide residents with sufficient advanced notice.

Customers with 100 kilograms or less of chargeable materials, like residual waste, will continue to pay the existing minimum fee set at \$10 per tonne. In 2022, Tonnage fees applied to 4 out of 10 transactions and on average 1 of the 10 transactions was with a residential customer.

Staff recommend the weight-based waste depot fee increase annually with CPI starting in 2024. This adjustment will be conducted through Corporate Finance Schedule of Fees and Charges for Service annual CPI update.

6. Local Impact

Staff notified local municipal waste staff of the proposed increase to the weight-based waste depot fee at the November 28, 2022 Strategic Waste Policy Committee meeting, and will continue to inform them of the process. If fee adjustments are approved, staff will share key


messages and communications materials from the waste depot fee increase and anti-litter campaigns with local municipal staff for distribution.

7. Conclusion

The Region's waste depots are designed as convenient and accessible one-stop depots for residents with excess residual waste and other materials not easily managed at curbside. This report seeks Council authorization for an increase to the weight-based fee for garbage and other chargeable loads at waste depots from \$125 to \$170 per tonne, effective September 25, 2023. Adopting the proposed weight-based fee of \$170 per tonne will help address cost pressures incurred since 2018 and ensure continued delivery of quality services for the community.

For more information on this report, please contact Lindsay Milne, Acting Director, Waste Management and Forestry Operations, Operations and Services, Public Works at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75714. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

Recommended by:



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Chief Administrative Officer

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