



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

COMMITTEE REPORT

To: Chair and Members of the Solid Waste Services Committee
From: Das Soligo, Manager of Solid Waste Services
Date: Tuesday, January 11, 2022
Subject: Leaf and Yard Waste Update

Background:

2021 was the second year that the County of Wellington has provided leaf and yard waste collection and drop-off services. The leaf and yard waste programme has been remarkably successful in giving residents convenient options in disposing of their yard waste, while diverting many tonnes of material from the County's landfill site.

Organic material, such as leaf and yard waste, degrades in a landfill causing the production of both leachate and methane, the latter of which is a potent greenhouse gas. All leaf and yard waste managed by the County is sent to a commercial composting facility and turned into a nutrient rich product that is used as a beneficial soil amendment to support agriculture and home gardens.

This report will provide a brief update on the performance of the programme, and some proposed changes for next year.

Leaf and Yard Waste Services:

The leaf and yard waste programme has performed very well in its first two years. Last year, it resulted in 1692 tonnes that were collected through the County's curbside collection and waste facility drop-off services. The 2021 tonnage represented a 31% increase over the previous year. As can be seen below, the increase is likely attributable to a full year of residents having the option of dropping off leaf and yard waste at the County's waste facilities, and to County residents becoming accustomed to the new service options. In 2020 the waste facility drop-off was an option for the fall months only.

	2020 Tonnage	2021 Tonnage
Curbside Collection	1037 tonnes	1039 tonnes
Waste Facilities	250 tonnes	653 tonnes
Total	1287 tonnes	1692 tonnes

The convenience of the new curbside collection of leaf and yard waste programme, from the County's 56 designated urban areas, has been very well received and well utilized by residents. In the Fall of both 2020 and 2021 Solid Waste Services (SWS) staff have received feedback and observed the challenges of collecting very high volumes of materials, within the time allocated to this task. This has led to some residents having materials out at the roadside for over a week, while the collection services for any given household are intended to be completed within a week.

Currently, each household receives a collection of leaf and yard waste once a month between April and November. SWS has included two additional collection events in October and November in the proposed 2022 budget at a cost of \$50,000 for leaf and yard waste to be collected twice in October and November.

This solution will reduce the amount of materials set out at the roadside in each collection event, by doubling the opportunities to dispose of yard waste materials at the curbside. This will be more convenient for residents, who will be able to reduce or eliminate the need to store leaf and yard waste between collection events. For residents in neighbourhoods with many mature trees especially, it can be cumbersome to store dozens of bags of leaves in the Fall months, while they await the next collection event.

The additional weeks of leaf and yard waste collection will also allow the County's curbside collection contractor to collect materials more quickly, as the materials set-out at the roadside will be spread out over four collection events through October and November.

With this proposed change, the leaf and yard waste services will be improved and is expected to be even more successful in the years to come.

Recommendation:

That the January 2022 report titled "Leaf and Yard Waste Update" be received for information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Das Soligo', with a stylized, flowing script.

Das Soligo
Manager of Solid Waste Services