



## MUNICIPALITY OF **West Elgin**

### Staff Report

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**Report To:** Council Meeting

**From:** Lee Gosnell, Manager of Operations & Community Services

**Date:** 2020-10-22

**Subject:** Bag Limits for Household Waste

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#### **Recommendation:**

That West Elgin Council hereby receives the report from Lee Gosnell, Manager of Operations & Community Services; and

That Council approve the lowering of West Elgin's bag limit for household waste from the current six (6) bag limit down to three (3), beginning January 1, 2021.

#### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this report is to seek West Elgin Council's commitment to waste reduction by reducing the current six (6) bag limit on household waste to three (3).

#### **Background:**

In November of 2011, WESA Environmental (now known as BluMetric) presented West Elgin Council with a Waste Recycling Plan. This was completed based on many factors including Council goals, industry best practices and public consultation. While many changes have been made since the preparation of this report, one simple, low cost option has yet to be introduced. At the time, West Elgin was being served by many different contracts, and service levels varied greatly across the municipality. With the recent move to municipal wide curbside collection, a reduction in bag limits is the next logical choice in our waste reduction strategy.

Currently, West Elgin has a six (6) bag limit for household waste. This number is unheard of in these times, with many municipalities operating on a two (2) bag limit or less. Option 3, found on page 14 of the attached WESA report, suggests a reduction to three (3) bags based on 'Waste Recycling Guidebook Options' (CIF, 2010). Residents now have expanded diversion alternatives such as bi-weekly recycling, large item pick, yard waste collection days and access to economical solutions for composting. As the report highlights, municipalities with lower weekly garbage bag limits tend to exhibit higher recovery rates. As part of the Public Information Session on expanding garbage collection West Elgin surveyed residents on if they would be in favour of reducing the bag limit to 3 and 73% of respondents voted in favour of this reduction.

#### **Financial Implications:**

Putting aside the tremendous environmental benefits associated with waste reduction, there are also many positive financial implications as well. For starters, any reduction in household waste translates directly to savings, since we pay 'per tonne' for all garbage delivered to Green Lane

Landfill. If diversion rates increase in the form of additional recycling, this will also provide extra revenue through our partnership with the London MRF.

Costs for waste disposal in Ontario continue to grow and show no signs of stopping. The attached WESA report is almost a decade old now, and as stated earlier, many municipalities have limits, which are far lower than the proposed three (3) bag limit. There are many households within the municipality, which only produce 1 – 2 bags of garbage per week (or less). Staff feel this reduction, along with promotion and education will help others learn how to lower their waste generation through increased diversion. This initiative is easily implemented with very little cost and will help West Elgin continue its efforts to becoming a greener community.

**Report Approval Details**

Document Title:	Bag Limits for Household Waste - 2020-19-Operations Community Services.docx
Attachments:	- Final Waste Recycling Strategy Report Nov 2011.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Oct 20, 2020

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Jana Nethercott