



By-law Enhancements for Clothing Donation Bins in the City of London

Principles for the development of a new and enhanced by-law governing Clothing Donation Bins in London

The Clothesline program, which operates clothing donation bins across Canada is an integral part of Diabetes Canada's continued success. The funds generated through these bins help support the important work of Diabetes Canada as they lead the fight to **end diabetes**. In particular, these funds allow Diabetes Canada to help people with diabetes live better lives and to fund important research to find a cure. Every dollar raised through the Clothesline program is reinvested back into important programs and services that directly support the people and the community our organization serves. In the GTA programs such as diabetes camps (D-Camps), diabetes information and awareness seminars and the funding of important research would not be possible without programs like Clothesline.

Diabetes Canada understands that in order to maintain a viable, transparent and properly enforceable clothing donation bin program in the City of London a new regulatory framework to govern the existence of all bins throughout London needs to be developed.

Through our experiences of working with over 70 municipal partners, we have created a list of guiding principles that we believe should be reflected in any new municipal clothing donation bylaw program.

Guiding Principles

Accountability

1. All clothing donation bins in the City of London must be licensed and registered with the City.
2. A licensing fee must be paid by all clothing bin operators. Such fees should cover the cost of enforcement of the program including bin removal.
3. Licensing fees should not be cost-prohibitive. Keeping permitting fees at a reasonable rate will assure the availability of donation bins and increase textile diversion. It should also be noted that some Canadian municipalities have bylaws that **do not charge** registered charities any fees for clothing donation bin placements (one such example would be the Town of Bradford, Ontario).
4. Permits should remain in effect for at least one year and the process to update an existing bin permit should be made a simple process that is cost effective for both the municipality and the bin operator.
5. There must be a written agreement (authorization form) between private property owners (or authorized property managers or tenants) and clothing bin operators (for profit or not for profit) for a bin to be placed and this agreement must be filed with the appropriate licensing department.



6. Though it is imperative that a bin operator be required to obtain consent in order to preserve the respectability of the textile recycling industry and to uphold property rights, an “owner’s agent” should be broadly defined to include the authorized local agent at a chosen bin location. Many times large multinational corporations anchor sites where bin operators will choose to locate. It is nearly impossible to obtain a signed document from the CEO of these companies or their fiscal agent located at company headquarters. An owner’s agent should include a local property manager/agent or authorized general manager, so that bin operators are realistically able to obtain the consent necessary, and to avoid undo and unwieldy consent thresholds.

Transparency and Public Disclosure

7. Permit tag or license must be clearly visible on the clothing donation bin for ease of enforcement.
8. Any charities that are involved in a clothing donation bin must be registered charities and their charitable CRA registration number must be clearly displayed on the clothing donation bin. In addition, the percentage of the proceeds received by the charity must also be displayed.
9. Any clothing bin operator - for profit or charity must provide a valid phone number in Ontario so that they can be contacted if there are issues with the bin.
10. All clothing donation bin operators must publish a list of all bin locations preferably on their website.
11. Bylaws **should** discourage the use of deceptive or ambiguous labels/logos on clothing collection bins that falsely imply an underlying affiliation with a charitable organization when one does not exist. Furthermore, if a For-Profit Operator is making claims and or statements on the bin that they are representing a charity, it is our belief that the percentage being shared should be on the bin. This allows the public to make informed decisions about which organizations are worthy of their donations.
12. Any For-Profit clothing donation bin operator must be a legal, registered business in Canada

Safety, Enforcement and Protection

13. Charities that use a for-profit bin operator to collect clothing are responsible for the actions of the for-profit operator and could be subject to the fees and or fines under the bylaw.
14. Clothing donation bins should be permitted on paved areas, parking spaces, medians and level grassed areas if deemed acceptable by the property owner or authorized agent as long as they do not create a safety issue.



15. Property owners or authorized agents that enter into agreements with a clothing bin operator should not be held responsible for the actions of the clothing bin operator. If a property owner is not able to have an unwanted clothing donation bin removed from their property, the city should remove the bin. Removal costs should be charged to the clothing bin operator and or their charitable partner.
16. If a bin is placed on land without appropriate consent (whether they be zoned private, commercial or residential) the city should be responsible for removing the bin. All removal costs should be charged to the bin operator and or charity partner, not the property owner or its agent.
17. A standard should be established for the construction and maintenance of all clothing donation bins which conforms to the City of London fire code and ensures public safety. i.e. Metal not Wood.
18. Bylaws should require clothing donation bin operators to provide proof of liability insurance with a minimum coverage of \$1,000,000.00 (per occurrence) for every bin placed.
19. The success of textile diversion is based on the **accessibility** and **convenience** of donation bin placements, and therefore, clothing donation bylaws should not restrict bin placements based on specific zoning regulations (whether they are private, commercial or residential).

About Clothesline

Each year, Clothesline diverts more than 100 million pounds of clothing and household items from our landfills. This translates into a savings of 840 million kWh of energy and reduces our donors' carbon footprint by 115 million kilograms of CO2 emissions. This energy savings is equivalent to planting 8.2 million trees!

About Diabetes Canada

Diabetes Canada is a registered charitable organization, leading the fight against diabetes by helping the 11M Canadians with diabetes and pre diabetes live healthy lives while we work to find a cure. Our professional staff and more than 20,000 volunteers provide education and services to help people in their daily fight against the disease, advocate on behalf of people with diabetes for the opportunity to achieve their highest quality of life, and break ground towards a cure.