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<b>TO:</b>	<b>CHAIR AND MEMBERS CIVIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING ON OCTOBER 1, 2012</b>
<b>FROM:</b>	<b>JAY STANFORD, M.A., M.P.A. DIRECTOR, ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS &amp; SOLID WASTE</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>CURBSIDE BLUE BOX PROGRAM AWARENESS &amp; COMPLIANCE PROGRAM</b>

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
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That on the recommendation of the Director – Environmental Programs & Solid Waste, the following actions **BE TAKEN** with respect to the Curbside Blue Box Program:

- (a) An awareness and compliance program be phased in with respect to the Curbside Blue Box Program **BE APPROVED**; it being noted that one of the primary goals of the program is to educate Londoners on the financial value of correct curbside separation practices, and
- (b) the draft amending By-law, attached as Appendix A, **BE INTRODUCED** at the Municipal Council meeting on October 9, 2012 to amend By-law WM-12 Municipal Waste & Resource Materials Collection By-law to allow recycling containers with improperly sorted or non-recyclable material, not to be collected.

<b>PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER</b>
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Relevant reports that can be found at [www.london.ca](http://www.london.ca) under City Hall (Meetings) include:

- Solid Waste Management Updates (April 23, 2012 meeting of the Civic Works Committee (CWC), Item #17)
- Update: Interim Business Plan for the Green Bin Program and Zero Waste Strategies (May 10, 2010 meeting of Environmental Transportation Committee (ETC), Agenda Item #13)
- Interim Business Plan for the Green Bin Program and Zero Waste Strategies (January 11, 2010 meeting of the ETC, Agenda Item #11)
- Guidance Document for Waste Diversion Decisions including the Green Bin Program (November 10, 2008 meeting of the ETC, Agenda Item #7)
- Waste Diversion Strategy Public Consultation Document and Recent Waste Diversion Initiatives – *Road Map to Maximize Waste Diversion in London* (December 10, 2007 meeting of ETC, Agenda Item # 9)

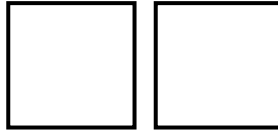
<b>BACKGROUND</b>
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**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to provide Committee and Council with an overview of the potential benefits that would result if we could improve compliance with the curbside set-out requirements of the Blue Box Program and the proposed steps towards achieving these results.

Why this program?

- Reduce Blue Box processing costs by approximately \$250,000 each year (by the end of 2013) if a target of 3% (by weight) of non-recyclable or improperly sorted materials arriving at the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) can be achieved
- Ensure City continues to receive top dollar for our recyclables by sending high quality materials to end markets
- Maintain good relationships with end markets



The primary focus of this program is on the small number London homes that are not recycling correctly. With minimal inconvenience they can take action that would result in program cost savings and reduce the recycling program reliance on tax revenues.

#### **CONTEXT:**

In August 2011, the City owned MRF for sorting Blue Box recyclables was opened. The operating agreement for the regional Manning Drive MRF with Miller Waste Systems allows for the processing fee for Blue Box recyclables to decrease based on three main factors:

1. as the quantity of delivered Blue Box material increases
2. as the quality of delivered Blue Box materials improves
3. with the elimination of plastic bags as a collection container

This report addresses improving the quality of Blue Box materials. Previous Committee reports have addressed the other two factors.

#### **DISCUSSION**

##### **Consequences of Not Improving Quantity**

The Manning Drive Regional MRF is designed to receive materials sorted into two streams by residents. When materials have not been sorted properly or Blue Boxes contain non-recyclables items there are financial impacts to the City as discussed below.

##### ***1. Processing fee paid to Miller Waste Systems***

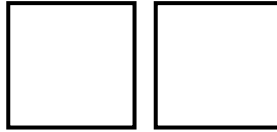
This is the most significant of the three factors with respect to having an impact on the City's costs. The City's contract with Miller Waste Systems allows them to charge additional processing fees when the percentage of unsorted recyclables combined with non-recyclables delivered to the MRF exceeds 3% (by weight). The additional fee increases as the unsorted recyclables combined with non-recyclables increases. Currently the unsorted recyclables and non-recyclables average between 5% and 6%. Over the period of a year, this could add an additional \$250,000 to the City's costs of operating the MRF. The additional fee is charged because of Miller's increased labour cost resulting from the need to manually sort recyclables that have been placed in the wrong 'stream' (e.g., paper placed in the container 'stream' or a container placed in the paper 'stream') and to remove and pay for disposal of non-recyclables.

##### ***2. Impact on revenue***

In 2011, the City of London received approximately \$4.5 million from the sale of recyclables; revenue which helped to reduce the cost of the program delivery. Revenue in 2011 was higher than average; for the five year period from 2006 to 2010 the annual amount received ranged between \$2 million and \$4 million. While revenue is largely dependent on market rates beyond the City's of London's control, there is some variability in what municipalities are paid for their recyclables based on the quality of the product they produce. In general, two-stream facilities, such as the City of London's MRF, are able to obtain preferred revenue rates because we are able to produce a higher quality product. When residents do not take the time to two-stream sort recyclables and if they put non-recyclables in the Blue Box it results in a lower capture rate of recyclables and a lower quality end product, both of which may have a negative impact on revenue.

##### ***3. Impact on relationships with end market mills***

By building relationships with end market mills we will be more assured that we will continue to find a market for our recyclables. Higher quality products will help to ensure stable markets, particularly during times of market downturn, when municipalities often experience difficulty in securing end markets and resulting in materials being stockpiled or moved at a cost instead of being paid revenue. During these times, MRFs that are able to provide the highest-grade product will have preferred options with end markets.



### **Current situation – many positives; however there is room for improvement**

The large majority of London households are very committed to recycling. Over 90% of London households participate in the curbside Blue Box program and in some areas participation is well above 95%. Most Londoners are also taking the time to know what can be recycled and to sort their Blue Box materials into two streams. Their efforts are significant and have resulted in financial and environmental benefits for all Londoners.

Similarly, the poor recycling habits of a minority of Londoners have a negative impact for all. For the month of August 2012 the level of unsorted plus non-recyclable delivered to the MRF was 5.8%. This rate has been increasing slightly in 2012. The average rate for 2012 (January to August) was 5.7% and has resulted in \$190,000 in additional processing costs to date.

Under the current curbside practice, when Blue Boxes do not comply with program instructions, the drivers will empty the Blue Boxes and place reminder stickers on them. The reminder stickers inform residents of the correct procedure. If a Blue Box is heavily contaminated with non-recyclables the driver may leave it behind. Because it is the common practice to collect these materials (with a few exceptions) it has a negative result of higher levels of unsorted recyclables and non-recyclables. An alternative, and the proposed procedure described below, would be to leave these materials behind if residents do not comply with program requirements/instructions after repeated reminders and explanations as to why proper sorting is required.

### **Proposed Awareness & Compliance Program**

The goal of the proposed program is to make London residents more aware of the Blue Box program requirements/instructions, of the impact on program cost when residents do not comply with these instructions, to increase 'curbside compliance' and to reduce program costs as a result.

The proposed program will be implemented in three phases: 1) General Awareness & Reminders, 2) Focused Awareness and Reminders, and 3) Compliance. These are described below and the approximate implementation schedule is shown in Table 1.

#### ***Phase 1: General Awareness and Reminders***

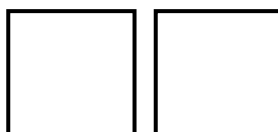
In this first program phase the goal will be to inform residents of program requirements and the expectation that they comply with these. This will be done with the use of curbside reminder stickers left on Blue Boxes, newsprint ads and other media. The City has access to free print ad space through Waste Diversion Ontario's CNA/OCNA (Canadian Newspaper Association/ Ontario Community Newspaper Association) ad program. The CNA/OCNA ads will provide high print exposure with no budget impact. Radio advertising and social media will also be added to the mix. As a general awareness campaign, Phase 1 will acknowledge and thank the majority of Londoners that are recycling correctly, as well as encourage those that need to improve.

#### ***Phase 2: Focused Awareness and Soft Compliance***

Phase 2 will focus on those households that are not recycling correctly and collection staff will begin to leave behind materials at the curbside. Through close monitoring at the curbside and of incoming calls our goal is for a smooth transition with minimal inconvenience for residents. The phase of soft compliance will be a period of clemency for residents, as staff will be prepared to return to collect materials that had been previously refused. This phase may last several months, as required to increase the level of program compliance in a manageable way while minimizing resident inconvenience. It is imperative that we do not lose participants in our recycling program.

#### ***Phase 3: Compliance and Program Maintenance***

The goal of Phase 3 is to reach a level of compliance where we can maintain our program at 3% or less (by weight of non-compliance materials in Blue Boxes) to ensure the on-going cost savings. At this level of program maintenance collectors will sticker non-compliant Blue Boxes and leave the materials at the curbside. As is always the case, a prime goal is customer satisfaction and we will make exceptions and return to collect materials from residents in special circumstances. Other times Blue Boxes will be left behind.



**Table 1: Program Phase-in Overview & Schedule**

Consideration	Phase		
	1. General Awareness & Reminders	2. Focused Awareness & Soft Compliance	3. Compliance & Program Maintenance
How we will get the message out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information stickers placed on Blue Boxes</li> <li>CNA/OCNA Print ad campaign</li> <li>Other media (radio, posters, social media, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information stickers placed on Blue Boxes</li> <li>Leaving behind non-compliant Blue Boxes</li> <li>Staff outreach &amp; close monitoring</li> <li>CNA/OCNA Print ad campaign</li> <li>Additional media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information stickers placed on Blue Boxes</li> <li>Leaving behind non-compliant Blue Boxes</li> </ul>
Schedule (approximate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing with increased education as noted above during Sept to Dec.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>November – December/January</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>February onwards</li> </ul>
Role of Collection Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place stickers on non-complaint Blue Boxes</li> <li>Collect all materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place stickers on non-complaint Blue Boxes</li> <li>Leave materials behind</li> <li>Assist City with monitoring compliance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place stickers on non-complaint Blue Boxes</li> <li>Leave materials behind</li> </ul>
Role of City Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manage awareness campaign</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manage focused awareness campaign</li> <li>Monitor</li> <li>Return to collect left materials as required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On-going monitoring (reduced)</li> </ul>

**Households Impacted**

Table 2 below provides an indication of the number of households that may receive reminder stickers. This information is based on visual curbside checks by staff of Blue Box set outs in November 2011. Curbside checks were completed at 1,160 households in all collection zones (approximately 200 households per zone). Staff observed if recyclables were properly sorted and if the Blue Boxes contained non-recyclables.

**Table 2: Blue Box Set-outs that are Not-Sorted and/or Contain Non-Recyclables**

	% Households Not Sorted	% Households Not Sorted and/or Non-Recyclable Items
November 2011 sample of 1,160 households	6%	15%
City Wide (approximate number of households)	7,000	17,000

This campaign will assist us to better understand why some Londoner’s are not recycling correctly, and help us to develop more effective messaging in the future. Our current understanding suggests a number of reasons, noted below. These will be addressed in the awareness campaign:

- Not aware of what and how to recycle – not all Londoners use their collection calendar or access the City’s web for this information. For example, some residents want to recycle properly but are not well informed and place items in the Blue Box that they believe are included in the City’s program but are not (e.g. Styrofoam™).
- New residents and students – many municipalities (particularly in the GTA) have transitioned a single-stream program which collects all recyclables fully mixed in the same Blue Box or large Blue Cart.

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- Too busy – we know that recycling correctly takes a little extra time and some Londoners may not have this time or be unwilling to spend it.
- Don't care about recycling – some residents are not interested and do not care to recycle. For example, two members in a household may care about recycling but the other two do not. This can result in a Blue Box full if mixed materials with some not being recyclable.

**Other Municipalities**

Staff contacted eight other large municipalities all of which have procedures/by-laws in place for leaving behind recyclables that do not meet their collection requirements for sorting and/or having non-recyclables. The municipalities contacted were:

- Durham Region
- Essex-Windsor
- City of Hamilton
- Niagara Region
- Peel Region
- City of Sudbury
- City of Toronto
- Waterloo Region

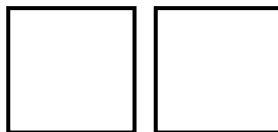
**Waste Management By-law WM-12**

It is proposed to change Waste Management By-law WM-12 to provide clarity with respect to the requirements of residents regarding sorting Blue Boxes into two-streams. The proposed amendments are provided in Appendix A.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This report was prepared with assistance from Mike Losee, Manager – Solid Waste Engineering.

<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	<b>PREPARED BY:</b>
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<b>PREPARED AND RECOMMENDED BY:</b>	<b>REVIEWED &amp; CONCURRED BY:</b>
<b>JAY STANFORD, M.A., M.P.A. DIRECTOR, ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS &amp; SOLID WASTE</b>	<b>JOHN BRAAM, P.ENG. MANAGING DIRECTOR, ENGINEERING &amp; CITY ENGINEER</b>



## APPENDIX A

Bill No:

By-law No:

A By-law to amend By-law WM-12 Entitled “A By-law to provide for the collection of municipal waste and resource materials in the City of London.”

WHEREAS section 5(3) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* S.O. 2001, c.25, as amended, provides that a municipal power shall be exercised by by-law;

AND WHEREAS section 9 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, as amended, provides that a municipality has the capacity, rights, powers and privileges of a natural person for the purpose of exercising its power under the *Municipal Act, 2001*, as amended, or any other Act;

AND WHEREAS the Municipal Council desires to amend By-law No. WM-12 being the Waste and Resource Materials Collection By-law;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the Corporation of the City of London enacts as follows:

1. Section 3.6 of By-law WM-12 is amended by adding the following after item 3.6 (d):  
“(e) Each Blue Box shall contain only recyclable paper products or recyclable containers.”
2. Section 3.7 of By-law WM-12 is amended by adding the following after item 3.7 (d):  
“(e) Each see-through Blue Bag or clear polyethylene bag shall contain only recyclable paper products or recyclable containers.”
3. Section 4.3 of By-law WM-12 is amended by adding the following words “and whether recyclable material is considered a paper product or container” after the words “or yard material”.
4. Section 8.3 of By-law WM-12 is amended by adding the following after item 8.3 (k):  
“(l) Recyclable that has not been sorted into paper products and containers.”
5. This by-law comes into force and effect on the day it is passed.

PASSED in Open Council on October 9, 2012.

Joe Fontana  
Mayor

Catharine Saunders  
City Clerk

First reading – October 9, 2012.

Second reading – October 9, 2012.

Third reading – October 9, 2012.