

Memo



Date March 10th 2010

File: 5360-01

To: City Manager

From: Utility Services Manager

Subject: 2009 Yard Waste Program/ 2010 Proposed Program

Recommendations:

THAT Council receive as information the following report dated, March 10th from the Utility Services Manager, that provides an update on the 2009 fall yard and boulevard tree leaf collection program and the 2010 proposed programs;

AND THAT Council approve a recommendation that will allow residents to receive a one time 360 litre yard waste bin upgrade to replace their existing 240 litre bin effective March 22nd, 2010 ;

AND THAT Council give reading consideration to Bylaw No. 10307 being Amendment No.2 to the Solid Waste Management Regulation Bylaw No. 10106;

AND FURTHER THAT the Boulevard Leaf Waste Program, piloted in 2009, not be provided in the fall of 2010.

Background:

Automated curb side collection, which includes bi-weekly yard waste pickup, began in the spring of 2009. Although residents were generally satisfied with the program in 2009, there were concerns expressed by some with the program's ability to handle larger volumes of yard waste during the fall period. In October of last year, Council considered two recommendations on how automated curb side pick up service might be enhanced to address these concerns.

The first recommendation, which Council did not support, was to add three additional pickups in the fall at a cost of \$175,579. The second recommendation, which was consistent with a RDCO board approved recommendation, was approved by Council and allowed residents to purchase up to two additional 360 litre yard waste containers at a cost of \$55 per container plus a fee of \$30 per cart per year for pickup service. An alternate recommendation, for a one time unlimited fall pick up service at a cost of \$165,018, was not supported by Council. Council also asked staff to come back with recommendations on how best to deal with city boulevard tree leaves. Council subsequently approved a one time boulevard tree leaf pickup service at a cost of \$26,250. Council then directed staff to come back in the first quarter of 2010 with a report on the overall performance of the 2009 yard waste and leaf pick up programs and make recommendations for any program improvements.

To properly gauge customer satisfaction and performance of the 2009 fall yard waste program, city staff and RDCO Waste Reduction Office staff conducted a telephone survey during the months of December and January. This survey was designed to gain customer feedback on the overall fall yard waste program for the Region and to gain feedback on the city's one time boulevard tree leaf pick up program. The general findings from the fall yard waste survey are outlined below. More detailed survey results are provided as

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part of the presentation that will be made by the RDCO Waste Reduction Office (WRO) Program Manager. Satisfaction ratings from all other communities surveyed are also included in these survey results.

Fall Yard Waste Survey Results Summary

- 423 telephone surveys throughout the region were completed (196 for Kelowna, 77 for West Kelowna, 75 for Peachland and 75 for Lake Country).
- 85% of the respondents surveyed in Kelowna were very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the yard waste collection program.
- Of all the communities surveyed, Kelowna residents had the highest satisfaction level with the automated curbside collection system.
- 77% of Kelowna residents surveyed said the yard waste bin was big enough to meet their fall requirements all or most of the time.
- 82% of Kelowna residents surveyed said the yard waste bin was big enough to meet their spring requirements all or most of the time.
- Of the 423 individuals surveyed, 105 individuals provided 127 additional specific comments related to the satisfaction with the automated system. The summary results of these comments are provided with the attachments. Although customers were generally satisfied with the size of the yard waste bin, the most frequent comment received was related to the yard waste bin being too small. Other comments received in descending order of occurrence were: provide more frequent pickups, extend the program time frame, bins are inconvenient, and provide at least one unlimited pickup.

There were also 23 letters and emails received in the fall of 2009. These letters included comments that reflected similar concerns.

Based on the information received staff are recommending that the program be enhanced to allow residents a one time upgrade of their existing 240 litre yard waste bin to a 360 litre bin at no charge. Those residents who have purchased an additional 360 litre bin(s) and wish to return their additional bin(s) and take advantage of the bin upgrade exchange, would be refunded their initial \$55 bin purchase price. There are currently 46 residents that have taken advantage of this additional bin purchase. If all 46 additional bins purchased were returned the total refunded amount would be \$1,150.

The additional annual charge for those Kelowna residents that take advantage of the yard waste bin upgrade will be \$6 per year to cover additional tipping fees. This upgrade program is consistent with the current recycle bin upgrade program. Residents would contact Okanagan Environmental Waste Systems to arrange for the exchange of their 240 litre yard waste bin for a 360 litre bin. The current inventory of 360 litre bins sits at 1400. The uptake of the exchange program would be closely monitored to ensure timely reorder of additional bins if necessary. The WRO (Waste Reduction Office) has advised that additional bins can be acquired within 2 to 3 weeks if needed.

Boulevard Tree Leaf Pick Up Program

As part of the October 5th, 2009 report to Council on fall yard waste pick up, Council asked staff to come back with recommendations on how city boulevard tree leaf waste might be addressed. Council subsequently approved a one time pilot boulevard tree leaf pick up service for the week of November 23 - 30, 2009 at a cost of \$26,250; funded from general taxation. This time frame was chosen based on a recommendation from Parks, recognizing that most leaves would have fallen from the boulevard trees by that time. Residents affected by boulevard tree leaves were notified by mail and were asked to collect boulevard tree leaves in compostable paper bags to be left at the curb for pick up along designated routes with a no bag limit. The service was limited to designated locations and routes where only city boulevard trees existed. Residents were asked to leave their leaves in compostable paper bags that would be picked up by our service provider Okanagan Environmental Waste Services (OKEWS) who tracked participation and compliance during the pickup period. During the designated pick up period staff also conducted field visits

to monitor participation levels. Residents were also asked to comment on the program as part of the yard waste survey. The following is a summary of the program and survey results

Total number of houses with trees	4,945
Total estimated compostable bags to be collected	29,670
Total actual bags collected	1,295
Number of actual houses participating	215
Participation rate as a %	4.36

The yard waste survey included a boulevard tree leaf program component as follows:

- 100 surveys were conducted
- 68 out of the 100 residents surveyed reported that they had a city owned tree adjacent to their property
- 37 stated that they were aware of the program
- 18 indicated that they had participated in the leaf pick up program
- 3 reported using compostable bags
- Of the 22 out of 34 who provided a rating, 19 indicated that they were very satisfied and 3 somewhat satisfied with the program

Although those that participated were generally satisfied with the program, field and survey results show that there was limited participation. Field visits also confirmed that most residents in many areas had undertaken yard and boulevard leaf cleanup prior to the leaf waste pick up week being offered.

Given the limited participation by residents in the boulevard tree leaf pickup program staff are not recommending a fall boulevard tree leaf pick up service for 2010. Staff believe the combination to allow a free yard waste bin upgrade at no extra charge for the bin in conjunction with the existing option to purchase up to two additional 360 litre bins for yard waste will address most residents needs.

Internal Circulation: Director Financial Services, Parks Manager, Revenue Manager

Considerations not applicable to this report: N/A

Legal/Statutory Authority: N/A

Legal/statutory Procedural Requirements: N/A

Existing Policy: N/A

Financial/Budgetary Considerations: N/A

Personnel Implications: N/A

Technical Requirements: N/A

External Agency/Public Comments: Waste Reduction Office (WRO) RDCO

Communications Considerations: N/A

Alternate Recommendation: N/A

Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don Degen", written in a cursive style.

Don Degen Manager, Utility Services

Approved for inclusion:

A small square box containing the handwritten initials "JV" in blue ink.

John Vos, General Manager Community Services

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL OKANAGAN YARD WASTE SURVEY



Introduction

The Regional District of Central Okanagan retained Schroeder Research to administer a telephone survey :

Primary objective:

- Public impressions of the automated yard waste collection program

Overview of Presentation

- Introduction
- Description of the sample
- Survey results
- Conclusions

Description of the sample

423 surveys were completed

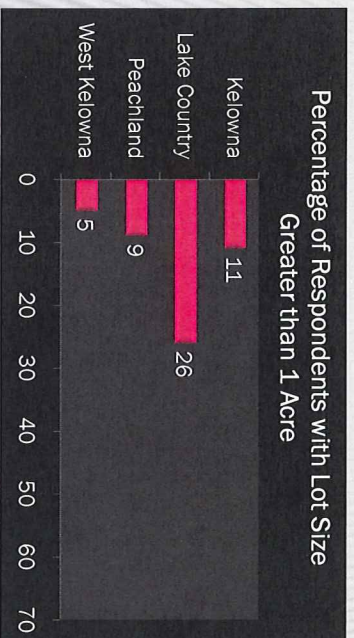
- 196 for Kelowna (including 11 from RDCCO East)
- 77 for West Kelowna
- 75 for Peachland
- 75 for Lake Country

As a region: results are accurate to about +/-5% (19 times out of 20)

Kelowna: results are accurate to about +/-7% (19 times out of 20)

West Kelowna, Peachland, Lake Country:
results are accurate to about +/-11% (19 times out of 20)

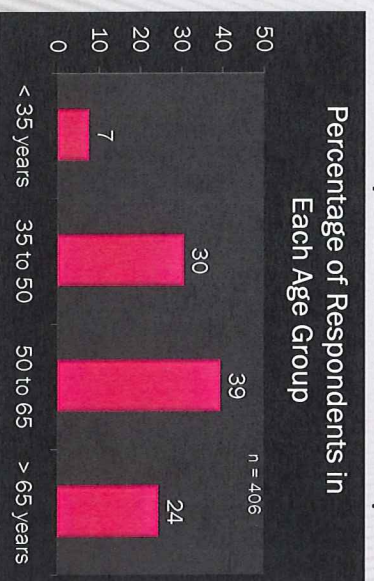
Description of the sample



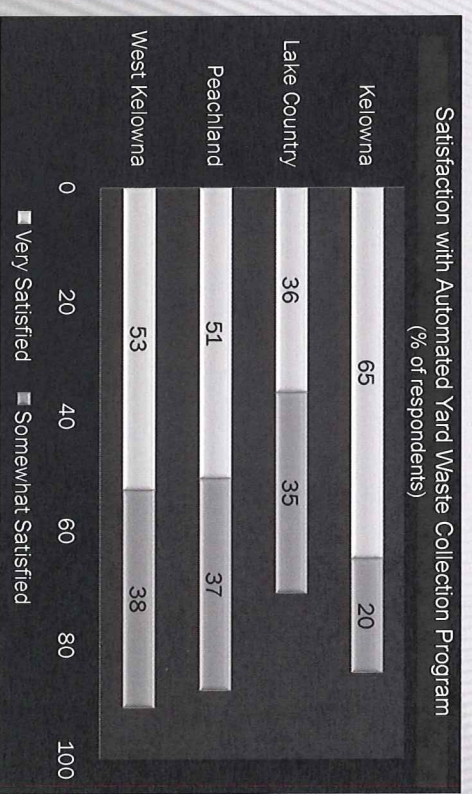
Description of the sample

- 94% of respondents owned their property
- 1 respondent was a seasonal resident

Description of the sample



Survey results



Note: Remainder are neutral, somewhat dissatisfied, and very dissatisfied

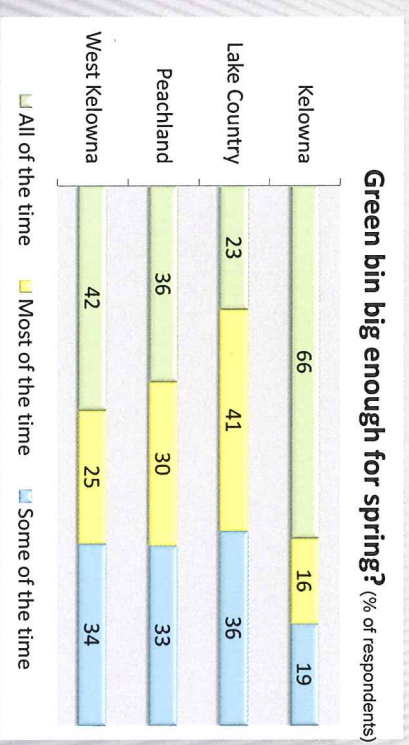
Survey results

Theme	Number of Mentions				Total
	Kelowna	Lake Country	Peachland	West Kelowna	
Bin too small	32	12	15	6	65
Have more frequent pickups	11	7	4	2	24
Have later pickup; extend program	8			1	9
Inconvenient; don't like bins	2	1	3	2	8
Have at least one uninitiated pickup	6	1			7
Old program was better; uninitiated pickup was better	5	1		1	7
Poor service; missed pickups	1	1	1	1	3
Other	1	1	2		4

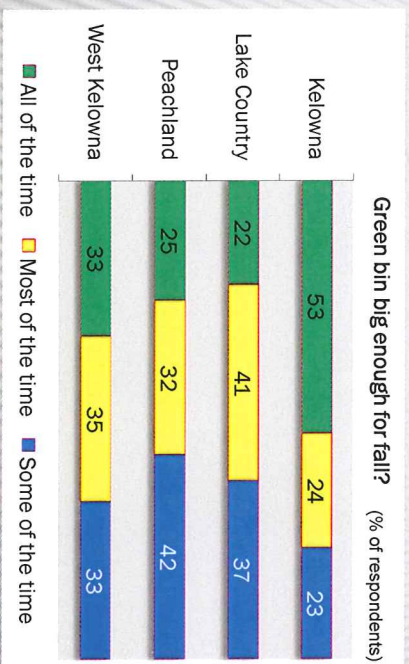
Note: 105 individuals provided 127 comments

Note: Residents were not prompted with these options.

Survey results



Survey results



Survey results

Options residents would consider for managing extra yard waste

Option	% of respondents who would consider the option			
	Kelowna	Lake Country	Peachland	West Kelowna
Take yard waste to the landfill	54%	83%	82%	89%
Compost	40%	54%	53%	65%
Pay municipality to collect bagged yard waste	18%	10%	37%	31%
Remove by landscaper	8%	17%	16%	15%
Buy additional green bins	7%	17%	7%	13%
Hire private contractor	13%	8%	9%	7%

Notes:
 1. Residents were prompted with these options.
 2. Municipal totals sum to more than 100% as some responses included multiple options that would be considered

Survey results

Respondents were asked whether they had any additional comments about the yard waste program.

Theme	Mentions
Very happy or satisfied; generally positive comment	81
Bigger bins (including blue bin)	38
Have more frequent pickups	30
Expand recycling program (e.g., include plastic, glass, kitchen waste)	17
Recycling should not be rewarded - <i>RecycleBank</i>	15
Extend the collection period	13
Costs are too high	12
Bins are poorly designed	10

Numerous comments received less than 10 mentions including:
“Have at least one unlimited pickup” (8); and
“Old system was better” (4).

Conclusions

1. Majority of residents are generally satisfied with the automated yard waste collection program (includes very and somewhat satisfied customers).

City of Kelowna (85%)
District of West Kelowna (91%)
District of Lake Country (71%)
District of Peachland (88%)

2. Minority of residents are interested in paying the municipality to collect bagged yard waste.

City of Kelowna (18%)
District of West Kelowna (31%)
District of Lake Country (10%)
District of Peachland (37%)

3. The most common comments regarding how to improve the program.

- Larger bins
- More frequent collection (not recommended due to general satisfaction)