

2018 Solid Waste Customer Satisfaction Survey Results

Over a three-week span in November 2018, the City of Kingston Solid Waste Department asked residents to complete a survey on their satisfaction with waste programs in the City. Over 1,300 residents completed the survey.

The information gathered from the survey, along with various audits conducted throughout the year, help to drive which initiatives the Solid Waste Department will undertake in the following years. The information presented below is a synopsis of the information that we received from residents. (2017, 2016 numbers in brackets)

Q. Do you find the solid waste staff knowledgeable, courteous and helpful?

93.3 % (91%, 88.9%) of respondents found Solid Waste staff knowledgeable, courteous and helpful.

Q. How satisfied are you with the waste, recycling and green bin collection services at your home?

85.4% (89.7%, 88.9%) of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with their collection services

Q. How satisfied are you with the weekly garbage limit?

86.2% (89.5%, 87.4%) of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with their weekly garbage limits.

Q. How satisfied are you with the alternating blue and grey box recycling program?

86.1% (87.6%, 87.3%) of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with their weekly garbage limit

Q. How satisfied are you with the green bin program?

76.2% (80.4, 84.8%) of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the green bin program.

Q. Overall, how satisfied are you with the garbage and diversion programs offered and the level of service you receive?

91.1% (92.8%, 91.4%) of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with their level of service.

Q. How satisfied are you with the City's garbage and diversion program information?

88.5% (88.8%, 91.2%) of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with waste program information.

Q. Did you participate in Giveaway Days this year?

32.1% (30.1%, 28.5%) of respondents participated in Giveaway days in 2018.

Feedback on Written responses

The City received over 3,200 individual written responses to the various questions asked in the survey. Many of these responses shared common themes or requests. Below you will find responses from City staff on various requests and suggestions.

Green Bins

1. Alternative Green Bin sizing

We know it is nice to have options! That's why the City's solid waste department is considering providing a **smaller 45L** green bin option in 2019 as well as keeping the standard and trusted 80L green bin.. Watch for more information in the spring. At this time, a larger sized green bin, beyond 80L will not be considered.

2. Addition of Pet Waste/Cat Litter/Diapers

The City's green bin waste is processed into compost. There are several technologies in the marketplace to process green bin wastes into compost; however, they are not local to Kingston. The processing facility utilized under contract to process the City's green bin waste is located on Joyceville Road and is known as Norterra Organics. At this time the processing facility is not capable or licensed to process pet waste, cat litter or diapers. The current system does not guarantee the destruction of pathogens that are possible in animal wastes, and diapers are made up of a number of plastic components that do not breakdown in the current composting process. All of those materials can contaminate the finished compost. Municipalities that allow diapers or pet waste in their programs have their waste processed differently where contaminants can be removed.

Approximately every five years the City requests proposals for green bin processing services. In the most recent procurement cycle that occurred in 2018, the City expressed its interest again in securing a contract with a green bin processor that is able to process these types of materials to increase the allowable items in the green bin and send less waste to landfill. Unfortunately, there were no processors able to handle these wastes at that time. The City will continue to request proposal for the handling of these materials.

Garbage

1. Large item collection.

The City does not offer large item collection to residents. There are several locations in the City that accept gently used large article items for free, and items can even be sold on other websites. As a last resort, waste removal contractors can be found in the yellow pages that will remove waste for a fee right from your home.

Recycling

1. Introduce larger bins for all materials, or single stream recycling, collect both blue and grey boxes every week

The City's processing facility where residents' blue and grey box materials are processed into twelve distinct commodities is a four stream system; cardboard, mixed grey box materials, mixed blue box materials and glass. The collection vehicles utilized weekly need to have two compartments to accommodate the way that the recyclables are processed. That means when we collect your grey box; cardboard is placed into one compartment and all of the other mixed grey box materials into the other. Similarly, on blue box week glass is placed into one compartment on the truck and all other mixed blue box materials are placed into the other compartment.

The current system where collectors are required to do sortation at the curb does not allow the use of larger boxes or carts. Similarly, based on the current system at the processing facility significant upgrades would be required to advance to a single-stream recycling program. Single-stream processing facilities have a significant capital cost associated with them and require a large supply of recyclables to maintain economies of scale. Kingston does not have a large enough supply of recyclables to warrant a single-stream system.

However, the City is currently reviewing the potential of retrofitting the facility to be a two stream facility by mid-2021, which will allow cardboard and glass to be collected with their respective boxes and will allow the City to collect both streams weekly. The City will review the option for larger recycling bins should the switch occur.

2. Add more material to recycling system.

The City is constantly reviewing the markets for recyclable materials to determine if new or an expanded selection of materials can be added to the recycling stream. Unfortunately, if a market does not exist for a material, these items

cannot be added to the recycling stream. This is what occurred when coloured Styrofoam was removed from the program.

Yard Waste

1. Christmas Tree Collection

The City will not be providing Christmas tree collection. Trees can be dropped off at the Kingston Area Recycling Centre or a number of charitable and sports organizations will collect your trees for a small fee.

2. Enhanced Yard waste collection

The City is reviewing the feasibility of implementing additional leaf and brush collections. This enhancement would have to be approved by Council and included in the solid waste department operating budget. The City is also reviewing the potential of changing from a separate leaf and brush collection schedule to a simplified yard waste (both brush and leaf) collection.

Other Diversion programs

1. Electronics/Textile curbside collection

The City attempted in 2017 to introduce curbside collection of electronics and textiles through various not for profit organizations. These organizations unfortunately were not able to handle the logistics involved in a City wide collection of these materials; however some other potential solutions were offered and will be reviewed for 2019.