



Press Release

NEW GARBAGE SCHEDULE TO CREATE LESS GARBAGE, LOWER COSTS

Port Coquitlam, BC – October 14, 2009... Savings of over \$130,000 per year and about 2,400 tonnes less garbage going to the landfill are the expected results of the City of Port Coquitlam's latest ground-breaking waste-reduction initiative.

Port Coquitlam City Council voted Tuesday night to move to biweekly garbage collection in January 2010 – making Port Coquitlam the first city in Metro Vancouver to take this critical step towards achieving the regional district's goal of diverting 70% of all household waste from the landfill.

Council also voted to eliminate curbside Christmas tree collection in January, and to consider a new rate structure that would see higher fees for households who produce above-average amounts of garbage, along with discounts for those who produce below-average amounts. City staff have been directed to work on the necessary amendment to the Solid Waste Bylaw for the user-pay rate structure.

"We're again being waste-reduction leaders in Metro Vancouver, just as we are with kitchen waste collection," Mayor Greg Moore said. "Just because we've done something one way for the last 40 years doesn't mean we can't do it better. This isn't about reducing service levels, it's about doing a better job of diverting more garbage into recycling and green waste."

He added: "It also comes down to economics. There's potentially over \$133,000 a year savings. Taxpayers share in that, because waste disposal is a pass-through cost that they pay for directly, just like sewer and water. This will help offset those rising costs."

Regional garbage disposal rates are expected to rise almost 14% next year, to \$82/tonne from \$72/tonne, while green waste disposal costs will remain at \$52/tonne.

Council's decision comes on the eve of Waste Reduction Week Oct. 19-25, and the start of expanded kitchen waste collection Nov. 2 that will allow Port Coquitlam households to add all food scraps (including meats, bones and dairy) and food-soiled papers (e.g. pizza boxes) to their green waste carts, along with yard waste and vegetable and fruit scraps.

"This new biweekly schedule is possible because of our expanded kitchen waste program and our recycling program. There actually should be very little that goes into the garbage," noted Cllr. Sherry Carroll, Chair of the Environmental Enhancement Committee. "Besides that, this is the right thing to do. People are still throwing away things that can be recycled or go into their green waste carts. We hope this will make people more conscious about what they throw away."

At the moment, Port Coquitlam residents divert 52-55% of their household waste from the landfill through the existing recycling, yard waste and kitchen green waste collection programs.

However, in a six-week pilot this summer of biweekly pickup and expanded kitchen waste collection, the 200 participants succeeded in diverting 65% of their household waste into their recycling and green waste carts. Of particular note is that while green waste diversion increased almost 9% through expanded food waste collection, recycling diversion also increased by more than 7% with no change to that program.

Of the 74 households who returned the follow-up survey, 85% supported the biweekly pickup schedule and 81% supported expanded food waste collection.

Details of Port Coquitlam's waste-collection changes in January 2010:

- **Environmental benefits:**
 - Greenhouse gas emissions are to be reduced by 51.46 tonnes each year, the equivalent to taking almost 13 cars off the road, based on a Metro Vancouver report.
 - An estimated 2,400 tonnes less of garbage per year will go to the landfill.
- **Operational benefits:**
 - The waste disposal costs paid by taxpayers will be reduced \$35,000-\$45,000 per year, depending on participation.
 - Fuel and maintenance costs for the City truck fleet are to drop \$73,000 per year.
- **Christmas trees:** The City's automated garbage trucks can't accommodate curbside tree collection, and the old rear-loading trucks used for this service each January will soon be retired. Further, various charitable groups offer tree chipping/disposal services each January, and trees without tinsel or chemical sprays can be chopped up and placed in green waste carts. Eliminating this service will save \$6,000 per year.
- **New rate structure:** An estimated \$9,000 per year in revenue is anticipated from the new structure due to additional diversion encouraged by economic incentives.
 - Households that continue to use the standard 240-litre carts will see no change in fees.
 - Households that produce above-average amounts of garbage can receive a larger or second cart for a higher annual fee plus delivery/administrative charge. The higher rate will not be applied for the first six months of 2010 to allow households to adjust to the new schedule.
 - Households that produce below-average amounts of garbage and switch to a 120-litre cart will receive a discount.
 - Additional recycling and green waste carts are also available with a one-time delivery/administrative charge but no increase in annual rates.
 - Any additional garbage and green waste carts in bear-prone areas will be required to be secured with a City-approved latch or stored in a bear-proof enclosure (e.g. garage), per the Solid Waste Bylaw (please see www.portcoquitlam.ca/bears for details).
- **Start-up costs:** Approximately \$41,500 in costs are anticipated in the first year of the program to pick up carts set out on the wrong day, and for public education.

For more information, please visit www.portcoquitlam.ca/greenwaste.