



**STAFF REPORT  
ACTION REQUIRED**

**Extension to Leaf and Yard Waste/Christmas Tree  
Collection Programs**

<b>Date:</b>	January 24, 2008
<b>To:</b>	Public Works and Infrastructure Committee
<b>From:</b>	Geoff Rathbone, General Manager, Solid Waste Management Services
<b>Wards:</b>	All
<b>Reference Number:</b>	p:/2008/swms/Jan/002PW (#6864)

**SUMMARY**

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The purpose of this report is to seek authority to amend the collection schedule for residential leaf and yard waste and Christmas tree collection programs.

This report recommends that the current seasonal programs be extended and the frequency of service be amended.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The General Manager, Solid Waste Management Services, recommends that:

1. the current Leaf and Yard Waste and Christmas Tree collection schedules be amended beginning in September 2008, such that these services be provided on a bi-weekly basis with extended spring and fall Leaf and Yard Waste collection and extended Christmas tree collection; and
2. the General Manager exercise his discretion to adjust the actual collection dates as required.

**Financial Impact**

The proposed amendments to the collection schedule are estimated to be cost neutral as the extended collection season will be offset by reduced collection frequency. Furthermore, the resources required are not expected to change. The recommended

amendments to the collection schedule can be undertaken within the Recommended 2008 Operating Budget for Solid Waste Management Services.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and concurs with the financial impact statement.

## **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

### Leaf and Yard Waste

The City currently provides single-family residences with curb side collection of Leaf and Yard Waste (L&YW) beginning in the first full week of April and continuing through until the first week of December on an alternating weekly/bi-weekly schedule as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1**

	<b>Current 2008 Schedule</b>	<b>Proposed Schedule Effective September 2008</b>
Leaf and Yard Waste	April 8 – June 13 (weekly) June 17 – Oct. 9 (bi-weekly) Oct. 7 – Dec. 5 (weekly)	March 16 – Dec. 31 (bi-weekly)
Christmas Tree Service	January 2 – 11 (weekly) (2 collection cycles)	January 5 – 23 (bi-weekly) (2 collection cycles)

Several factors including changing climate conditions have altered the patterns associated with the fall and winter months. Trees are keeping their leaves longer into the fall and residents are requesting collection later into the fall/winter months. The current cut off date for the collection of L&YW in the first week of December frequently results in residents having uncollected bags of leaves, or leaves on the ground with no means for disposal.

A similar problem exists in the early spring. Our current program begins in the first full week of April. If snow has melted by mid-March, residents often begin yard clean-up and do not have an outlet until early April.

### Christmas Tree Collection

The City currently provides curbside collection of Christmas trees from single-family residences. This service begins the first week of January and is provided for a 2-week period.

Religious holiday celebrations now extend into the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> weeks of January and residents celebrating these festivities are requesting collection of their Christmas trees in the third week of January.

## Collection Calendars

Collection calendars are provided to households annually with a detailed collection schedule for garbage, recycling, green bin and leaf and yard waste materials. The 2007/2008 calendars expire at the end of August 2008.

Planning is now underway to prepare the 2008/2009 calendars which are delivered to homes beginning in the spring. The deadline for copy for the new calendar is March 2008. Therefore, a Council decision on the proposed amendments to the Yard Waste and Christmas Tree schedule is required at the March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> Council meeting to allow for inclusion in the 2008/2009 calendar.

## **COMMENTS**

Staff considered two options for extending the leaf and yard waste and Christmas tree collections programs to meet residents' needs.

### **Option 1**

The first option is a simple extension to the existing schedule. Adding additional weeks to both the spring/fall portions of the calendar for L&YW and adding another Christmas collection week are potential options. The cost associated with this is estimated at approximately \$544,000.00 per year.

### **Option 2**

The second option is to extend the duration of spring and fall L&YW collection and Christmas tree service in a cost neutral manner through an offsetting reduction of collection frequency. In this option, weekly yard waste service would be eliminated and replaced with a consistent bi-weekly schedule that would extend longer.

## Leaf and Yard Waste

Providing the L&YW collection on a bi-weekly basis simplifies the collection calendar. The collection of the L&YW would be done on the same day as their current garbage collection.

Having a bi-weekly collection program also allows for better utilization of vehicles and staff resources. Having a balanced bi-weekly collection program will allow staff to be utilized year-round. Staff currently hired for the L&YW program are typically hired on a seasonal basis (April through to January) and laid off at the end of the Christmas Tree Collection program. The period when L&YW collections are not offered (late January, February, early March) will provide timing for mandatory safety staff training, holiday cover-off and assignment to other collection operations.

Extended bi-weekly collection would also have a positive effect on current overtime costs. During peak periods (April and November), the large amount of material set out for curbside pick up requires planned overtime hours to collect. Utilizing an extended bi-weekly system will spread the collection over a longer period and thereby reduce peak demand and allow for better control/reduction of overtime hours.

Currently, it is anticipated that fewer seasonal workers will be required to complete the bi-weekly collection. Detailed routing/beat designs are currently being developed and any savings will be reported back through the 2009 Budget process.

#### Christmas Tree Collection

Staff are proposing that the Christmas tree collection be offered on a bi-weekly basis and begin in the first week of January and continue for two collection cycles. This will allow opportunities for residents to recycle their tree at their convenience.

### **CONTACT**

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### **SIGNATURE**

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