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## **2013 BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE**

### **Blue Bin and Green Bin Participation Rates**

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#### **Issue/Background:**

- At its meeting on November 7, 2012, the Budget Committee request the General Manager, Solid Waste Management Services, to provide a briefing on how to have a 100% participation rate for blue and green bins.
- The participation rates for the single-family Blue Bin and Green Bin programs are 96% and 89% respectively.
- All single-family homes received a Green Bin when the program was rolled out between 2002 and 2005. Blue Bins replaced Blue Boxes in all single-family households in 2008, with residents being able to choose their size preference from small to extra large.

#### **Key Points:**

- The aforementioned participation rates were calculated based on four participation rate studies conducted over four seasons in 2010/2011.
- Participation rates are determined by monitoring bin set out of a statistically reliable number of single-family homes over a four week period (two collection cycles).
- Participation rate is defined as the percentage of households that set out the bin at least once in the four week period.
- The participation rates could, in fact, be higher than reported due to other factors. For example, a household that uses a backyard composter or a person who chooses a lifestyle of eating meals out may have no need to set out the Green Bin or would only have to set out when the bin would be full. Another example would be a resident who tries to avoid packaging in their purchasing choices and therefore does not generate enough recyclables to fill the Blue Bin in a four week period.
- Within 450,000 single-family homes, it is likely that there are a few residents that refuse to participate; however, it would constitute a significantly small number.
- In order to ensure 100% participation, homes would have to be monitored to determine whether they are consistently putting out their waste bin but not their Blue Bin or Green Bin. The homes in question would then have to be visited by a By-Law Officer and the occupants questioned as to why they have not been participating.
- Where households do not set out Green Bin organics or may not have a Blue Bin pickup in a four week period is not an indication of any violation.

- Households who do not set out waste for collection in the appropriate containers would be in violation of the waste collection by-laws.
- Enforcement includes responding to complaints from the public, staff of Solid Waste Management Services and pro-active actions to address all violations related to the waste collection by-law (wrong containers, incorrect times, mixed/contaminated waste, etc.).
- All Waste Enforcement Municipal Standards Officers (currently 38) are involved in some form of enforcement that supports the Target 70 program.

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