

# SWS 2017 Annual Report

The Solid Waste Services (SWS) Division provides waste management services and planning with a focus on;

- Excellent customer service
- Effective and efficient financial management
- Environmental stewardship

Our goal is to provide a safe, cost effective service to County of Wellington residents while protecting the air, water and land through environmentally sound practices. All operations, services and programmes are, and will continue to be, evaluated on an on-going basis to attempt to identify and implement efficiencies and improvements wherever possible. Towards those efforts, SWS staff are currently undertaking a long-term strategy review. The review is scheduled to be completed by December 2018.

### Quick Fact:

SWS received \$709,466 in funding from Industry Funding Organizations for our blue box recycling, tires, and hazardous waste programmes in 2017.

## Customer Service

### Programmes and Services

- First full year of County-wide rural curbside waste and recycling collection. Our studies show participation levels averaged 67% for recycling and 53% for garbage.
- After the flood experienced in Mapleton and Minto, the County opened the three waste facilities that service those areas on Monday June 26. 66 customers took that additional opportunity to dispose of items damaged by the flood.
- Updated Curbside Collection of Waste and Recyclables By-Law to allow urban residents to use a standard-size garbage container without prior approval. This removed participation barriers and simplified the programme for all.
- Eliminated Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) event days in Erin and Guelph-Eramosa by adding the two County garages onto the Mobile HHW Depot schedule. This increased access to HHW collection by over 1,000% in both of those municipalities.



Key Customer Service Statistics	2016	2017	% change
number of calls and emails	4,007	3685	-8.0%
number of customers at waste facilities	272,724	253,526	-7.0%
number of garbage curbside stops	455,612	503,761	10.6%
number of garbage bags picked up at curbside	671,579	783,199	16.6%
number of blue box curbside stops	724,343	760,894	5.0%
number of recycling carts picked up at curb	15,555	15,891	2.2%

## Promotion and Education

- The County was proud to be recognized by our municipal peers for our promotion and education efforts completed in 2016. County staff received the top award in our household category for our 2016 SWS Calendar as well as our International Plowing Match Booth Display, and won third place for our 2016 Fall Newsletter.
- New recycling signs with pictures of materials were installed at all waste facilities. These signs assist customers in identifying acceptable materials and sorting their materials into the appropriate bins. This improves the quality and marketability of materials in our recycling programme.
- SWS participated in the Drayton ‘Touch a Truck’ Event on May 27, 2017. Bruce, one of our drivers, was on-hand with one of our Roll-off trucks to share his knowledge. Kids and parents alike were invited to ‘touch the truck’, sit in the cab and blow the horn.



County Website – SWS Pages (unique visitors)	2016	2017	% change
most visited in 2017 – hours and locations	22,003	30,048	36.6%
second most visited in 2017 – waste facilities	5,672	9,680	70.7%
third most visited in 2017 – curbside collection	n/a	7,201	n/a
Reuse Website (total number of visits)			
# of visits	1,486	1,562	5.1%
# of pages	29,896	39,433	31.9%
average time spent on website (minutes)	3.46	7.09	104.9%

## Financial

- The Purchasing Department issued a tender for HHW Depot service which resulted in cutting the recycling and disposal costs of HHW materials in half.
- Using recycled asphalt from a Roads Division construction project allowed SWS to do some paving at the Elora and Rothsay waste facilities. This improvement has reduced the number of times these sites need to be graded resulting in direct annual savings of \$4000 - \$6000. Additional savings will be realized from reduced calcium application for dust control and fewer pothole repairs.
- Use of an automatic tarping machine at the Riverstown Landfill Site reduces the cost of daily cover by \$15,000 a year and also saves capacity for future garbage disposal.

SWS Operating Actuals	2016	2017	% change
Total Revenue	4,845,370	5,404,642	11.5%
Total Expenditure	8,727,891	9,259,370	6.1%
<b>Net Operating Budget</b>	<b>3,882,521</b>	<b>3,854,728</b>	<b>-0.7%</b>
Total Transfers to and from Reserves	726,910	1,154,728	58.9%
<b>Overall Operating Budget</b>	<b>4,609,431</b>	<b>5,009,456</b>	<b>8.7%</b>

## Environmental Stewardship

With the encouragement and support of the SWS Committee and County Council, the SWS Division developed a “Green Strategy”, and works to protect and enhance the natural environment wherever possible. Our goal is to promote green practices in all daily activities, programmes and operations. We incorporate “Green Principles” into all areas of waste management decisions and actions. The core green principles are:

- To protect and enhance the natural environment.
- To reduce the carbon footprint of our operations.
- To practice a “Life Cycle” approach.

All operations are tracked over time to determine if any activity or practice assists in:

- Reducing negative environmental impacts created in providing service.
- Reducing the carbon footprint created in providing service.
- Improving life cycle performance through reduction, reuse and recycling practices.
- Enhancing environmental health.

### Quick Fact:

Wellington County residents and businesses diverted 33.6% of their waste materials through the services and programmes offered by SWS.

Tonnes Landfilled	2016	2017	% change
<b>total tonnes disposed</b>	<b>23,449.38</b>	<b>24,178.15</b>	<b>4.0%</b>

County Diversion Programmes	2016	2017	% change
blue box recyclables	5,725.34	5,976.30	4.4%
wood, brush, Christmas trees	2,408.33	2,719.44	12.9%
scrap metal	457.56	490.83	7.3%
electronics	141.11	140.53	-0.4%
tires	98.46	124.32	26.3%
rubble and concrete for reuse	1.37	0.00	--
household hazardous waste	170.97	187.04	9.4%
clothing and textiles	17.68	18.83	6.5%
reuse centres and website	12.82	12.54	-2.1%
backyard composting (estimate)	1,477.40	1,487.20	0.1%
<b>total tonnes diverted from landfill</b>	<b>10,511.04</b>	<b>11,157.03</b>	<b>6.1%</b>

In 2017, the following projects and initiatives were implemented or enhanced:

- Additional screening for metal was implemented at the landfill site tipping area. This resulted in an additional 4,440 kg of steel being diverted from landfill.
- In 2017, staff has started using de-icer on the scale beds at our waste facilities. This initiative reduces the amount of salt used on-site, which is better for area groundwater. It also reduces the risk of elevating chloride levels in monitoring well results. Chloride is an indicator of the presence of leachate as well as of salt, so this will help provide more accurate results.

- The Annual Warden’s Tree planting had volunteers planting over 500 trees at the closed Aberfoyle Landfill Site property. The event was coordinated in partnership with the Green Legacy Division.



## SWS Strategy

In 2001, at the request of the local municipalities, the County of Wellington accepted responsibility for all solid waste services from its seven member municipalities. Over the intervening years, many changes have been made to the waste services and programmes provided to County residents.

In 2015, County Council directed SWS staff to undertake a review of waste services to help focus the planning of the future of waste management and diversion in the County. The goal of this project is to provide the County with a long term strategy for all its waste operations and services, and how they are provided.

Staff and Committee developed the framework and broad outline of the Strategy. Guiding principles, goals and priorities were established to provide direction for the Strategy. These principles reflect a balance of customer service, economic considerations, and environmental stewardship.

## Progress Report

There were several strategy related reports presented to Committee and Council in 2017. The topics covered included:

- **Curbside collection analysis and review of current and future practices**
  - The County will extend the curbside collection and processing contracts for up to five years and prepare a request for proposal on collection services when the requirements and specifics of the Waste-Free Ontario Act are known.



- **The use of closed landfill sites**
  - Staff will continue with the naturalization of closed landfill sites by planting trees and establishing pollinator habitat at closed landfill properties, where appropriate.
  
- **Outreach and partnerships**
  - Staff will continue to investigate opportunities to educate residents and businesses on diversion programmes and seek out partnerships to help achieve this objective.

### Next Steps

The remaining topics to be reviewed and assessed include food waste reduction and organics management, future waste disposal options, waste facility optimization and additional waste diversion opportunities. The SWS Strategy is expected to be completed by December 2018.

**Quick Fact:**

In 2017, 187,041 kg of HHW was received from 5,730 customers. This represents a 9.4% increase over the amount collected in 2016.



### Future Initiatives

The following table provides a list of current and potential projects that have been identified to continue to meet the SWS Division Green Strategy goals. The projects are continually re-evaluated and modified depending upon the County and Division priorities, budget availability, site construction requirements, potential benefits, and other factors. This is not an exhaustive list and will be adjusted as new opportunities are identified and developed.

#### 2018-2021

Project Details	Year	Estimated Cost
<b>Riverstown Waste Facility Rehabilitation</b> Enhance biodiversity and rehabilitate the site’s forests. Naturalize the on-site stream with native plantings.	2018	\$10,000
<b>Riverstown Topsoil Generation</b> Continue topsoil generation project. Amend subsoil with compost to produce topsoil for landfill capping.	2018	\$10,000
<b>Implement additional payment options for customers.</b> On-line ordering for user pay bag distributors. Debit and credit payment options at waste facilities.	2018	\$10,000
<b>Enhancing Customer Service Social Marketing and Web-based Tools.</b> Continue GIS mapping initiative with Planning and IT. Implement a waste mobile app and utilize social marketing	2018	\$12,000

## 2018-2021 (continued)

Project Details	Year	Estimated Cost
<b>Master Composter Programme Enhancement</b> Develop volunteer groups and training for master composters. Implement composting initiatives with various organizations.	2018	\$13,000
<b>Waste Management Strategy</b> Complete evaluation of future waste disposal alternatives. Assess and determine the optimal use of operational and closed waste facilities.	2018	\$100,000
<b>Waste Facility Rehabilitation for Closed Landfill Sites</b> Begin implementation of pollinator gardens. Better integrating sites with surrounding environment to foster wildlife habitat.	2018	\$15,000
<b>Explore leachate treatment options as required</b> Research and cost Phase II leachate treatment options. Determine a preferred option.	2018	\$6,000
<b>Implement Strategy Recommendations</b> Begin implementation of strategy recommendations.	2019	TBD
<b>Food Waste Reduction Education Initiative</b> Explore partnerships with other municipalities to develop educational tools. Produce tools, promotional activities, and measure impact of education initiative.	2019	TBD
<b>Develop interpretive opportunities as appropriate</b> Develop sites for interpretive studies and tours at sites. Establish relations with local naturalists and university groups.	2020	TBD

## 2021 and Beyond

- Enact Waste-Free Ontario Act programme changes as required
- Continue to Implement Strategy Recommendations
- Close Phase 1 Landfill Operations at the Riverstown Waste Facility
- Open Phase 2 Landfill Operations at the Riverstown Waste Facility





**Quick Fact:**

SWS Roll-Off Operations performed 3,477 bin lifts in 2017.

**Quick Fact:**  
80 volunteers participated in the Wardens' Annual Tree Planting at the Aberfoyle Waste Facility.



**Quick Fact:**

The County earned \$831,738 in revenue from the sale of blue box recyclables in 2017.