

2018 Solid Waste Services Annual Report

The Solid Waste Services (SWS) Division’s goal is to provide a safe, convenient and cost-effective service to County of Wellington residents while protecting the air, water and land through environmentally sound practices. SWS provides waste management services and planning with a focus on:

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

SWS operations, services and programmes are evaluated on an on-going basis to attempt to identify and implement efficiencies and improvements wherever possible. To support those efforts, SWS staff are working with County Council to develop a long-term strategy which is scheduled to be completed in 2019.

Quick Fact:

Staff gave out 899 orange Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) boxes to residents visiting the Mobile HHW Depot in 2018. The boxes provide a convenient place to store and transport their HHW materials.

Customer Service

Programmes and Services

- The County implemented debit and credit payment options at all six waste facilities to make payments more convenient.
- Cold ash temporary storage drums were added at all waste facilities as an extra precaution to reduce the risk of warm ashes causing bin fires.
- Allowed the use of containers in both urban and rural areas for curbside collection, to avoid animals disturbing waste set-outs.



Key Customer Service Statistics	2017	2018	% change
number of calls and emails	3,685	3,606	-2.1%
number of customers at waste facilities	253,526	250,012	-1.4%
number of garbage curbside stops	503,761	530,972	5.4%
number of garbage bags picked up at curbside	783,199	807,427	3.1%
number of blue box curbside stops	760,894	800,802	5.2%
number of recycling carts picked up at curb	15,891	16,855	6.1%

Promotion and Education

- The County was proud to be recognized by our municipal peers for our promotion and education efforts completed in 2017. Wellington County received a Silver Award in our household category for our 2017 Fall/Winter Newsletter, from the Municipal Waste Association.
- SWS staff were pleased to deliver several presentations on recycling to elementary school students in Minto and Erin, as well as to a Seniors’ group in Minto. Staff also provided composting workshops at the Fergus and Palmerston Libraries and did composting demonstrations at the Local Food Fest and Arthur Fall Fair events.
- The Manager of Solid Waste Services was interviewed twice on TheGrand101’s Swap Talk, where he answered questions about our services and programmes.



County Website – SWS Pages (unique visitors)	2017	2018	% change
most visited in 2018 – hours and locations	30,048	21,406	-28.8%
second most visited in 2018 – curbside collection	7,201	7,150	-0.7%
third most visited in 2018 – waste facilities	9,680	7,090	-26.8%
Reuse Website (total number of visits)			
# of visits	1,562	2,675	71.3%
# of pages	39,433	36,367	-7.8%
average time spent on website (minutes)	7.09	5.69	-19.7%

Financial

- The Purchasing Department issued and awarded a contract for SWS for a new Bomag Compactor. Having the right piece of waste compaction equipment improves the waste density of buried waste, and prolongs the life of a landfill site. These efficiency improvements defer the need to develop new areas of the landfill.
- The closed Elora landfill site was regraded with excess soil received from the Groves Memorial Hospital project. Savings were realized by both SWS and the Hospital as a result of this arrangement.
- A survey was completed to assist in the efficient development of the first cell of the Riverstown Landfill’s Phase II. The current Phase of the landfill is expected to be full in the next two years.



Environmental Stewardship

As part of the County’s commitment to protect and enhance the natural environment, the SWS Division looks to our “Green Strategy”. Staff and Council endeavour to 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 assessed and tracked over time with an aim of:

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

Quick Fact:

In 2018, 223,374 kg of HHW was received from 6,807 customers. This represents a 19.42% increase over the amount collected in 2017.



Quick Fact:

Wellington County residents and businesses diverted 33.9% of their waste materials through the services and programmes offered by SWS.

Tonnes Landfilled	2017	2018	% change
total tonnes disposed	24,178.15	23,375.82	-3.3%

County Diversion Programmes	2017	2018	% change
blue box recyclables	5,976.30	6,019.68	0.7%
wood, brush, Christmas trees	2,719.44	2,380.05	-12.5%
scrap metal	490.83	460.29	-6.2%
Electronics	140.53	136.23	-3.1%
tires	124.32	174.60	40.4%
rubble and concrete for reuse	0.00	0.00	--
household hazardous waste	187.04	223.37	19.4%
clothing and textiles	18.83	20.90	11.0%
reuse centres and website	12.54	12.46	-0.6%
backyard composting (estimate)	1,487.20	1497.50	0.7%
total tonnes diverted from landfill	11,157.03	10,925.08	-2.1%

In 2018, the following environmental projects and initiatives were implemented:

- Tree and shrub planting of native and pollinator-friendly species along the stream at the Riverstown Waste Facility improved habitat for animals, insects and birds.
- A wildflower seed blend was used following re-grading at the Elora closed landfill site, which will support pollinator habitat.
- A University of Toronto study on measuring sources and concentrations of flame retardants that are found in migratory bird populations was undertaken at our Aberfoyle Waste Facility. The County supported this study and found the Aberfoyle site had the lowest concentration of these chemicals of any of the sites that were monitored.
- Backyard composters were installed at four waste facilities to encourage and remind residents to practice food waste reduction and diversion from landfill.

Other Achievements and Activities

- SWS was thrilled to receive a Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) Silver Excellence Award in the Special Waste Category for our Mobile HHW Depot.
- Health and Safety is of utmost importance in the waste industry, and County staff were instrumental in organizing a province-wide Safety Summit hosted by the Ontario Chapter of SWANA.
- One of the SWS rolloff operators joined forces with a Roads Division Equipment Operator to compete in the Annual Ontario Public Works Association Road-e-o, and won the Silver Award!

Quick Fact:

The County's SWANA Silver Excellence Award was one of 21 awarded across North America



SWS Strategy

In 2001, at the request of the local municipalities, the County of Wellington accepted responsibility for all waste management 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 a number of strategy related reports presented to Committee and Council in 2018. The following table lists the topics covered in 2018, and the direction the County will be moving forward in. For more information, all of the Committee reports are available on the County's website as part of the SWS Committee meeting agendas.

Topic	Direction	Report
Group B - Future of Waste Disposal Topics		
Landfill mining	That the County of Wellington not consider landfill mining operations at this time, but this may be revisited at a future date.	Feb. 13, 2018 (pg. 6)
Buffer land acquisition	Endorse the current policy approved in 2014, with staff able to enter into negotiations on property acquisition for lands surrounding County closed landfill sites, where appropriate.	Feb. 13, 2018 (pg. 2)
Riverstown expansion vs. other technologies for waste disposal	The expansion of the Riverstown landfill site will be adopted as the current preferred option for long-term waste disposal.	May 8, 2018 (pg. 9)
Landfill operations	Seek out a leachate treatment solution at a local municipal waste water treatment plant; if unavailable, solicit a Request for Proposals for proven on-site leachate treatment processes.	June 12, 2018 (pg. 12)
Mandatory recycling	The County will not proceed with any mandatory recycling policies at this time.	June 12, 2018 (pg. 12)
Group D - Independent Topics		
Spring clean-up support	SWS to invite member municipalities ¹ to organize spring clean-up events and support their efforts with containers and disposal of materials collected.	April 10, 2018 (pg. 10)
Earth Day or other event days	Enhance promotion and support of events and activities such as Earth Day and Waste Reduction Week.	April 10, 2018 (pg. 10)
Special Event recycling	SWS to encourage event organizers to offer recycling options at events and establishing waste reduction standards in the future.	April 10, 2018 (pg. 10)
Involvement in regional waste management systems	Seek out collaboration opportunities in smaller scale regional waste management systems.	May 8, 2018 (pg. 4)
Co-operative contract procurement	Continue to seek out opportunities to collaborate with other County departments and Ontario municipalities to share information and develop co-operative procurement contracts where practical.	May 8, 2018 (pg. 7)
Setting goals or targets	Continue to work towards the current capture rate target of 85% for recyclables and strive for performance improvements in all waste management programmes and services.	Sept. 8, 2018 (pg. 12)

Topic	Direction	Report
Master Composter programme	The Food Waste Management Strategy is endorsed and a baseline residential food waste survey to be completed as soon as practical.	Nov 13, 2018 (pg. 19)
Education on reducing food waste	The Food Waste Management Strategy is endorsed and a baseline residential food waste survey to be completed as soon as practical.	Nov 13, 2018 (pg. 19)
Partnering with various groups	The Food Waste Management Strategy is endorsed and a baseline residential food waste survey to be completed as soon as practical.	Nov 13, 2018 (pg. 19)

Next Steps

The remaining topics to be reviewed and assessed are listed below. The SWS Strategy is expected to be completed in 2019.

- Determining the optimal number, location and use of the County’s Waste Facility infrastructure, including an assessment of the fee structure at the waste sites.
- Selecting which programme and service alternatives to include in the next curbside collection contract, including a decision on whether to provide a curbside organics collection service.



Quick Fact:

A curbside collection worker can collect from up to 1,000 homes a day.

Plans for 2019

SWS is evolving and changing to meet the needs of the County’s residents. Projects are continually re-evaluated and modified depending upon the County and Division priorities. Other considerations include budget availability and site construction requirements, among other factors. The following is a list of some of the projects planned for the coming year. This is not an exhaustive list and will be adjusted as new opportunities are identified and developed.

- Launching a waste app to provide customers with customized collection schedules and robust look-up tool for diversion and disposal options.

- Partnering with the City of Guelph on the Our Food Future initiative. Amongst other exciting and important goals, the project aims to recover more of the valuable resources in food waste, while also reducing how much food is wasted in Wellington County and the City of Guelph.
- Begin establishing pollinator gardens and/or pollinator habitat at several closed landfill sites, starting with the property at the Aberfoyle Waste Facility.
- Continue the development of Phase II at the Riverstown Landfill Site for long-term waste disposal for the County.
- Complete the SWS Strategy and continue the implementation of the many aspects of the plan.



Quick Fact:

SWS Roll-Off
Operations performed
3,378 bin lifts in 2018.