

## BRIEFING FORM

**SUBMITTED TO:** Environmental Sustainability Standing Committee

**MANAGER'S APPROVAL:**



Gord Helm, Manager Solid Waste Resources

**DATE OF MEETING:** February 22, 2012

**SUBJECT:** Clean Across N.S. - Community Litter Clean-up

### ORIGIN

STAFF

### RECOMMENDATION/ DECISION REQUIRED

INFORMATION ONLY

### BACKGROUND

Litter is any material that can be held in your hand that is left where it is not supposed to be – usually dropped on the ground, tossed out a car window or blowing off a truck with an unsecured load. Litter is material that should have been placed in a garbage or recycling container.

On Earth Day, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, Clean Nova Scotia (CNS) will be launching “Clean Across Nova Scotia”, part of a global community clean-up initiative, focusing on litter clean-up activities in HRM.

‘Clean Across Nova Scotia’ will be calling upon community members to participate in clean-up activities all across the province on June 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> to coincide with Environment Week in Nova Scotia.

The “Clean Across NS” is an extension of the CNS ‘Great Nova Scotia Pick-Me-Up’ (PMU), which has engaged 300,000 Nova Scotians over the past 18 years in litter clean-up events. Community groups, individuals and businesses have participated in litter clean-up events targeted at public streets, parks, roadsides and shorelines. Litter clean-up kits, supplied with bags and gloves are provided to groups who register events with Clean NS. Groups are encouraged and do continue to conduct clean-ups any time throughout the year.

There is a long standing partnership between HRM and CNS who acts as the liaison with clean-up groups, for the provision of support from TPW where there is a need to arrange for the collection of bagged litter following an event. This added level of service makes planning easier for the community groups (only one phone call to make), and ensures consistency in the HRM supported process as outlined below.

## HOW TO COORDINATE A COMMUNITY LITTER CLEAN-UP

Contact Clean Nova Scotia:

- [www.clean.ns.ca](http://www.clean.ns.ca) – Waste – Great Nova Scotia Pick Me Up
- 902-420-3474 or toll free at 1-888-380-5008

CNS will send the organizer of the clean-up (free of charge):

- Garbage & Recycling bags– enough for your particular clean-up
- Nitrile gloves
- Posters
- A Safety Information Booklet
- Data Card – to allow CNS to track participation and plan for the following year.

Bags of litter (garbage and recyclables) from most clean-ups can be disposed of by dividing bags between participants who can place the collected litter at the curb with their household garbage on their regular collection day.

- The material counts towards the curbside bag limit and all collection rules apply, including proper sorting. While this is adequate for most clean-ups, larger events often require additional assistance for collection.

If an event group requires separate collection of litter due to the volume expected, the organizer must let CNS know at the time of registration.

- Group organizers must identify the anticipated time the clean-up event will be completed and provide the specific location of where collected and properly bagged materials will be piled for collection.
- CNS will contact HRM Transportation and Public Works through the call centre with the details of the clean-up. The HRM Call Centre agent will provide a Service Request number to CNS.
- CNS will provide the event organizer with the Hansen Service Request number.
  - The event organizer must contact 490-4000 if there are any cancellations or changes to the time for pick-up or locations on the day of the event.
  - Municipal Operations Department, of TPW, are generally able to remove the material the same day as the clean-up event occurs. There remains the odd occasion where operational issues arise that may delay this pick-up. Organizers can follow-up with 490-4000 for updates on requests.

Event organizers may also opt to deliver bagged litter to the Otter Lake Facility on their own, in which case CNS will notify HRM Solid Waste Resources who will arrange to have the material accepted free of charge. Costs for such deliveries are waived ONLY with advance notification provided to HRM solid waste staff.



## **ALTERNATIVES AND ASSOCIATED RISKS**

When clean-up projects take place that fall outside of the scope and intent of a CNS litter clean-up initiative (i.e. illegal dump site clean ups), then HRM is put at risk of incurring un-budgeted and excessive waste handling and disposal costs. Staff resources are also taken away from existing operational requirements. An example of this type of situation is detailed in attachment #1 ESSC staff report dated July 7, 2011.

## **IMPACT/BENEFITS**

Litter clean-up events and activities are highly beneficial to HRM communities as a whole. They allow residents an opportunity to beautify their parks and public spaces and heighten awareness of the litter issue. These events build awareness and recognition that keeping our public areas and recreational spaces clean is everyone's responsibility. This involvement also develops support for public pressure on individuals who do litter and for policy and initiatives that promotes cleaner communities.

Adherence with the clean-up event process outlined above ensures limited resources from Municipal Operations can be programmed efficiently in support of these important volunteer events and ensure litter materials collected are dealt with effectively and do not become litter once again. The established event support process also makes planning easier for the event organizers in terms of only having one point of contact to coordinate the support required.

## **COMMUNICATION ISSUES/OPPORTUNITIES:**

HRM will promote community litter clean-ups in the Spring Edition of Naturally Green newsletter as well as the 'Good Neighbours, Great Neighbourhoods' clean-up toolkit found at [www.myhrm.ca](http://www.myhrm.ca).

In addition, CNS staff will be enlisting grassroots community organizations to host community conversations about how to change society's wasteful habits and to prevent littering from occurring in the first place.

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment #1: ESSC Briefing Note: Litter Clean-ups & Communication, July 7, 2011

## **KEY STAFF CONTACT:**

Shannon Betts, Waste Resource Analyst – Solid Waste Resources	490-7153
Gord Helm, Manager - Solid Waste Resources	490-6606



PO Box 1749  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 3A5 Canada

## BRIEFING FORM

**SUBMITTED TO:** Environmental Sustainability Standing Committee

**MANAGER'S APPROVAL:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gord Helm", written over a horizontal line.

Gord Helm, Manager, Solid Waste Resources

**DATE OF MEETING:** July 7, 2011

**SUBJECT:** Litter Clean-ups & Communications

**ORIGIN**

**STAFF**

### RECOMMENDATION/ DECISION REQUIRED

None required, for information only.

### BACKGROUND

Litter is any material that can be held in your hand that is left where it is not supposed to be – usually dropped on the ground, tossed out a car window or blowing off a truck with an unsecured load. Litter is material that should have been placed in a garbage or recycling container.

For over 18 years, the Great Nova Scotia Pick-Me-Up (PMU) has been a flagship program of Clean Nova Scotia (CNS). It is a year round initiative that aims to promote litter clean-up from communities, parks and shorelines. The program is open to schools, individuals, businesses and community groups. There is no cost to register and organizers are provided with garbage bags, recycling bags, nitrile gloves (provided in-kind by HRM), and a booklet with information on how to plan a litter clean-up.

Bags of litter (garbage and recyclables) from most clean-ups can be disposed of by dividing bags between participants who can place it with their household garbage on their regular collection day. The material counts towards the current bag limit and all curbside collection rules apply, including proper sorting. While this is adequate for most clean-ups, larger events often require additional assistance for collection.

HRM has a long standing relationship with CNS in support of community litter clean-ups. Through this agreement, CNS staff act as a liaison between the organizer and TPW to arrange collection of bagged litter following an event. This added level of service makes planning easier for the organizer (only one phone call to make), and ensures consistency in our process. Organizers can also opt to deliver bagged litter to the Otter Lake Facility on their own, in which case CNS will notify HRM Solid Waste Resources. Tip fees for such deliveries are waived with advance notification.

On May 7, 2011 a clean-up event was held in the North Preston community. The event was advertised as a 'Roadside & Community Clean-up' (see attached flyer). It was registered by the 'North Preston Core Group' through the PMU program. CNS contacted 490-4000 and a work order was generated to facilitate collection of material by Municipal Operations (MOPS).

When MOPS staff arrived at the North Preston Community Centre on May 7, they were met with a large pile of waste (photos attached) that did not appear to be generated from a roadside litter clean-up event. Materials included wood, tires, computers, furniture, mattresses and hazardous waste. It was reported to staff that members of the community had brought material from their household properties to the central collection area in addition to bags of litter that had been collected roadside.

A front-end loader and tandem trucks were brought to the site to facilitate the removal of debris. The clean-up by MOPS staff started on May 7 and lasted roughly 4 days.

There was minimal source separation of material which meant the recyclable and construction & demolition material contained in the pile could not be separated. This was included in the 49.64 tonnes of waste delivered to the Otter Lake facility. Over 275 tires were collected by the provincial tire recycling program directly from the site. An additional five tandem truckloads of tires were taken to the Turner Drive depot by MOPS (later picked up by the tire recycling program). Three truckloads of regulated electronics were delivered to an ACES drop-off depot for recycling. Hazardous waste was also taken to Turner Drive to be disposed of through a licensed hazardous materials handling company.

## **ALTERNATIVES AND ASSOCIATED RISKS**

When projects take place that fall outside of the scope and intent of a litter clean-up initiative (such as the example of the North Preston event), HRM is put at risk of incurring un-budgeted and excessive costs. Staff time is also taken away from other planned projects.

In the case of the North Preston event the following un-budgeted additional costs were incurred:

Staff and Equipment	\$8,300.00
Tipping Fees	\$6,205.00
Total	\$14,505.00

The level of service that was required to clean this site is not part of business planning or service provision to residents and is, therefore, un-budgeted.

## **IMPACT/BENEFITS**

The PMU program is highly beneficial to the community as a whole. It gives residents an opportunity to beautify their neighborhoods and raise awareness of the problem of litter. Many of the sites cleaned are public spaces so the program also benefits HRM from an operational standpoint.

## **COMMUNICATION ISSUES/OPPORTUNITIES**

Clear communication is crucial to ensuring the intent and purpose of this program is maintained. Event organizers should be clear about what areas are being cleaned (e.g. roadside, park) and what is being collected (litter).

Building on the existing relationship between HRM and CNS, there is an opportunity to identify events that anticipate large numbers of volunteers or to collect a large volume of material. Taking a proactive look at these events can ensure the program guidelines are followed, and the intent maintained.

Removal and disposal of waste from private land is the responsibility of the property owner. Information on how to properly dispose of debris is available on the HRM website ([www.halifax.ca/recycle](http://www.halifax.ca/recycle)) or by calling 490-4000.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Flyer – North Preston Community & Roadside Clean-up  
Photos

## **KEY STAFF CONTACT**

Shannon Betts, Waste Resource Analyst, Solid Waste Resources	490-7153
Gord Helm, Manager, Solid Waste Resources	490-6606
Donnie Pellerine, Superintendent – Streets, Municipal Operations	490-6087

## **ATTACHMENT #1 - Flyer**

Note: The event was originally planned for April 30 but was postponed to May 7.

### ***North Preston Community & Roadside Clean Up Saturday, April 30, 2011 9:00 am – 3:00 pm***

In conjunction with Earth Day, there will be a **COMMUNITY & ROADSIDE** clean up in North Preston on Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm (RAIN or SHINE).

***Looking for all residents of North Preston  
- ALL AGES -  
to participate in the clean up.***



#### ***I want to participate – how do I sign up?***

Visit or call the North Preston Medical Centre at 434-3807 to sign up for the clean up.

When you sign up, you will receive Clean Nova Scotia garbage bags & gloves so that you are equipped to start Spring cleaning around your property in advance of the event. As well, by signing up you will receive contact information for the Clean Up Captain in your area.

#### ***Tell me more...***

- The roadside clean up will start at the pond on Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am and fan out to the rest of the community.
- Property owners are encouraged to clean up their area in advance of the event and to place garbage out for regular Thursday collection. Garbage bags can also be left at the end of your driveway on the morning of April 30<sup>th</sup> for collection.

More details about the clean up will be communicated via CityWatch, the North Preston Community Centre, and St. Thomas Baptist Church.

***It's true what they say...***

***Many hands make light work! So tell your neighbours about this great opportunity to come together in unity, while contributing to the health & beautification of North Preston.***



**ATTACHMENT #2 – Photos**











