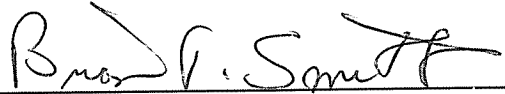




Halifax Regional Council
December 10, 2002

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: 
Brian T. Smith, Director, Solid Waste Resources

DATE: November 29, 2002

SUBJECT: Litter, Flyers and Shopping Carts

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

At the April 16, 2002 Regional Council meeting, Councillor Cooper, District 4, requested a staff report outlining a campaign to address litter generated by fast food restaurants, the careless discard of flyers, junk mail, and shopping carts; plus potential legislative changes as a deterrent of the continuation of this ongoing problem.

BACKGROUND

The resolution of the careless discard of litter from fast food restaurants, flyers and junk mail, and shopping carts requires the combined effort of the HRM, the NS Department of Environment and Labour, the local fast food and supermarket/grocery stores industry, and those companies that produce and distribute flyers and junk mail. HRM staff have, in partnership with the NS Department of Environment and Labour, and various industry, been working to effect a resolution of the ongoing problems noted by Councillor Cooper. The following summarizes efforts to date, as well as ongoing initiatives for 2003/04 FY.

DISCUSSION

1. Abandoned Shopping Carts

Community Projects presented a report to Regional Council on July 2, 2002, making recommendation that staff meet with representatives of the business community who utilize shopping carts to discuss solutions to reduce the number of carts leaving store property and consider this input in future recommendations on this issue.

As per Council direction, a meeting was convened with representatives of the business community who utilize shopping carts. The representatives were cooperative and expressed a desire to work collaboratively on the issue. During this facilitated session, issues identified in the Report and concerns expressed by Regional Council were discussed. A needs analysis process was also initiated. This analysis will create the foundations upon which an action plan for implementation will be developed. A follow-up meeting with retailers will be scheduled for early in the new year.

An interim strategy was agreed upon by the retailers and will be implemented shortly. Under the interim strategy, if an abandoned shopping cart is reported to the municipality, Community Projects staff will contact the designated retailer representative. The retailers committed to providing the representatives names and contact numbers to staff.

2. Litter From Fast Food Restaurants

A survey conducted by the Province in 1998 (Attached #1) entitled "A Characterization of Nova Scotia Litter, Executive Summary" identified the various sources of origin of litter. In descending order, the top generators of brand name litter are: Tim Hortons, McDonalds, Players (cigarette packs), Hostess, Humpty Dumpty, Export A, Sobeys, Hershey, Pepsi and Coke.

The problem of litter from fast food restaurants has been previously discussed at SWRAC and at the Regional Chairs Committee Solid Waste/Resource Management. Attachment #2 is correspondence from the Honourable David Morse, Minister of Environment regarding this matter. The letter refers to the placement of an anti litter strategy comprising three components; a) education and awareness, b) cleanup, and c) enforcement.

In the spring of 2002, Tim Hortons Ltd., in conjunction with the NS Department of Environment and Labour announced a province wide anti litter campaign. Isolated cleanup events hosted by Tim Hortons Ltd. were conducted shortly after the commencement of the campaign. However, over the past four months there has been no campaign highlighting the negative impacts of littering (environmental, and tourism related). There have been very few, if any, cleanups hosted by Tim Hortons Ltd. (or other brand name litter sources)

since the spring. Enforcement also has not been enhanced to effect a behaviour change.

The lack of a sustained anti litter campaign has been discussed at the Regional Chairs Committee with officials from NS Department of Environment and Labour who have committed to liaising with Tim Hortons Ltd. regarding the re-establishing of their campaign.

As the 1998 litter survey revealed, the source of litter is not exclusive to one brand name or company. In this regard, the December meeting of the Regional Chairs Committee, the problem of litter and source separation at fast food restaurants will be discussed with Minister Morse, NSDEL and Mr. Luc Erjaveck, Vice-President, Canadian Restaurant and Food Services Association.

While the efforts of the local fast food industry have not been satisfactory, HRM staff have requested that the Resource Recovery Fund Board, Provincial Education Committee (PEC) assess the commencement of a public awareness anti litter campaign in the local and provincial newspapers utilizing credits from the newspaper stewardship agreement. A public awareness campaign in the newspapers would be only one component of a comprehensive campaign involving all local fast food chains.

3. Flyers and Junk Mail

Although the careless discard of flyers and junk mail occurs across the Region (and Province) it is often most acute in rural areas where delivery is problematic. HRM staff have observed flyers being delivered by tossing onto the shoulder of the roadway at the driveway entrance. 2003 provides an opportunity to successfully address the problem of flyers and junk mail.

One of the conditions of the Newspaper Stewardship Agreement is the placement of a stewardship agreement with the producers/distributors of flyers and junk mail by December 31, 2005. Officials from the NS Department of Environment and Labour, plus solid waste staff from HRM and other municipalities will be meeting with representatives of Canada Post, daily and weekly newspapers across the province, and local and national retail stores to effect a stewardship agreement, where the industry plays a meaningful role in the management of the products they produce/distribute.

4. Enforcement

Enforcement of a successful anti litter campaign should follow a period of sustained public awareness, the promotion of cleanups and public monitoring and reporting. Failure to achieve a behaviour change through non punitive means, would trigger the application of enforcement of provincial legislation for littering and illegal disposal of items, including stolen shopping carts. The provincial legislation of a \$765.00 fine for littering would appear

to be a sufficient deterrent. The application of existing provincial legislation for littering, is viewed as more to the issue, rather than increasing the amount of the fine.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

None at this time. If the shopping cart action plan has resource implications, these will be identified and addressed through the budgetary process.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES/BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

ALTERNATIVES

There are no alternatives.

ATTACHMENTS

1. A Characterization of Nova Scotia Litter - Executive Summary
2. Letter from the Honourable David Morse, Minister of Environment and Labour

Additional copies of this report and information on its status can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report prepared by: Jim Bauld, Diversion Planning Coordinator, 490-7176
Peter James, Regional Coordinator, Bylaw Enforcement, 490-5641

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A Characterization of Nova Scotian Litter

A Litter Survey
July & August 1998

Presented by:

Nova Scotia Youth Conservation Corps.

&

Nova Scotia Department of the Environment

Submitted by,

Benjamin J. Fairbanks
Jonathan C. Flynn
Stephanie E. Hicks
Alina Trejos Soley
Daniel G. Thompson

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

During summer, 1998, the Department of the Environment sponsored a Youth Corp Team to conduct a litter study across Nova Scotia. The study, under the direction of the Solid Waste-Resource Implementation Committee, was designed and completed by five Youth Corp Team members.

The purpose of the study was three-fold:

- to characterize litter in Nova Scotia (by item and brand), in order to develop litter abatement programs;
- to clean survey areas; and
- to provide baseline data for future litter surveys.

Study Methodology

Three types of areas were surveyed across Nova Scotia. They were: main streets; rural highways; and recreational areas. A random selection was made to determine the sites to be surveyed. However, sites were surveyed only if there were significant amounts of litter, since one of the goals was characterization. Most randomly chosen sites had sufficient litter.

Sites were chosen across the entire province, in each of the seven solid waste regions developed in the Nova Scotia Solid Waste-Resource Management Strategy. Representative samples were sought for each region.

Visible litter was targeted for this survey. Individual litter was counted as one item. For example, a cup with a lid and straw was counted as one piece of litter. However, when a lid was found on its own, it too was considered as one item. Broken glass, when found in one area, also was counted as one item. None of the litter was weighed, and only items larger than a bottle cap were counted. Cigarette butts were excluded.

In addition to an individual count, each piece of litter was also classified according to item (i.e. cup, lid, napkin), its category (six were used: fast food; beverage container, snack food, tobacco, grocery store and miscellaneous), and its original brand owner (a visible company name).

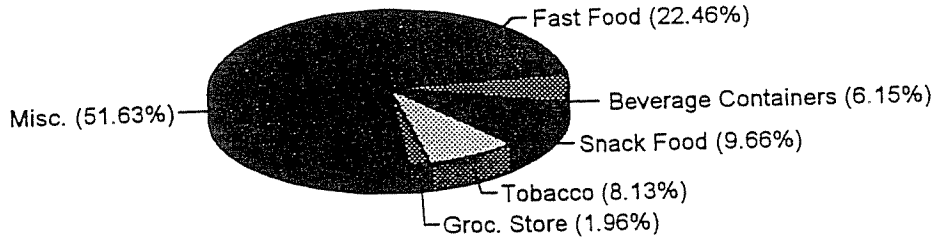
Results

The main results of the study are shown in three tables:

- Total composition, including miscellaneous.
- Total composition excluding miscellaneous.
- Ten most common brand names found on litter items.

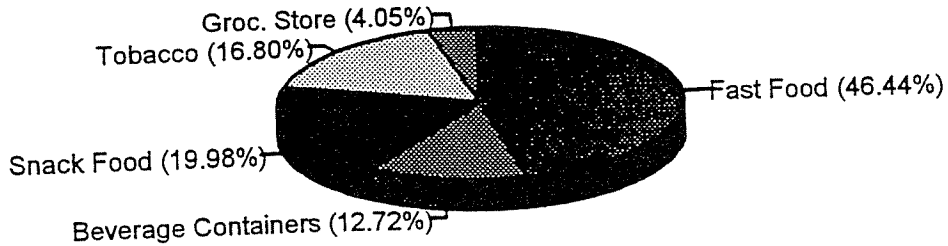
During the study, 7,750 piece of litter were collected, and classified into one of six categories. The table below shows these results:

Total Composition With Miscellaneous



The table below is similar to the one above, except the Miscellaneous category has been excluded. Most of the miscellaneous litter was simply unidentifiable due to decomposition. However, it likely originated from one of the categories shown below.

Total Composition Excluding Miscellaneous



Identifiable litter was also classified according to brand names. The ten most common brand names found during the survey are ranked below.

Ten Most Common Brand Names

Rank	Brand Name	Total # Items	% of Total Litter (excluding miscellaneous)
1	Tim Horton's	821	22.0%
2	McDonalds	380	10.1%
3	Player's	223	6.0%
4	Hostess	205	5.5%
5	Humpty Dumpty	110	2.9%
6	Export A	104	2.8%
7	Sobeys *	98	2.6%
8	Hershey	91	2.4%
9	Pepsi	82	2.2%
10	Coke	77	2.1%

* Sobeys brand plastic bags, beverage containers and chip bags.

Another interesting finding is that there were almost 50% more non-deposit beverage containers than deposit bearing containers. The deposit refund system now collects about 75% of all containers sold. This has resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of containers that are recycled, which is helping to reduce the volume of beverage container litter in Nova Scotia.

Conclusion

Litter is a hindrance to the scenic beauty of our province. It is deadly to wildlife, attractive to pests and can even be hazardous to human health. While many people don't know the amount of fines that can be levied for littering, most realize it is illegal and socially unacceptable. Despite these facts, some Nova Scotians continue to litter.

Anti-littering strategies have one main goal: to stop litter. However, a strategy must rely on a number of elements. These include education, stewardship and enforcement. Individuals, industry and government all share responsibility to implement these elements.

It is believed that the findings of this survey will help Nova Scotia develop a strategy to reduce litter. By working together and sharing responsibilities, Nova Scotia will become a cleaner and more beautiful place to call home.

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Department of
Environment & Labour

PO Box 697
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 2T8

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Office of the Minister

FEB 14 2002

Mr. Reg Rankin, Chair
Solid Waste Regional Advisory Committee
Halifax Regional Municipality
P.O. Box 1749
Halifax NS B3J 3A5

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Dear Mr. Rankin:

Re: Fast Food Litter

Thank you for your letter and your interest in resolving the problem of litter from the fast food industry in Nova Scotia and the source separation on organics in fast food restaurants.

For the past few years staff of my Department have been attempting to negotiate an agreement with the fast food industry to assist with the reduction of litter in Nova Scotia.

We have proposed that an anti-litter strategy be developed with three main components:

1. Education and Awareness;
2. Cleanup and Monitoring; and
3. Enforcement

A campaign that involves all of these elements requires funding. As of this date, we believe certain members of the industry will now step forward and work with us to address this problem.

With regard to source separation of organics in front of the counter, past experience has shown limited success in proper waste separation by the customers. This has lead to a high degree of material contamination. Efforts are currently underway in some areas to address this matter. The Department is following the results of these efforts and will act accordingly. However, I should point out that in the meantime, municipalities have the ability to pursue this matter at their own discretion.

I will be pleased to keep the Regional Chairs informed of future progress in these areas.

Sincerely,

Sherryl
4208

Original Signed By

David Morse
Minister

cc: Brian Smith