



P.O. Box 1749  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 3A5 Canada

**Item No. 2**  
**Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee**  
**March 7, 2019**

**TO:** Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

*-Original Signed-*

**SUBMITTED BY:**

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Brad Anguish, Director, Transportation and Public Works

*-Original Signed-*

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Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** November 21, 2018

**SUBJECT:** Household Special Waste Mobile Depot Program Reassessment

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**INFORMATION REPORT**

**ORIGIN**

At the Regional Council September 11, 2018 session, the following motion was approved:

That Halifax Regional Council request a staff report to reassess and make possible recommendations to the current Household Special Waste (HSW) Mobile Depot program whereby our local Enviro Depots in HRM are involuntarily becoming the depository of Household Special Waste with materials being left on their doorsteps by our citizens.

**LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, section 335 (regarding the power to make by-laws respecting Solid Waste):

*The Council may make by-laws respecting solid waste, including, but not limited to,*

*(a) prohibiting persons from depositing any solid waste except at a solid-waste management facility;*

*(b) regulating the disposal, collection and removal of solid waste;*

*...*

*(e) prescribing the materials that may or may not be deposited at a solid-waste management facility of the Municipality or in which the Municipality participates;*

HRM Solid Waste By-Law, S-600, section 11.1 (regarding Household Hazardous Waste Services):

*The Administrator may designate the place and time, including the days and hours of operation and the materials eligible for the collection of household hazardous waste in the Municipality. This includes the operation of a permanent household hazardous waste depot and the operation of mobile depot(s) in the Municipality. Household hazardous waste depots may only be used by residents of the Municipality for the proper disposal of household hazardous waste originating within the Municipality. All persons are prohibited from disposing of industrial, commercial and institutional waste at the permanent depot or the mobile depot(s).*

**BACKGROUND**

The Municipality operates a Household Special Waste (HSW) Depot program that includes a permanent Depot located behind the Materials Recovery Facility at 20 Horseshoe Lake Drive in Bayers Lake Business Park. This program operates most Saturdays throughout the year (except weekends around holidays). To provide greater access to other areas of HRM, the program also operates through mobile Depot events located throughout the Municipality which are scheduled to occur on selected Saturdays generally between May and November each year. In Fiscal 2018/19, eleven mobile HSW Depot events were scheduled in the following communities: Dartmouth, Cole Harbour, Sackville, Porters Lake, Bedford, Oyster Pond, Fall River, Eastern Passage, Sheet Harbour and north end Halifax.

The Municipality operates the HSW Depot program under a multi-year operating agreement with a contractor procured through an RFP process. The current contractor is Clean Harbors.

Divert NS administers the Province's deposit-refund program through its network of "Enviro Depots" where consumers can return deposit bearing beverage containers and receive their portion of deposit back. The Enviro Depots also receive acceptable paint from residents through the Province's paint stewardship program (an industry program administered by Regeneration). There may be other materials that some Enviro Depots will accept. The Enviro Depot network in the Province consists of some 78 locations of which approximately twenty-two are in HRM. The HSW Depot located at 20 Horseshoe Lake Drive is not an Enviro Depot.

The issue of "materials being left on the doorsteps of Enviro Depots" includes materials that may be dropped without permission outside of Enviro Depot hours, improper materials received when the Enviro Depot is receiving paint program materials (due to inadequate screening of materials) or improper materials inadvertently received along with paint program materials (e.g. non-program paint, thinners, etc. that may look similar to acceptable paint program materials). These materials can be of varying types and originate from the ICI sector or residential sources.

**DISCUSSION**

Hazardous wastes or special wastes can generally be defined as wastes that are (or potentially are) corrosive, toxic, reactive and/or flammable. Household special wastes (HSW) are comprised of some relatively common household materials including but not limited to toilet and drain cleaners, bleaches, batteries, paints and paint solvents, flammable aerosols, oil, stale gasoline, household propane tanks, household fire extinguishers, compact fluorescent bulbs, antifreeze and pesticides.

Household special waste materials will be accepted at the Municipality's HSW Depot provided the materials:

- originate from household sources within Halifax Regional Municipality
- are in clearly labelled, original containers or can be readily identified and classified by the program personnel;
- are **not** generated from Industrial, Commercial or Institutional (ICI) or other Business sources or

- activities; and
- are **not** designated as non-acceptable materials by HRM.

The HSW Depot program operates under an Approval issued by NS Environment that uses the term “waste dangerous goods” for household special waste and outlines the parameters under which the program takes place including what materials are acceptable and what materials are not be accepted at the Depots. Section 16. of the Approval indicates:

“a. The Approval Holder shall only accept waste dangerous goods from residential sources. Waste dangerous goods from Institutional, Commercial and Industrial (ICI) sources are not to be accepted at the Facility.”

Other items not accepted at the HSW Depots are: biomedical waste (including sharps), explosive waste (including ammunition and fireworks), radioactive waste, wastes known or reasonably suspected to contain PCBs, asbestos waste, international waste, unidentifiable compressed gas cylinders, unidentifiable or unclassifiable wastes, HSW materials from outside the boundaries of HRM, and other items including oil and fuel tanks.

The contracted personnel for the HSW Depot program include a staff person(s) trained in chemistry to screen materials for unacceptable items and for identification of the class of material when needed (e.g. if not in original containers) for proper packaging of the waste under the transportation of dangerous goods and related regulations. The Municipality tracks car (vehicle) counts for the HSW Depot program (both permanent Depot at Bayers Lake and the mobile Depot events held throughout the Municipality). In calendar 2017, a total of 13,234 vehicles used the HSW Depots.

The Enviro Depots are operated as individual businesses through a program that handles deposit bearing beverage containers and household paint stewardship and they have two main revenue sources – handling fees for the deposit containers (as distributed by Divert NS as part of the Provincial deposit-return system) and a portion of environmental handling fees (as distributed from the paint industry program administered by Regeneration) that are paid by consumers based on the size of paint purchased at point of sale. Divert NS and Regeneration also provide support and guidance information to the Enviro Depots for what materials are acceptable (and not acceptable) in their stewardship programs.

Enviro Depots are part of the ICI sector, operating as businesses for the delivery of materials as contracted by Divert NS and Regeneration and are responsible for screening the incoming materials for any unacceptable items (non-program materials) and for providing security to prevent unauthorized drop-off of materials. Staff of Enviro Depots have the lists of acceptable materials for their programs and are responsible for turning away any other unacceptable items that may be brought by residents. In the event that the Enviro Depots do inadvertently receive some non-program materials, there are measures in place through the paint stewardship program to handle and account for the non-program materials (e.g. items such as industrial paint, automotive paint, driveway sealers, etc.). It is noted that unacceptable items received by Enviro Depots originate from both the ICI and residential sectors and may also include types of hazardous materials that could not be accepted by HRM’s HSW Depot program. The quantity of unacceptable materials that could be received annually by EnviroDepots is unknown and depends upon the level and adequacy of screening of incoming materials that occurs at individual EnviroDepots.

As part of HRM’s environmental approval issued by the province, the HSW Depot program is not permitted to receive hazardous materials from the ICI sector or other business sources or activities. The Municipality has approval for residential HSW materials only and would require a different type of regulatory approval to receive any hazardous waste from the ICI or business sector. The requirements to change the type of approval are not known.

The ICI sector and businesses who may generate hazardous materials as waste are required to properly dispose or recycle these materials according to all applicable laws and regulations in Nova Scotia and Canada. For any ICI sector hazardous materials, the business is responsible to arrange for proper disposal

or recycling through licensed hazardous waste handling companies. Enviro Depots do not have the regulatory approvals required to receive hazardous waste other than those materials that they are contracted to take under the paint stewardship program. Transport of hazardous wastes in quantity may require specialized packaging, labelling, manifesting, licensing and transport vehicles (under TDG – transportation of dangerous goods regulations).

Enviro Depots have in place measures through the paint stewardship program to manage and account for the non-program materials that may be inadvertently received (and the environmental handling fee paid by consumers is distributed accordingly for all program costs such as receipt, transport, recycling, QA/QC, disposal of non-program material, etc.). HRM is not permitted to accept these non-program materials inadvertently received by Enviro Depots. For items that may be HSW materials from residents, in the Enviro Depots receiving procedures, these materials can be re-directed to be taken by the residents directly to HRM's HSW Depot program.

HRM communicates the schedule through a variety of means for the permanent HSW Depot and the mobile HSW Depot events held in various communities from May to November. HRM will enhance direct communications undertaking the following initiatives:

- Education visits by HRM staff to Enviro Depots in HRM to deliver schedules for the residential HSW program, including the mobile events, to provide to residents.
- Timely communication of the schedule for the HSW program to Regeneration as administrators of the paint stewardship program and Divert NS as administrators of the deposit-return program.
- Encouraging Enviro Depots to improve messaging and signage to indicate that household hazardous waste items should be delivered by residents to the HSW Depot program.

#### Summary:

The EnviroDepot network in Nova Scotia operates as individual businesses who have agreements with Divert NS for the deposit return program and with Regeneration for the paint stewardship program. These programs are funded through the deposits paid for beverages and the environmental handling fees for paint stewardship. The Municipality's HSW Depot program does not accept ICI sector or business waste and is only permitted to receive residential household special waste under its regulatory approval. HRM Solid Waste undertakes communications of its HSW Depot program schedule (including timing and locations of mobile Depot events) through a variety of means including the waste app, website, newspaper notices, social media, community notice locations, etc. HRM will enhance direct communications of the HSW program schedule with EnviroDepots in HRM and the related program administrators.

The reasons that the Municipality's HSW Depot program does not receive hazardous materials (that are inadvertently received) from EnviroDepots are: HRM's regulatory approval is to receive residential HSW materials only (with unknown requirements for changing the type of approval), unacceptable items received by Enviro Depots can originate from both the ICI, business and residential sectors and may also include types of hazardous materials that could not be accepted by HRM's HSW Depot program, and there is an unknown quantity (and types) of materials that would originate from the twenty-two EnviroDepots in HRM (and if receipt from these EnviroDepots could be implemented, it would have budget implications).

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications related to this information report.

#### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

There was no community engagement undertaken for this report.

**ATTACHMENTS**

N/A

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at [halifax.ca](http://halifax.ca) or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Robert Orr, P. Eng., Program Manager, Engineering and Contract Services, 902-490-6698

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