



DUFFERIN COUNTY WASTE SERVICES

## **COMMUNICATION PLAN – FINAL REPORT**

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# **1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

## **1.1 Municipal Information**

The County of Dufferin is a municipality located in south-central Ontario, about 75 km northwest of Toronto. Dufferin is made up of 1,486 square kilometers and is home to 56,881 people and 21,257 private dwellings, including 1,838 multi-residential units (2011 Census). There are eight local municipalities in Dufferin, including the Townships of Amaranth, East Garafraxa, Melancthon, Mulmur and the Towns of Grand Valley, Mono, Orangeville and Shelburne.

Dufferin is where urban streets meet country roads; where nightlife meets night skies; where culture meets community. The Town of Orangeville is the largest urban center in Dufferin County, making up nearly half of the population. This is complimented by the small towns of Shelburne and Grand Valley, a number of villages and rural subdivisions, large expanses of rural farmland, and rolling hills that attract many weekend residents. The landscape of Dufferin is diverse, and so are its residents.

## **1.2 Background and History**

As per By-law 2010-29, household waste services, such as the curbside collection of garbage, recycling, yard waste, bulky items and white goods, were transferred to the County from the local municipalities, effective January 1, 2013.

Prior to January 1, 2013, waste services responsibilities in Dufferin were divided between the County and its member municipalities. The County provided services for organic, hazardous and electronic wastes, while the eight local municipalities provide collection of all other household solid waste.

As of January 1, 2013 the County was responsible for all household waste collection services. However, the local municipal contracts were extended until May 31, 2013 and new waste collection contracts and program changes came into effect on June 1, 2013.

The collection programs previously delivered by the local municipalities were varied. Some included bi-weekly collection, clear bags, landfills and differing bag limits. A quick summary of the eight local municipal programs is provided in Table 1.1.

**Table 1.1 Local Municipal Programs Prior to June 1, 2013**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Collection Frequency</b>	<b>Bag limit</b>	<b>Clear Bags</b>	<b>Landfill*</b>
Amaranth	Weekly Green Bin. Bi-weekly alternating garbage and Blue Box.	104 bags per year (stickers for each bag).	Required.	Available.
East Garafraxa	Weekly Green Bin, Blue Box and garbage.	3 bags per week.	Not required.	None.
Grand Valley	In urban areas, weekly Green Bin, Blue Box and garbage.  In rural areas, weekly Green Bin and bi-weekly alternating Blue Box and garbage.	2 bags per week. (4 bags per bi-weekly collection in rural areas).	Required.	None.
Melancthon	No curbside collection.	104 bags per year (landfill card to be stamped).	Required.	Available.
Mono	Weekly Green Bin and Blue Box. Bi-weekly garbage.	4 bags per bi-weekly collection.	Not required.	Available.
Mulmur	Weekly Green Bin, Blue Box and garbage.	1 bag per week.	Required.	Available.
Orangeville	Weekly Green Bin, Blue Box, and garbage.	1 bag per week.	Not required.	None.
Shelburne	Weekly Green Bin, Blue Box and garbage.	104 bags per year (stickers for each bag).	Not required.	None.

*\* The Amaranth, Mono and Mulmur landfill sites were closed to the public on January 1, 2013. As there was not an existing curbside collection program, the Melancthon landfill site remained open until May 31, 2013.*

As the collection programs were delivered by the local municipalities, information from the 2011 Datacall is broken down by municipality. Table 1.2 contains data from the 2011 Datacall showing the municipal groupings, Blue Box tonnages and program cost.

**Table 1.2 Excerpts from 2011 Datacall.**

THS = Total Households Served, RWG = Total Residential Waste Generated (tonnes), BBM = Calculated Blue Box Tonnes Marketed, BBMD ß= Blue Box material diversion (%), TMD = Total Materials Diversion from Landfill (%), NC = Net Cost of Blue Box Program, NC/BBM = Net cost per Blue Box Tonne Marketed

Group	Municipality	THS	RWG	BBM	BBMD	TMD	NC	NC/BBM
7	Amaranth	1,373	1438.54	257	17.87%	35.88%	\$ 44,525	\$173/t
7	East Garafraxa	925	811.57	199	24.52%	38.62%	\$ 57,154	\$287/t
7	Grand Valley	1,384	892.07	189	21.19%	53.76%	\$ 89,253	\$472/t
9	Melancthon	1,144	849.15	133	15.66%	29.74%	\$ 56,844	\$427/t
7	Mono	2,829	2745.76	716	26.08%	58.09%	\$ 156,053	\$218/t
7	Mulmur	1,666	1424.00	283	19.87%	36.32%	\$ 100,455	\$355/t
5	Orangeville	10,186	11,761.40	3,392	28.84%	53.67%	\$ 642,811	\$190/t
5	Shelburne	2,158	2552.97	472	18.49%	43.09%	\$ 105,744	\$224/t
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21,665</b>	<b>22,475</b>	<b>5,640</b>	<b>25.09%</b>	<b>49.3%</b>	<b>\$ 1,252,839</b>	<b>\$222.13/t</b>

In the past, the budgets for promotion and education of the Blue Box program were relatively low at the local municipal level, ranging from \$0 to \$3 per tonne marketed, according to the 2011 Datacall.

### 1.3 Program Description

On June 1, 2013 a new waste collection contract, blue box processing contract, Waste Collection By-law and policy came into effect. Details of the new program include:

- Curbside collection of garbage and recycling for the first time in the Township of Melancthon;
- Weekly collection of garbage, Green Bins and Blue Boxes;
- Clear bags for garbage collection (mandatory);
- Updating the list of acceptable items in the blue box to reflect current market conditions (i.e. the removal of Styrofoam);
- Collection day changes;
- Bulky items and white goods collection on a monthly call-in basis; and
- Yard waste collection bi-weekly from April through November, as well as monthly in rural areas on a call-in basis.



Green for Life (GFL) is the contractor for curbside collection with the new program, providing curbside collection of garbage, single-stream recycling, Green Bins, yard waste, bulky items and white goods. Recyclables are co-collected with organics at a cost of \$1.18 per household (\$0.59 per household for Blue Box only). Blue Box materials are processed by Waste Management Inc. in Cambridge, Ontario at a cost of \$78 per Tonne. There is a revenue rebate agreement in place between the County and the processing contractor.

Green Bin materials are processed at the Caledon Composting Facility by the Region of Peel. Garbage is currently being sent to Brent Run Landfill in Mont Rose, Michigan. There is no municipally run depot or transfer station available to residents. However, GFL does operate a transfer station west of Orangeville that residents can bring certain waste streams to at their own expense (recyclables are accepted at no charge).

The total budget for all promotion and education related activities in 2013 equaled \$94,500. This includes promoting the new program through the transition in June, special events, and program details for Blue Box, Green Bin, Hazardous and Electronic Waste, Take it Back, etc.

## **1.4 Future Direction**

As the new program comes into effect and we look ahead into the future, there are a few items that could potentially make a big impact on our programs. As per a decision by County Council, the bag limits of the previous collection programs are still in effect, having been converted to a weekly limit, where necessary, to accommodate the new collection schedules. Discussions about a County-wide bag limit will take place in early 2014.

By uploading waste services to the County level, we are able to provide streamlined communications to residents. Our hope is to provide more effective tools to inform, encourage and empower residents in their own waste diversion efforts.

## **1.5 Project Description**

In the fall of 2012, County staff began the development of a communication plan to welcome the Townships of Amaranth, East Garafraxa, Melancthon, Mulmur and the Towns of Grand Valley, Mono, Orangeville and Shelburne into the County's new waste program. The plan outlined the current state of affairs for Dufferin County Waste Services, our goals and objectives and a plan of the promotional and educational tactics that would be used to reach our goals. The purpose of the communication plan was to inform residents of upcoming changes to their municipal curbside collections. To facilitate the communication planning and

development & distribution of P&E materials, the County received \$35,000 in funding from Waste Diversion Ontario's Continuous Improvement Fund.

## 2 IMPLEMENTATION

### 2.1 Goals and Objectives

The goals of our promotional and educational activities include the following:

- **Increased effectiveness of the Blue Box program.** Our goal is to increase the capture rate of the Blue Box program from 93% to 95%, as measured in waste audit studies, as well as to decrease the contamination rate. As found in the waste audit conducted in 2012, the contamination rate in the Blue Box program is 9.6%, but there is a wide range between the municipalities from 5.4% in Grand Valley, to 17.4% in Shelburne. Our goal is to bring the contamination rate for the whole County down to 7% by 2015 by focusing on the areas with the higher contamination rates and with targeted P&E.
- **Increase Tonnage of Blue Box Marketed materials** According to the 2011 Datacall, 5,640 tonnes of Blue Box materials was marketed in Dufferin County. With the Township of Melancthon now receiving curbside collection and increased communications of the new program, our goal is to increase this by 10%, to 6,204 tonnes by 2015.
- **Decrease Net Cost per tonne of Blue Box Marketed materials** The Net Cost per Tonne Marketed in Dufferin County (weighted average of local municipalities) is currently \$222.15. Our goal is to decrease this by 10% to \$199.94 by 2015.
- **Increase waste diversion.** Like any communications plan, our ultimate goal is to reduce what is being sent to landfill. This will be done through not only educating residents on what to do, but through encouraging messages that show residents that their actions make a difference and why it matters. The 2011 total diversion rate in Dufferin is 49.33% and the percentage of blue box materials diverted is 25.09% (2011 Datacall). Our goal is to increase the percentage of blue box materials diverted to 28% and the total diversion rate to 55% by 2015.
- **Increased participation in the Green Bin program.** Based on waste audits conducted in 2012, it is estimated that 36% of residents use their Green Bin. Our goal is to increase this participation rate to 50% by 2015.
- **Increased number of impressions.** Our objective is to communicate more effectively with residents. To achieve this we will measure and track the number of impressions (website visits, social media statistics, handout at events, Smartphone app downloads, email newsletter clicks, etc.). This data will assist in providing direction for future P&E campaigns.

## 2.2 Messages Used

- New Waste Program Starts June 1
- Clear bags are coming
- Participating makes a difference. Using your Blue Box and Green Bin positively impacts the environment.
- Did you know \_\_\_\_\_ can go in the Blue Box?

## 2.3 Tactics Utilized

The following is a breakdown of the planned promotion and education expenditures for all waste services.

Table 2.1 describes the planned activities in the Fall of 2012, leading up to the County's assumption of waste on January 1. Table 2.2 contains the planned promotional activities throughout 2013. Table 2.3 explains some of the activities that will continue into 2014 and 2015. Total planned expenditures towards recycling related P&E materials/tactics is \$93,000.



**Table 2.1 Fall 2012 Planned Expenditures**

Communication Tool	Budget	Notes
Calendars for January to May 2013	\$11,000	Calendars for each local municipality sent out in December 2012 for information specific from January to May 2013.
Flyers and Signs Landfill Closures	\$200	Partner with Amaranth, Mono, and Mulmur to communicate the closure of their landfills
Informational Display	\$400	At local municipal offices and arenas.
Newsletter "Diversion Digest" print newsletter	\$5000	Fall 2012 edition highlighting landfills, transition in January, Hazardous and Electronic Events, Take it Back and Green Bin programs
Newspaper Ads Did you receive your calendar?	\$2,000	Ads in local papers in December.
Promotional Giveaways	\$5,500	Pencils, shopping totes, stickers, clips, wristbands, to be available throughout 2013

**Table 2.2 2013 Planned P&E Expenditures**

Communication Tool	Budget	Notes
Bag Samples – clear, blue, compostable	\$0	Provided by Glad.
Flyers Hazardous & Electronic Waste Events	\$10,000	Bulk mailing in spring and fall.
Flyers	\$200	To hand out at events.



Communication Tool	Budget	Notes
Sorting Guide and Calendar		
Flyers Sorting tips at home	\$50	To hand out at events.
Guide Booklet	\$15,000	Bulk mailing in May.
Information tables	\$400	January to May 2013. At municipal offices, arenas, community halls, etc.
Magnets	\$8,250	Fridge magnets to show what is accepted in the Blue Box and Green Bin programs.
Newsletter "Diversion Digest" print newsletter	\$15,000	Bulk mailed to each household. 3 editions (Jan., Aug., & Oct.) throughout 2013.
Newsletters "Dufferin Waste Bulletin" e-newsletter	\$0	At least monthly email reminders.
Newsletters Shelburne quarterly newsletter	\$0	Insert into Shelburne Town Newsletter, sent in mail.
Newspaper Ads Hazardous & Electronic Waste Events	\$4,620	In local newspapers prior to each event
Newspaper Ads Holiday Interruption	\$4,000	Week before each holiday interruption.
Newspaper Ads New Waste Program Starts June 1	\$15,500	All local newspapers for 6 weeks prior to June 1 and 3 weeks after. Smaller ads in the papers of surrounding communities. In part funded by WDO/OCNA.
Newspaper Ads Special Events	\$2,640	Local newspapers. Earth Week, Waste Reduction Week, Compost Give Away
Newspaper Ads Thank you for participating	\$2,400	To report on success of programs and thank residents for their hard work
Oops Stickers	\$3,000	Handed out by collections staff
Posters New Waste Program Starts June 1	\$100	Handed out to retailers, restaurants, community halls, etc. in April/May.
Posters Sorting guides and helpful tips	\$0	For schools, businesses, churches, etc.
Presentations Intro to Waste and 3Rs	\$0	Offered to schools and other children groups (daycares, etc)
Presentations New Waste Program Starts June 1	\$200	Offered to staff and community groups (i.e. Rotary Club, Church groups)
Press Releases Special Events	\$0	Earth Week, Waste Reduction Week, Compost Give Away, Hazardous Waste Events a Success
Press Releases Waste Services Transition	\$0	Monthly from January to June
Public Information Sessions, a.k.a. "coffee chats"	\$500	5 sessions held in early May

Communication Tool	Budget	Notes
Smartphone App	\$6,700	"my-waste" app for smartphones. Available for download in May.
Social Media	\$0	Facebook and Twitter
Special Events	\$0	Various
Road signs	\$1,000	Throughout May 2 County-owned mobile digital signs at Museum and Operations Centre 5 rented mobile signs 10 existing "Welcome" signs on County Roads
Road Signs – Billboards New Waste Program Starts June 1	\$2,000	2 Highway Billboards for May
Transit Ads	\$2,000	Orangeville Transit 3 buses and 2 shelters in May
Vehicle Decals	\$4,000	Dufferin County logo on collection Vehicles
Video Rogers TV appearance	\$500	Full episode of "Discover Dufferin" on Rogers TV. Focus on what happens after waste leaves the curb.
Website	\$0	<a href="http://www.dufferincounty.ca/waste">www.dufferincounty.ca/waste</a>
Website Searchable tool on website	\$1,700	From Smartphone App database.

**Table 2.3 Planned P&E Expenditures Comparison 2013 - 2015**

2014 Communication Tool	2013 Budget	2014 Budget	2015 Budget	Notes on changes
Flyer Hazardous & Electronic Waste Events	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$0	2014: eliminate fall mailing 2015: dates for Hazardous Events and Calendar should line up so that both mailings are not necessary.
Flyers Sorting Guide and Calendar	\$0	\$8,000	\$8,000	Professionally print in future.
Guide Booklet	\$15,000	\$12,000	\$12,000	Savings by mailing out through newspaper.
Newspaper Ads Did you know ____ can go in the BB?	\$0	\$0	\$0	Book through WDO/OCNA funding
Newsletter "Diversion Digest" print newsletter	\$15,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	3 editions per year.
Newspaper Ads Hazardous & Electronic Waste Events	\$4,620	\$5,600	\$5,600	Addition of Shelburne local paper.
Newspaper Ads Holiday Interruption	\$4,000	\$6,400	\$6,400	8 holiday interruptions per year. Newspaper reminder before each one.

2014 Communication Tool	2013 Budget	2014 Budget	2015 Budget	Notes on changes
Newspaper Ads Special Events	\$2,640	\$2,640	\$2,640	
Newspaper Ads Thank you for participating	\$2,400	\$5,000	\$5,000	Show progress of program
Road Signs – Billboards	\$2,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	
Smartphone App	\$6,700	\$3,200	\$3,200	Annual license fee.
Transit Ads	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	
Website Searchable tool on website	\$1,700	\$500	\$500	Annual license fee.

The following initiatives will also continue at little or no cost: bag samples from Glad, sorting tips at home flyer, information tables at municipal offices, email newsletters, Shelburne quarterly newsletter, presentations to schools and community groups, press releases for special events, social media, special events, and the website.

### 3 RESULTS

#### 3.1 Results

Table 3.1 below shows the goals that have been set and the information that is currently available for tracking each metric, as of January 2014. Some metrics will not be available until a waste audit is conducted again or until the WDO Datacall for 2013 has been completed.

**Table 3.1: P&E tracking methodologies, collection points, and general comments**

Tracking Methodology	Data Collection Point	Fall 2012	Goal	As of January 2014
Capture Rate of Blue Box	Waste Audits	93%	95%	Not available.
Contamination Rate of Blue Box	Waste Audits	9.6% (5.4% to 17.4%)	7%	6.9% (as per MRF audit of September 2013)
Blue Box Tonnage	Datacall	5,640 tonnes (2011)	6,204 tonnes	2,739 tonnes (Jan.-May)* 3,427 tonnes (June – Dec.) =6,166 tonnes in 2013
Net Cost per tonne of Blue Box Marketed Materials	Datacall	\$222.15	\$199.94	Not available.
Overall Diversion	Datacall	49.33%	55%	Not available.
Blue Box	Datacall	25.09%	28%	Not available.

Tracking Methodology	Data Collection Point	Fall 2012	Goal	As of January 2014
Diversion				
Blue Box participation	Participation/Set out studies	80% ** (2012)	90%	94.8% (as per participation study of Oct./Nov. 2013)
Green Bin participation	Participation/Set out studies	36% (2012)	50%	79% (as per participation study of Oct./Nov. 2013)
Smart Phone app users	Downloads	0	2,000	448 downloads as of January 17, 2014.
Website Statistics (hits on webpage)	Google Analytics	0 (no data collected)	2,000 visits per month	35,571 unique page views in 2013 on waste-related pages. Average 2,131 per month.
Incoming calls	Call log (Sharepoint list)	0 (no data collected)	< 2,000 calls per month	2,376 calls recorded in 2013 (under-estimated). Average 198 per month.
Social Media Statistics	SproutSocial	No data collected.	10 new Twitter followers per month. 10 new Facebook fans per month. 5,000 Facebook impressions per month.	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31, 2013 - 1,800 interactions by 1,200 unique users - 290 new Twitter followers (24/month) - 253 new Facebook fans (21/month) - 148,600 Facebook page impressions (12,383/month)
Email newsletter Statistics	Mailchimp	No data collected.	40% open rate 5% click rate	359 subscribers 44.7% open rate 3.5% click rate
Handouts at events	Promotional Inventory Tracking	No data collected.	10,000 total handouts	Approx. 4,000 handouts total in 2013.

\* Available tonnage data from invoices. Includes “collected” tonnage from January to May and “processed” tonnage from June to December.

\*\* Participation rate, excluding Melancthon, which did not receive curbside blue box collection.

## 3.2 Analysis of project

Overall, the results show that the new program is performing well. Given that 2013 was a hybrid year, with 8 separate programs running from January to May and the new program implemented on June 1, the annual numbers for Blue Box tonnages are encouraging and can be expected to exceed our goal in the next year. Participation in the Blue Box program is up from 80% in 2012 to 95%. Green Bin participation is also much higher than expected, having risen to 79% from 36% in 2012.

Having not measured the performance of communications before, the results for these metrics are interesting. The number of incoming calls, website visits and handouts at events serve to establish a baseline. It should be noted that the number of incoming calls is likely underestimated.

Downloads of the Smartphone app were much lower than expected, but have experienced significant growth recently, likely a result of winter weather and holiday interruptions. About one third of the app users have reminders set and nearly all have registered for push notifications. With a focused campaign on the smartphone app planned for 2014, we expect to see a large increase in the number of downloads.

Social media (Facebook and Twitter) have performed well in the past year and the number of “likes” and “follows” continues to grow. Whereas subscribers to the email newsletter have remained fairly static since it’s beginning, with nearly equal numbers of subscribers and unsubscribers.

### 3.3 Key Lessons

There were some key lessons learned from the transition in 2013. The most notable was the realization that the key message(s) will often be the only message that is received and understood by individuals. Leading up to June 1, our advertisements focused on the key message that a “New Waste Program Starts June 1”. Every newspaper ad, billboard, mobile sign, etc., contained this message in big bold letters. Meanwhile, nearly every article about the transition in waste services that were being run by the press had the key message that clear bags would be required as of June 1 in the headline. While other

details of the program were often included in the articles and included whenever possible in communications from Waste Services, it became apparent that many people did not take in the whole message. Appendix A shows one of the full page ads that ran in the paper leading up to June 1<sup>st</sup>. It became apparent from the number of calls that were received during the first couple weeks of the program, that many people missed the fact that their collection day may change, or missed the ad all together.

In short, we learned that if there is a message that the public needs to have, in this case because it will affect their daily schedule, then that message needs to be in big bold letters. Communicating that there is a change may not be enough. In the future, we will ask ourselves “if a resident only reads the headline, is that enough?” or “is it intriguing enough to convince them to read a little more?”



The other key takeaway from the transition in 2013, has been to help people help themselves by putting the information where they want to see it. The dissemination of our communications has proven to be very comprehensive, with robust information in print, digital and mobile sources. This is augmented with timely reminders on the website, social media, email newsletters and the smartphone app.

To summarize, when communicating an important program change it is important to make sure the information is communicated through as many mediums as possible and that if a person only sees the headlines, they will have enough information to participate.

## Appendix A: Newspaper Ad “New Waste Program Starts June 1, 2013”

# NEW WASTE PROGRAM STARTS JUNE 1, 2013

**COLLECTION DAYS**

- MONDAY
- TUESDAY
- WEDNESDAY
- THURSDAY

*With new collection routes, it is important to have your waste at the curb by 7 a.m. on the morning of your scheduled collection.*

*June 1 marks the start of a new curbside collection program in Dufferin County. Keep in mind that starting June 1:*

- Blue Boxes, Green Bins and garbage will be collected every week.
- Your current municipal bag limit will remain in effect and be converted to a weekly limit (as opposed to a bi-weekly or yearly limit) where applicable.
- Your collection day may change (see map).
- Yard waste will now be collected in rural areas on a call-in basis.
- Bulky items and white goods will be collected on a monthly call-in basis for a fee.
- Clear bags will be required for garbage. Each clear bag can contain two small opaque “privacy” bags and garbage can be placed at the curb in a container, if desired.

**If you'd like a free sample and coupon for clear garbage bags, contact Dufferin County Waste Services.**

*detail of Orangeville*

**The Waste Services Guide, with full details about the new program, has been mailed to all households. If you did not receive yours, please contact Dufferin County Waste Services.**

**MY WASTE** *Managing your household waste in Dufferin County just got easier!*

Download the ‘my-waste’ app and never again lose track of your collection day. Find out the proper way to get rid of hundreds of materials, learn the locations, dates and times of special collection events, and much more.

Download the ‘my-waste’ app from your favourite App Store.

**It's FREE!**

Available on the App Store

ANDROID APP ON Google play

Contact Dufferin County Waste Services for more information.  
[dufferincounty.ca/waste](http://dufferincounty.ca/waste) | [dufferinwaste@dufferincounty.ca](mailto:dufferinwaste@dufferincounty.ca) | 519.941.2816 ext. 2620 | Sign up for the Dufferin Waste Bulletin e-Newsletter at [eepurl.com/vf2Fv](http://eepurl.com/vf2Fv)

Space provided through a partnership between industry and Ontario municipalities to support waste diversion programs.