



**Correspondence regarding
City of Toronto request
for quotation
call # 6033-14-3092**

Attention: Mary Ann Morgan

June 6, 2014

Mary Ann Morgan
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen St. W.
17th Floor, West Tower
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Mary Ann Morgan,

CUPE Local 416 represents 6,800 workers in the City of Toronto, who proudly and competently deliver a variety of services such as water operations, parks maintenance, and solid waste collection. Currently, Local 416 members deliver solid waste collection in the two eastern districts of the City – Districts 3 and 4 (or D3 and D4). The City's private provider Green for Life (GFL) delivers the service in the western districts – Districts 1 and 2 (or D1 and D2). The recent decision to again tender the D1 service and continue private sector delivery provides an opportunity to reflect on what privatized collection looks like and if benefits are truly realized. Given this development, the Local wanted to convey information it has been tracking as to performance of the contractor GFL and also to ask the department why a return to publicly delivering the service was not considered.

In both D1 and D2, GFL has a questionable record in terms of its service levels and the savings achieved by the City. Local 416 believes that the most accountable and cost-effective way to deliver services is through public management and oversight. Regarding the provision of critical services such as solid waste collection, there is more to consider than just cost. Local 416 will highlight several issues, which we urge the purchasing and materials management department to consider prior to moving ahead with the continued use of private contractors in D1.

The following sections will deal with the issue of true cost savings to the City; health and safety matters as they relate to vehicle operation; and finally the service issues present in the western half of the City. Finally, the Local provides an overview of concerns which pervade the solid waste industry. We trust this information will be received and considered in the evaluation of bids for the D1 contract.

Cost Savings

Evidence has shown (Appendix A) that in many cases the contracting out and privatization of public services can result in higher costs, lower service performance and even increased levels of risk exposure for the City. Original cost saving claims for the GFL District 2 contract purported to save approximately \$11 million per year.¹ However,

2013 City budget documents and documents gained through access to information requests have shown this not to be the case. This was first reported in 2013 budget deliberations: City staff stated total savings over 2012 and 2013 was \$11.2 million; \$6.1 million in 2012 and just over \$5 million in 2013.ⁱⁱ

Local 416 has also been receiving information from the City through freedom of information (FOI) requests. Based on those requests we have received a great deal of information on the District 1 and 2 solid waste contracts. In examining this we calculated data based on figures from invoices (for Contract #47016587ⁱⁱⁱ) for a one-year period (September 2012-2013). The total paid to GFL by the City in that period is \$22,527,581.80. When you factor out 13% for HST (\$2,928,585.63), we are left with \$19,598,996.17¹. The City's RFQ (#6033-11-3186) identifies in Section 19.2 that the total estimated price per year in D2 must be under \$25,975,030.00 to meet the cost savings requirement. The difference between the amount paid to GFL and the cost savings requirement is \$6,376,033.83.

The \$25.9 million dollar figure identified by the City is the most appropriate number in which to measure savings for D2. The Local acknowledges that Toronto's Auditor General identifies a different savings to the City in D2; however, this was a comparison to the City-delivered service in D2 in 2011 and not the threshold established by the City. It is clear that, when City's numbers are used, savings are about half of what was expected. This leaves us with a key question: if costs escalate over time, how long before GFL eclipses the \$25.9 contract threshold?

The key differences between the Local's and Auditor General's numbers are summarized in the Table below (more detailed charts are included in Appendix B):

	CUPE Analysis based on Toronto cost savings requirement	Toronto Auditor General analysis based on 2011 service delivery
Invoice totals – year 1 D2 collection	\$19,598,996.17	\$19,000,000.00
Baseline measure	<i>City RFQ:</i> \$25,975,030.00	<i>2011 actual City service cost:</i> \$27,500,000.00
Difference – savings totals	\$6,376,033.83	\$8,500,000.00

Note: this is a service-to-service delivery comparison; the Auditor General's calculations of City fleet reserve contributions and monitoring costs are not included. If these items are included, the conclusion of potential recurring cost savings rises to \$10.8 million per year according to the Auditor General.

¹ This figure is close to one of the scenarios demonstrated by Al Rosen and Associates, which was released to Council and the public prior to taking the final decision to contracting out; that report warned there was not enough evidence to continue with the contracting out.

Health & Safety – CVOR

Second, we wish to raise the concern of health and safety and vehicle operation. It recently surfaced that current contractor GFL's commercial vehicle operating rating (CVOR), which is required to be at a satisfactory rating, fell to conditional. When compared to three key competitors in the Table^{iv} below, GFL holds far and away the worst rating (Appendix C):

Selected Companies	Safety Rating	Safety Violation Rate
GFL Environmental Inc.	Conditional	76.2%
BFI Canada Inc.	Satisfactory	28.3%
Miller Waste Systems Inc.	Satisfactory- Unaudited	38.1%
Waste Management of Canada Corporation	Satisfactory	40.3%

In Section 11.28 of the D2 RFQ the City mandates a satisfactory rating operators; moreover this section contains a provision for termination of the contract if the rating is not achieved. It should also be noted that, when GFL challenged the province's ruling on their rating in court, it was detailed only 0.6% of operators had a safety violation rating over 70%.^v GFL is an outlier when compared not only to operators in the industry and the City, but in the province.

The City of Toronto's safety violation rate is 55.8%. The Toronto solid waste vehicles make up about two-thirds (or 61%) of City vehicles under evaluation for the rating.^{vi} This is higher than some of the aforementioned contractors, but within the acceptable limits.

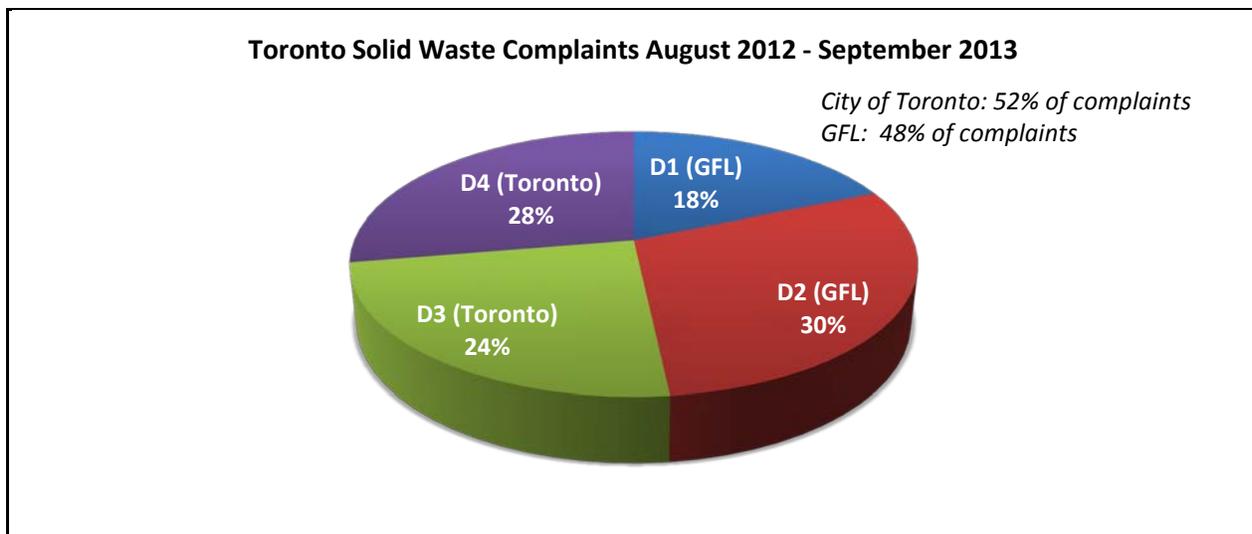
Service Issues

Third, the Local wants to review the number of service issues that have been present during the GFL period in both D1 and D2. City workers aim to provide the highest levels of service and we expect the same from our contractors. More and more we are learning that the contracting out of solid waste in the City of Toronto has not resulted in the outcomes which Council and residents expected. The issue of what kind of service Toronto residents are receiving needs to be examined more closely.

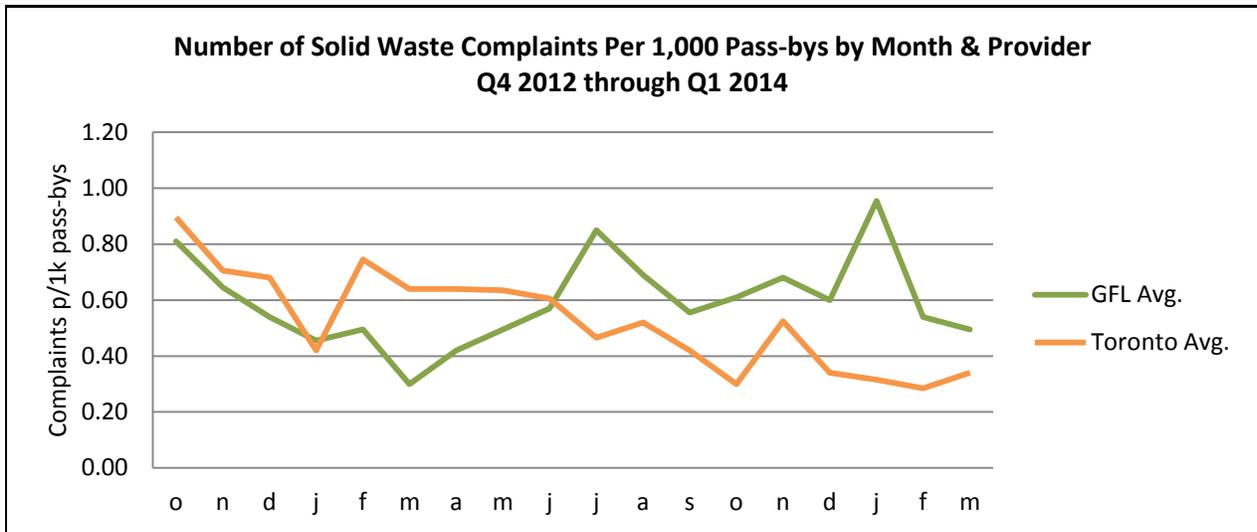
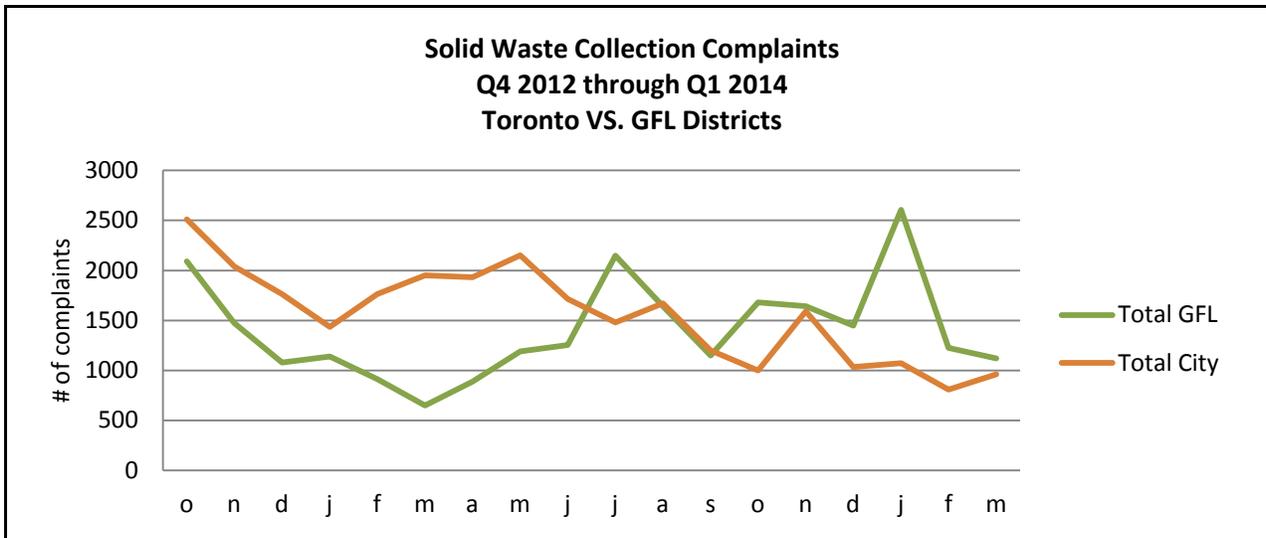
The most recent quarterly solid waste collections report examined service responses, or complaints, city-wide. The City of Toronto collections operations in Districts 3 and 4 have shown a remarkable improvement when compared to the same quarter in 2013. However, the performance of the contractor in Districts 1 and 2 has gone in the opposite direction during the same period. The data below shows complaints fell by 7.23% in District 3 and by an impressive 63% in District 4; conversely, GFL complaints increased by 55.6% in District 1 and by a staggering 117.2% in District 2. Put another way, when the total amount of complaints is examined city-wide, GFL was responsible for 64% of complaints and the public City service, only 36%.

Solid Waste Collection Service Requests by District									
2013/2014 First Quarter Comparison									
2013 Q1					2014 Q1				% Percent Change +/-
Jan	Feb	Mar	Total	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total		
D1	635	464	391	1490	1206	579	534	2319	55.6
D2	505	450	258	1213	1399	648	588	2635	117.2
D3	187	788	712	1687	450	552	563	1565	-7.2
D4	1250	976	1238	3464	624	256	399	1279	-63.0

There has been some public discourse, that publicly delivered operations were performing much worse than the private contractors. When the year-long period is examined from the GFL takeover of D2 in August 2012 (August 2012 to September 2013), the difference between the two service providers is negligible. When total complaints for the period are examined, the City Districts of 3 and 4 were responsible for 52% of complaints versus the contractors 48%. Moreover, the City has shown improvement, while the contractor has performed worse. The following chart demonstrates the total complaints in this period.



This data raises further questions, given the decision by the Solid Waste Department to re-tender the District 1 contract away from existing provider GFL. In answer to the recent Council meeting's Administrative Inquiry, it was acknowledged that increasing complaints were a factor in the decision.^{vii} When examined over a longer period, the differences between the public service and private become more pronounced. The following charts examine performance by both parties – Toronto and GFL – from the final Quarter of 2012 through the end of the first Quarter of this year. Both measures are detailed, total complaints and the 1,000 pass-by measure, the ratio used by the Toronto Solid Waste Department. It should be noted that the worst performing months by the contractor are factored out.



NOTE: Calculated using reports to the Public Works Committee.

Service issues have not been confined solely to District 1. The Auditor General’s report which went to Council in February 2014, found that, in District 2, the contractor had a 4.9% deficiency rate, or 887 late finishes, for completing routes on time. This rate was calculated excluding the initial month of GFL District 2 service, and the period after the July 2013 storm. GFL is also allowed a later finishing time of 6:00pm, whereas finishing time in the rest of the City is at 5:00pm. The Auditor General also notes that, late finishes would escalate to over 3,000, or 16.7% of the time, if the 5:00pm threshold was applied in District 2.^{viii}

Toronto is not the only municipality to experience issues with the contractor. This past winter, York Region Councillors and residents expressed frustration over GFL service. The northern six municipalities – Aurora, Newmarket, Whitchurch-Stouffville, King, East Gwillimbury, and Georgina – all experienced a high volume of complaints, in part due to malfunctioning trucks, which led some councillors to consider penalties up to and including cancellation of their contract with GFL.

This was not the first time there were collection issues in the region; in King, Council have “frequently voiced complaints”. One councillor called the issues, which began in November 2013 a “crisis”.^{ix} In Stouffville, communication with the contractor was so bad that Councillor Richard Bartley commented, “It was really disturbing the lack of communication between the staff at GFL, they basically unplugged their phone lines and left our staff and residents out to dry. This is unacceptable.”^x (Appendix D)

Not to single out Greater Toronto or GFL, it is worth noting that, in 2013, the City of Ottawa fined the company Waste Management \$33,000 for collection service issues in the Kanata and Stittsville regions of the city. Councillor Shad Qadri noted, “My residents have all had different issues, especially with leaf and yard waste pickup. Sometimes it wasn’t picked up at all, and finally on the insistence of the city they were forced to come back.”^{xi}

The Private Solid Waste Industry

The contract solid waste collection, processing and landfill business is a competitive field, with both small regional operators and North American giants. By its nature, solid waste collection and processing is a business that has a great deal of sensitivity and scrutiny attached to it; a wide variety of environmental, health and safety, and service requirements are some of its many considerations. In addition, waste diversion managing and reducing our solid waste output are municipal and provincial goals. This level of scrutiny has brought to light a number of unsettling stories about the private solid waste industry; these have resulted in allegations, litigation, and disputes across North America.

The City is responsible for contracting with the best possible companies when outsourcing service provision. The following examples should be considered as part of any privatization decision:

- BFI Canada, a company that was disqualified from D2 bidding in 2011, was fined \$150,000 in 2011 for a violation of the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA), for an incident in 2009 in which a workers foot was run over by a collection truck. The company was found guilty of “...failing to provide information, instruction and supervision to the worker with respect to safe operating procedures for mobile waste collection.”^{xii}
- Wasteco was fined \$85,000 following a worker fatality in 2009. The company plead guilty “...under the OHSA of failing as an employer to provide information, instruction and supervision to protect the health and safety of a worker.”^{xiii}
- Waste Management of Canada was fined \$85,000 under OHSA when a worker broke their arm on an unguarded machine in 2008.^{xiv} Waste Management in the United States was recently indicted by a federal grand jury on 13 counts charging company management with multiple felonies, including alleged violations of the Clean Water Act, Environmental Protection Agency, and making

false statements to the Hawaii Department of Health. The allegations stem from an incident in which 7.5 million gallons of medical waste, contaminated water, toxic soil, fecal matter, and garbage emptied into the ocean from Oahu's Waimanalo Gulch Sanitary Landfill.^{xv}

Regarding Toronto's experience with GFL, there are two key additional points to consider. First, the Auditor General noted that fines have yet to be levied against the contractor for service issues. In the Auditor General's report a recommendation was made concerning damages in the contract. This issue must be followed up and publicly reported.

Second, GFL and the City are embroiled in a legal dispute on another contract. The City is being sued by GFL for \$3.7 million on a project connected to construction for the Pan-Am Games.^{xvi} Local 416 members have concerns that this litigation is indicative of private-sector practices in the industry and that the City is being exposed to unnecessary risk by continuing to have private collection.

Members of CUPE Local 416 members understand they have been subject to scrutiny and complaint as well; however, the City can more effectively address and manage these concerns. The aforementioned evidence details a troubling pattern of behaviour in private waste collection. The municipality's stakeholders are its own residents in their own neighbourhoods but private companies must answer to their investors and owners. The motivations to provide high-quality service could not be starker – a municipality's interests include investment in communities, whereas a private company's is first and foremost to look after its investors. Decisions that have the potential to expose the City to risk should ultimately be made by our politicians and staff, who know our communities best and are accountable to them.

We call on the City to slow down and consider these additional factors. It is too risky to continue with privatized solid waste collection. More debate and examination could continue at the Public Works Committee in the winter of 2015, when a new Council and Committee will already be examining further privatization and contracting out. Given that outcome of the election may chart a new-course for the City and its solid waste service, we ask that this tender be withdrawn and the service be brought back in-house. If the next Council and Committee decide to continue with a private operator in D1 at that point, the tender could be re-issued.

Thank you,



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Vice-President Local 416
Toronto Civic Employees' Union
Tel: 416-968-7721
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copy: Victor Tryl, Director, City of Toronto, Purchasing and Materials Management Department

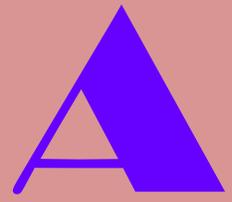
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- ⁱ <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/private-garbage-trucks-start-collecting-west-of-yonge-1.1268128>
- ⁱⁱ City of Toronto. City Budget 2013; Solid Waste Management Services Operating Budget Analyst Notes; pages 11/12. Available at: http://www1.toronto.ca/staticfiles/static_files/budget/2013/pdf/op13_swms.pdf
- ⁱⁱⁱ Confirmed by purchasing and the last FOI as D2.
- ^{iv} Ministry of Transportation records.
- ^v GFL Environmental Inc. v. Registrar of Motor Vehicles, 2014 ONSC 2728 (CanLII), <<http://canlii.ca/t/g6q5f>> retrieved on 2014-05-27
- ^{vi} City of Toronto Staff Report. *Green for Life Commercial Vehicle Operator Registration Safety Rating Downgrade*. TO: PWIC; DATE: May 13, 2014. Ref. no.: P\2014\ClusterB\SWM\May\009PW (AFS #19659).
- ^{vii} City of Toronto Clerk response to Council Administrative Inquiry. *Administrative Inquiry Regarding Curbside Collection for District 1 (Former Etobicoke)*. May 1, 2014
- ^{viii} Toronto Auditor General Report. *Solid Waste Management Services – District 2 Curbside Collection Contract Review of Cost Savings and Opportunities for Improving Contract Monitoring*. January 16, 2014.
- ^{ix} Riedner, Heidi. *GFL may be one left at curb if politicians decide to scrap garbage contract; Company faces penalties, cancellation of waste contract; The mayors and CAOs of Georgina, East Gwillimbury, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Newmarket, Aurora and King met Thursday to take a closer look at the contract and pool their collective concerns*. YorkRegion.com; Jan 17, 2014. From: <http://www.yorkregion.com/news-story/4321423-gfl-may-be-one-left-at-curb-if-politicians-decide-to-scrap-garbage-contract>
- ^x Bolan, Sandra. *Angry Stouffville councillors demand answers from waste firm; Hargrave wanted contract trashed*. Stouffville Sun-Tribune; Jan. 15, 2014. From: <http://www.yorkregion.com/news-story/4317141-angry-stouffville-councillors-demand-answers-from-waste-firm>
- ^{xi} Sherring, Susan. *Municipal miracle; City council gets tough on trash by fining Waste Management for not providing proper service*. The Ottawa Sun; News. Pg. 3; Thursday June 27, 2013.
- ^{xii} Government of Ontario News Release. <http://news.ontario.ca/mol/en/2011/11/bfi-canada-inc-fined-150000-after-worker-injured.html>
- ^{xiii} Government of Ontario News Release. <http://news.ontario.ca/archive/en/2009/04/20/Court-Bulletin-Wasteco-fined-85000-after-worker-dies.html>
- ^{xiv} Government of Ontario News Release. <http://news.ontario.ca/archive/en/2008/11/26/Court-Bulletin-Waste-Management-of-Canada-Corporation-fined-85000-after-worker-i.html>
- ^{xv} Hawaii Reporter. *Waste Management of Hawaii, Principals, Indicted on Violations of Clean Water Act, Making False Statements*. Thursday May 1, 2014.
- ^{xvi} Powell, Betsy. *Trash firm sues city over site work; Company that collects half of Toronto's garbage demands extra \$3.7M for Aquatic Centre job*. Toronto Star; Greater Toronto. Pg. GT2; Thursday October 17, 2013.

APPENDIX

TAB:

- A. CUPE National Solid Waste Fact Sheet
- B. City of Toronto District 2 GFL Invoices September 2012 - 2013
- C. Selected Companies Solid Waste CVOR Safety Violation Rates
- D. Media articles

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QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICES YOU CAN COUNT ON



Create clean, green cities



Municipal solid waste services are fundamental to the quality of life in our communities, to our health, our environmental future and the appearance of our cities and towns.

The challenge now is to continue to reduce the amount of residential waste we create, and to capture the value of any waste created as another public resource. Another critical challenge is to extend waste reduction and recycling practices to all of commercial and industrial activity. We cannot keep digging and filling up holes with our garbage, or releasing toxins from its disposal into our air and water.

In order to meet these challenges, it is vital that municipalities retain accountability, flexibility and control over their solid waste services. When services are delivered publicly they are efficient, more committed to service and environmental sustainability, and more accountable to the public.

As provincial governments consider Extended Producer Responsibility as a way to make the private sector more responsible for final disposal of waste they introduce into the system, it is critical for municipal governments to retain control over waste collection and recycling. Companies must take responsibility for excess packaging and other waste by supporting comprehensive local recycling programs, but only publicly controlled and delivered programs will put the public interest first.

The introduction of industry-specific programs would reverse progress that public systems have made in diverting waste from landfill, creating a fragmented approach that takes resources away from effective public diversion programs. Stronger waste reduction, reuse and recycling programs aimed at private industry should support, not undermine, effective universally accessible public systems.

Reputable studies conclude that solid waste services delivered by municipal employees are comparable in cost and efficiency to privately contracted services. There is no consistent evidence showing that contracted-out private sector waste collection is less costly and more efficient than waste collection provided by public employees. This is confirmed by recent experience across Canada.

Sherbrooke, Quebec

The City of Sherbrooke announced in March 2011 that it was bringing garbage collection services in house, saving the city \$750,000 annually. Successful recycling and composting programs enable the city to reduce garbage collection to once every two weeks and its own employees can take over the service with the addition of one new employee and one new truck. Prior to this, city workers collected garbage in the city core only while private contractors handled the outlying areas.

Ottawa, Ontario

In 2006 the City of Ottawa brought solid waste services back in house in one of its six "zones". Each year the public service has been more efficient. Ottawa's Auditor General reported in February 2011 that an independent auditor's report found that the in-house services had saved more than \$5 million in four years.

In a February 2010 report to the city's planning and environment committee, Ottawa's auditor attributed the savings from using public employees to "route optimization, managing labour costs and the benefits of a new fleet [reduced maintenance costs]." The auditor reported that overall financial performance "reflects continued operational efficiencies, and the productivity

of dedicated and experienced staff.” In November 2011, the city renewed the first in-house contract, and voted to bring a second zone back in house.

Port Moody, B.C.

In 2009, the City of Port Moody brought solid waste and recycling services back in house after 10 years of private provision. The contractor missed pick-ups every week and provided such poor service that the city sent municipal employees out to clean up their mess. Two years later, the city's in-house waste collection won Port Moody a 2011 Solid Waste Association of North America Award of Excellence. The bronze award “recognizes outstanding solid waste reduction programs,” in this case for a communications project to change public attitudes about recycling. The city credits its staff as “recycling ambassadors” for getting the word out.

Conception Bay South, Newfoundland and Labrador

After 30 years of using a private contractor, the Town of Conception Bay South has decided to bring its residential garbage collection services in house. The town is going to provide the service using its own workers, on a five-year trial basis.

Hamilton, Ontario

Since amalgamation in 2000, City of Hamilton employees have collected garbage in half the city, and a private contractor in the other half. The city's in-house operation has consistently been more economically efficient than the contractor's, even though city employees serve the older downtown core. An April 2011 report to the Public Works Committee confirmed that publicly-delivered solid waste services cost \$1.15 less per household than the private service.

Contracting out garbage services means municipalities lose control and flexibility for implementing new waste diversion programs like recycling and composting. Contractors earn more money collecting and disposing of more garbage, not less.

Let's keep solid waste services public for clean, green cities and quality services we can depend on.



CUPE | Canadian Union
of Public Employees

B

City of Toronto District 2 GFL Invoices September 2012 - 2013

<i>September 2012</i>				Total Invoice (incl. HST)
Solid Waste Type	Amount Collected	Cost p/Unit	Total Cost	
Waste	4582.26	90.49	414,648.71	
Recycle	4018.95	90.49	363,674.79	
Yard Waste	1449.38	104.98	152,155.91	
Organics	3852.29	90.49	348,593.72	
White Goods/Bulk	391.67	723.27	283,283.21	
				\$1,765,462.66
<i>October 2012</i>				Total Invoice (incl. HST)
Solid Waste Type	Amount Collected	Cost p/Unit	Total Cost	
Waste	5133.46	90.49	464,526.84	
Recycle	4665.39	90.49	422,171.19	
Yard Waste	2990.42	104.98	313,934.17	
Organics	3600.15	90.49	325,777.75	
White Goods/Bulk	410.43	723.27	296,851.76	
				\$2,060,285.73
<i>November 2012</i>				Total Invoice (incl. HST)
Solid Waste Type	Amount Collected	Cost p/Unit	Total Cost	
Waste	4902.21	90.49	443,600.91	
Recycle	4781.79	90.49	432,704.18	
Yard Waste	6390.6	104.98	670,885.25	
Organics	3525.14	90.49	318,990.21	
White Goods/Bulk	414.56	723.27	299,838.83	
				\$2,447,601.90
<i>December 2012</i>				Total Invoice (incl. HST)
Solid Waste Type	Amount Collected	Cost p/Unit	Total Cost	
Waste	4166.64	90.49	377,039.19	
Recycle	4309.57	90.49	389,973.08	
Yard Waste	672.13	104.98	70,560.23	
Organics	3046.84	90.49	275,708.64	
White Goods/Bulk	315.76	723.27	228,379.77	
				\$1,516,076.83
<i>January 2013</i>				Total Invoice (incl. HST)
Solid Waste Type	Amount Collected	Cost p/Unit	Total Cost	
Waste	4929.4			
Recycle	4688.87			
Christmas Tree	302.54			
Organics	3652.54			
White Goods/Bulk	329.78			
				\$1,622,394.71

City of Toronto District 2 GFL Invoices September 2012 - 2013

February 2013				Total Invoice (incl. HST)
Solid Waste Type	Amount Collected	Cost p/Unit	Total Cost	
Waste	3711.81			
Recycle	3646.94			
Organics	2932.84			
White Goods/Bulk	205.54			
				\$1,220,339.95
March 2013				Total Invoice (incl. HST)
Solid Waste Type	Amount Collected	Cost p/Unit	Total Cost	
Waste	4178.79			
Recycle	3894.72			
Organics	3289.1			
White Goods/Bulk	285.27			
YardWaste	71.77			
				\$1,398,420.21
April 2013				Total Invoice (incl. HST)
Solid Waste Type	Amount Collected	Cost p/Unit	Total Cost	
Waste	4898.2			
Recycle	4247.39			
Organics	3538.22			
YardWaste	1624.7			
White Goods/Bulk	110.38			
				\$1,579,913.50
May 2013				Total Invoice (incl. HST)
Solid Waste Type	Amount Collected	Cost p/Unit	Total Cost	
Waste	6263.65			
Recycle	4927.16			
Organics	4060.37			
White Goods/Bulk	125.8			
Yard Waste	3147.91			
				\$2,035,733.79
June 2013				Total Invoice (incl. HST)
Solid Waste Type	Amount Collected	Cost p/Unit	Total Cost	
Waste	5542			
SSRM Recycle	4290.98			
SSQ Source Seperate Organics	3293.9			
DGMS Durable Goods	110.14			
YardWaste	2111.19			
				\$1,674,645.64

City of Toronto District 2 GFL Invoices September 2012 - 2013

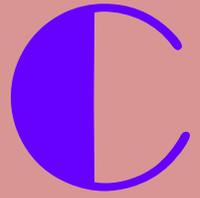
July 2013				Total Invoice (incl. HST)
Solid Waste Type	Amount Collected	Cost p/Unit	Total Cost	
Waste	6533.26			
SSRM Recycle	4521.89			
SSO Source Seperate Organics	3739.08			
DGMS Durable Goods	156.88			
YardWaste	2063.86			
				\$1,895,812.32

August 2013				Total Invoice (incl. HST)
Solid Waste Type	Amount Collected	Cost p/Unit	Total Cost	
Waste	5813.01			
SSRM Recycle	4204.35			
SSO Source Seperate Organics	3725.28			
DGMS Durable Goods	137.21			
DGMS Alternate Stream	7.24			
Yard Waste	1564.82			
				\$1,708,924.59

September 2013				Total Invoice (incl. HST)
Solid Waste Type	Amount Collected	Cost p/Unit	Total Cost	
Waste	5409.28			
SSRM Recycle	4091.49			
SSO Source Seperate Organics	3496.18			
DGMS (Durable Goods)	123.22			
YardWaste	1452.25			
				\$1,601,969.97

* NOTE: Where they do not appear the 2013 invoice unit & total costs were redacted in documents received through Freedom of Information.

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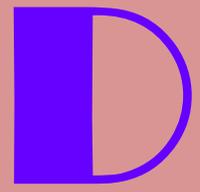


Selected Companies Solid Waste CVOR Safety Violation Rates

Company	Certificate Expiry Date	Fleet Size	Total KMs	Safety Rating	Safety Violation Rate	Collisions	Convictions	Number Safety Inspections	COMMENTS
GFL Environmental	2015 09 21	692	17,632,000	Conditional	76.2%	271	71	150	Ministry Warning Letter 2012/09/23
BFI Canada	2015 10 20	575	50,200,000	Satisfactory	28.3%	147	84	142	Ministry Warning Letter 2013/01/31
Miller Waste Systems	2014 05 26	490	14,812,000	Satisfactory-Unaudited	38.1%	152	23	42	Ministry Warning Letter 2013/10/24
Waste Management of Canada	2015 02 07	775	21,931,000	Satisfactory	40.3%	153	46	122	Ministry Warning Letter 2012/08/30
Torcan Waste Management	2014 09 14	22	771,600	Satisfactory-Unaudited	35.1%	6	6	7	Ministry Warning Letter 2013/12/20
Southern Sanitation	2015 09 23	143	6,420,000	Satisfactory	53.9%	59	19	45	Ministry Warning Letter 2012/12/13

Note: Original records in author's file

cope491:djk



LORINC: Garbage in, garbage out

MAY 12, 2014 | BY JOHN LORINC



JOHN LORINC

<http://spacing.ca/toronto/2011/12/19/lorinc-acceleration-and-other-myths-about-life-in-the-fast-lane/feature-lorinc/#main>

It's easy to forget, after the landslide of (political) crud unleashed by the brothers Ford, that our chief magistrate's checkered mayoral career traces its beginnings to the 2009 garbage strike, and his strident pledge to outsource collection as a means of breaking the union. Ford exploited the public's unhappiness about that lengthy job action, and, in what is really the most substantial achievement of his term, succeeded in privatizing collection west of Yonge Street, with the promise of more.

So it's fascinating and ironic that in the dying days of Ford's term, the winning contractor – a well capitalized and extremely territorial outfit called [Green For Life Environmental](http://gflenv.com) (<http://gflenv.com>), which won the multi-year contract with a low-ball bid

[\(http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/toronto/winning-bidder-for-toronto-garbage-contract-no-stranger-to-controversy/article559012/\)](http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/toronto/winning-bidder-for-toronto-garbage-contract-no-stranger-to-controversy/article559012/) – is doing its best to show that privatization, in practice, is hardly the panacea that Ford et al promised.

At public works committee tomorrow, staff will table quarterly complaints figures (<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2014.PW31.3>) showing that GFL's operations in District 1 (Etobicoke/York) have the poorest record as measured by service requests per thousand pass-bys of all four regions across the city (GFL has the balance of the west of Yonge section, known as District 2; CUPE Local 416 still has districts 3 and 4, east of Yonge). By contrast, the CUPE crews that work Scarborough last quarter registered the fewest complaints.

The District 1 contract — which has been in place since 2007, held first by Turtle Island and then GFL — was frequently held up as an example of how the private sector gives better service. Despite the rhetoric, it has been performing increasingly poorly in the past two years, as this works department chart indicates (<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2013/pw/bgrd/backgroundfile-63553.pdf>) [PDF].

Indeed, as works staff explained to an administrative inquiry by Councillor Mike Layton, the city has decided not to extend GFL's contract when it expires in 2015, and instead re-tender the deal in part because of increasing complaints.

The spotty track record is merely the latest, um, strike against GFL: before the company won the City deal, its waste management group had run into trouble in other jurisdictions, including Hamilton and Kawartha Lakes, while the company's clean fill/excavation division has attracted complaints and regulatory reprimands (<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/toronto/tainted-soil-lands-on-pickering-farm/article547534/>) east of the GTA.

This past winter, municipal politicians in six northern York Region municipalities took GFL to task after its trucks failed to collect the garbage during a bad-weather run in December. As one Whitchurch-Stouffville councillor told a YorkRegion.com reporter (<http://www.yorkregion.com/news-story/4317141-angry-stouffville-councillors-demand-answers-from-waste-firm>): “It was really disturbing the lack of communication between the staff at GFL, they basically unplugged their phone lines and left our staff and residents out to dry.” GFL CEO Patrick Dovigi had to appear at one council meeting to show his contrition.

Toronto hasn't run into those sorts of problems. But I've wondered in recent years whether the complaints metrics, which helped scotch the District 1 contract, provide an accurate performance gauge, or if it merely disguises other practices.

Residents complain mainly for two reasons: one, the collection is late; two, that their garbage wasn't removed (the myth of the surly city worker is just that). My own non-scientific observation in my (west-of-Yonge) neighbourhood is that homeowners increasingly put out more and more stuff on garbage day, secure in the knowledge that the GFL trucks will haul off all the excess trash, with or without a bag tag (in the interests of full disclosure, mea culpa).

Works officials claim they monitor the private contractors for compliance with the city's [garbage/diversion policies \(http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vgnextoid=6dad433112b02410VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD\)](http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vgnextoid=6dad433112b02410VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD). But if I'm a GFL supervisor and I want to keep my service request numbers down (and my bonus up), I'd certainly tell my crews to pick up everything; they have all sorts of specific financial incentives to disregard the bag-tag rules, and none to observe them. (Likewise, homeowners.)

Even potentially more problematic for GFL is a recent [Ontario superior court decision \(http://www.canlii.org/en/on/onscdc/doc/2014/2014onsc2728/2014onsc2728.html\)](http://www.canlii.org/en/on/onscdc/doc/2014/2014onsc2728/2014onsc2728.html) that dismissed an attempt by the company to quash a vehicle safety downgrade by the Ontario Registrar of Motor Vehicles (ORMV).

Last year, according to the judgment, GFL's vehicle safety violation rate nosed above the 70% rate, meriting a downgrading of the ORMV rating from "satisfactory" to "conditional." As the ruling points out, "the vast majority of Ontario's nearly 55,000 [commercial vehicle operator registration (CVOR) certificate] holders have overall violation rates of 70% or less. 95.6% of holders have safety ratings equal to or below 35%. Only 0.6% of operators have an overall violation rate of over 70%." Which is to say, GFL was in pretty shabby company.

Instead of complying with a public safety regulator, the firm tried to get that order set aside. Why? Because, as the city's contract with GFL states, "The loss by the Contractor of its certification renders the Contractor unable to perform the work under this Contract and shall constitute default under the Contract. The City of Toronto may terminate the Contract and find a replacement contractor."

That GFL took to the courts to reverse the ORMV's order hints at its sense of desperation; after all, losing Canada's largest municipal waste management contract because of unsafe trucks – translation: accidents with other vehicles or pedestrians, and all the associated scandal and litigation – would be nothing less than a reputational disaster for an acquisitive company on such a steep growth trajectory.

Council last week asked deputy city manager John Livey to explain to the works committee tomorrow what's being done about the safety downgrade.

City officials, no less than Ford and the other council conservatives who pushed for the privatization, are heavily invested in the success of the out-sourced garbage collection project. So I'm not expecting Livey to tell the committee that the city should punt GFL, even though it could do just that (as the contract stipulates, the city "may" terminate, not "shall" terminate).

Yet no one can hide from the seriousness of this turn of events: after all the rhetoric about the private sector and service quality, the fact is that GFL, a flesh-and-blood company, hasn't had the good sense to adhere to the terms of its agreement, either because of poor management or outright greed.

Homeowners, of course, aren't going to get exercised about any of this stuff: the problems with the GFL contract are infinitely more subtle – for now, anyway – than blunt force of a strike, and all the attendant inconvenience. Still, what Toronto taxpayers should understand, the next time the privatization salesmen come a callin', is that these deals are invariably tidier on paper than they are in reality.

photo by Kevin Steele (<https://flic.kr/p/2tPhK>)

GFL takes turn in hot seat

Stouffville Sun-Tribune

There was no apology, but Green For Life Environmental (GFL) officials admitted this morning to Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville councillors there was a communication failure between them, town staff and residents late last year when green and blue bin collection was disrupted.

GFL representatives were asked by Mayor Wayne Emmerson to make a presentation to councillors because "I thought it was time we talked directly to the man in charge".

Only two members of the public were in attendance. They were not allowed to ask questions.

Patrick Dovigi, GFL founder and president, along with Brian Kent, vice-president of the company's solid waste and recycling division, both noted they were not aware of Whitchurch-Stouffville's collection problems in the aftermath of the ice storm and subsequent deep freeze, until it was too late. They said the area manager failed to tell them of the service problems he and his crews were experiencing.

"There's been a failure on your behalf to meet those (contract) standards and its been an ongoing basis," Councillor Phil Bannon told Mr. Dovigi and Mr. Kent. "You're going to have to suffer the consequences down the road."

Unlike other councillors who thanked the pair from GFL for coming before council to provide insight on what happened and what the plan is going forward, Rob Hargrave instead said he appreciated their appearance and then asked them, on a scale of one to 10, how much they appreciated the municipality's business.

"We value everybody's business as a 10," Mr. Dovigi said. "All we have is our reputation ... everybody has forgotten about the last six years."

On one of the coldest days on record in the GTA, collection was cancelled in the so-called N6 — York Region's six northern municipalities.

It was a decision made early Tuesday, Jan. 7 between GFL officials and the northern six waste management representative.

"Trucks had already left town when I found out," Paul Whitehouse, director of public works for the municipality told The Sun-Tribune.

This was not the first time collection was cancelled due to weather. In early 2013, GFL and its northern six waste collection representatives agreed to suspend collection for one day due to snow, Mr. Whitehouse told The Sun-Tribune.

He said promises from GFL this past December and January that collection would be done on a particular day, then didn't, led to much of the frustration felt by town staff and residents.

"The communication between GFL and us went south," Mr. Whitehouse told The Sun-Tribune.

Mr. Dovigi noted moving forward, communication between his staff and town employees will improve. A back-up generator will be installed later this month in order to avoid a repeat of the four days the company was without phone service in December.

Meanwhile, Mr. Hargrave hopes community goodwill will be part of GFL's future plans, since fining the company does nothing for the inconvenienced residents, he said.

"We did our best. Sometimes your best isn't enough," Mr. Dovigi told The Sun-Tribune following his meeting with council.



Patrick Dovigi, GFL founder and president, addressed Stouffville council this morning over disrupted green and blue bin collection.

Waste collection back on track

Newmarket Era

Waste collection is back to normal in northern York Region.

Green For Life, the waste collection contractor for the area, reports its regular pick up service is fully restored, following a month of weather-related service disruptions.

"There's a commitment on behalf of GFL to provide an action plan that will bring the service levels back to that which we can rightfully expect," Newmarket Mayor Tony Van Bynen said.

The mayors and CAOs of Georgina, East Gwillimbury, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Newmarket, Aurora and King met last week to take a closer look at the GFL contract.

However, there were a few more service blips.

Aurora and Whitchurch-Stouffville extended their Christmas tree collection periods, while a regular collection route was missed along Riddell Court in Newmarket Friday.

The Riddell waste was picked up Monday afternoon.

"It's totally unacceptable," Riddell resident John Kamin said, noting his green bin and blue boxes were placed curbside early Friday morning. "We haven't had a regular pick up in three or four weeks. I've lived in Newmarket for 17 years and I've never had garbage service on this level."

The route was accidentally skipped, Mr. Van Bynen said.

"From time to time, things can get missed," Mr. Van Bynen said, noting there are 26,000 households in Newmarket. "It's how well we respond. It's good to see these items have been resolved."

In Georgina, GFL committed to doing an extra tree collection run to search for trees that may have been buried in snow.

Aurora will run a special yard waste pick up next week to deal with tree branch debris caused by last month's ice storm.

GFL blames the ice storm, heavy snowfall and extremely cold temperatures for the bulk of the problems, including driver injuries and vehicle breakdowns.

Increased collection volume from the holiday season and GFL staff turnover also contributed to the backlog.

— with files from Simon Martin, Heidi Riedner and Sandra Bolan



GFL may be one left at curb if politicians decide to scrap garbage contract

Company faces penalties, cancellation of waste contract

YorkRegion.com

The private waste and recycling company responsible for picking up your trash may be the one left at the curb if politicians decide their level of service hasn't been up to par.

But if penalties are levelled against the company for not meeting contractual obligations, residents won't see direct compensation.

Apologies and assurances from GFL Environmental Corp.'s district manager Craig Nelson for delays in garbage and recycling pick up in recent weeks may not be enough to stave off penalties or a cancellation of the private company's contract with the northern six municipalities.

The mayors and CAOs of Georgina, East Gwillimbury, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Newmarket, Aurora and King met Thursday to take a closer look at the contract and pool their collective concerns.

Excuses issued on behalf of the company — including malfunctioning trucks and decreased staff due to the weather — didn't carry much weight with Georgina Mayor Rob Grossi.

"Our constituents have great compassion for outside workers and the kind of work that they do on a daily basis ... and this has nothing to do with their performance of their duties on those kind of days," he said during a review of the matter at council Wednesday.

"To try to use that as a crutch relative to these discussions and the contract is not acceptable," he added.

The mayors and CAOs will have to make decisions moving forward regarding penalties, restitution and a potential cancellation of the company's contract if it is determined GFL has not lived up to its terms.

"They have broken many of the conditions of the contract and the ball is now in our court," Mr. Grossi said, adding GFL has been playing a "juggling game" regarding service capability.

The review by council follows suit in neighbouring municipalities after special meetings were called by councils in Aurora, Newmarket and Whitchurch-Stouffville after residents flooded customer service departments with complaints their garbage wasn't picked up.

GFL representatives apologized for the recent service delays earlier in the week at Newmarket council and told members it had taken several steps to address the issues, such as hiring several mechanics and placing more efficient collection trucks in its fleet.

Waste collection in Georgina, however, wasn't back on schedule as promised for this week despite assurances from GFL, said Ward 3 Councillor Dave Szollosy.

While financial penalties may be imposed against GFL, those won't translate to any direct reimbursement to residents, said CAO Winanne Grant, in response to Ward 1 Councillor Phil Craig, who asked if residents would receive a reduction in property taxes or financial compensation.

Financial compensation would be incorporated in the overall tax levy, Ms Grant said.

Recent collection delays aren't the first issue to crop up with GFL since it took over the 10-year service contract negotiated with Turtle Island Recycling Corporation in 2011.

Aurora councillors expressed concerns not only with delays, but also GFL's overall performance.

The Township of King has frequently voiced its displeasure with the level of service from GF, prompting Ward 4 Councillor Bill Cober to call the waste management situation "a crisis" in November.

— with files from Simon Martin



GFL crews were playing catch up to try and clear the backlog of household waste, still uncollected in parts of northern York Region. Here, a truck makes its way through the Bayview Avenue and Hollandview Trail area in Aurora.

Angry Stouffville councillors demand answers from waste firm

Hargrave wanted contract trashed

Stouffville Sun-Tribune

Apparently Green for Life Environment Corp. - Waste Management's phones, along with its collection trucks, experienced mechanical issues over the past month as they would not take or return calls from Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville officials, Mayor Wayne Emmerson and Councillor Rob Hargrave told The Sun-Tribune this week.

"It was really disturbing the lack of communication between the staff at GFL, they basically unplugged their phone lines and left our staff and residents out to dry. This is unacceptable," Councillor Richard Bartley told The Sun-Tribune via e-mail.

Mr. Hargrave wants GFL's contract terminated and for Whitchurch-Stouffville to break away from the N6 (York Region's northern six municipalities) agreement currently in place for waste collection services so it can hire its own contractor.

"You can't do a bulk buy and get all the efficiencies," he told The Sun-Tribune.

Miller Waste was the municipality's collection contractor from 1999 to 2007. In 2007, the N6 (Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Newmarket, Whitchurch-Stouffville) banded together on waste collection services and awarded Turtle Island the contract. GFL purchased Turtle Island in 2011.

Mr. Hargrave, who was against the contract switch from the beginning, saw Miller going about its collection duties in Peterborough on one of the coldest days.

In late November/early December town staff were alerted to collection issues as its customer service department started receiving a disproportionate number of calls related to missed collections, according to a Jan. 14 council report.

"I'm not saying it's an essential service but it's critical to have our garbage picked up in a timely manner," Mr. Hargrave said.

About 423 calls were fielded by town staff on Jan. 2 and 3 and another 1,017 from Jan. 6 to 9 regarding the lack of blue box and green bin collection, according to the report.

"Our staff took the brunt of the blame and the complaints and they didn't deserve it," Councillor Phil Bannon told The Sun-Tribune.

"It hijacked my entire week," Councillor Ken Ferdinands told The Sun-Tribune of the roughly 75 calls he received last week from his constituents in northwest Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Mr. Bannon and Mr. Hargrave both noted their frustration, not just because their blue box and green bins sat curbside for days, but because of the lack of information GFL representatives provided town staff.

Wards 1, 2 and 6 were among the hardest hit, according to Mr. Hargrave.

"Just tell them they're going to be a day late and they'd be OK with that," Mr. Emmerson told The Sun-Tribune. "I'm hoping GFL will come through and make the adjustments and apologize."

A GFL rep apologized to Newmarket councillors earlier this week. However, one councillor refused to accept it.

"GFL is a national company. You expect me to buy this story?" Joe Sponga said, addressing GFL representatives. "You're making money on my back. It's private industry. I shouldn't feel sorry for you. Get your act together and pick up the garbage like you agreed to do."

For unknown reasons, it appears as though the N6 may have been among GFL's most poorly treated customers.

Other GFL clients, such as Northumberland County and the City of Toronto, experienced only minor delays in their collection service, according to the council report.

Despite Mr. Hargrave's wish to have GFL's contract deemed null and void, town staff recommended against it because they continue to work with all those involved to raise the service level back to contractual standards, according to the council report.

Replacing GFL would take 18 to 24 months due to the complexity of the tender, final contract terms and the need for a competitive bidding process, according to the report.

Staff also noted that "any hastily conceived course of action could affect the level of service even further".

But that does not mean their hands are tied.



A GFL truck clears some of the curbside waste backlog in northern York Region last weekend.

Among the options outlined in the contract pertaining to GFL's failure to complete services, municipalities can assess liquidated damages for every non-performance episode. Each incident carries a specific dollar value that can be levied against GFL, according to the council report.

"What's that going to do for residents?" Mr. Hargrave said.

For now, the plan is to review the contract performance in conjunction with the other N6 municipalities; identify any other expenses incurred by the town resulting from GFL service deficiencies and examine whether or not routes in Whitchurch-Stouffville should be shortened and more trucks added.

GFL officials did not return calls before our deadline.

A special council meeting regarding GFL has tentatively been scheduled for Feb. 4, 9:30 a.m. in council chambers, 111 Sandiford Dr.

with files from Chris Simon

York Region's northern municipalities not satisfied with trash collection

Georgina Advocate

A lot of trash talk this past week has led the northern six municipalities to re-examine their contract with GFL Environmental Corp.

Georgina is the latest town to voice displeasure over the level of service being provided, highlighted by several pick-up delays during last week's storm.

"I can tell you that we've been handling a very large volume of calls and that we are taking this situation extremely seriously and that it is now a contractual issue," Georgina's communications manager Marcus Cooper said.

Similar to many other municipalities, curbside garbage collection in Georgina by contractor Green for Life (GFL) was delayed due to extreme weather conditions.

On the heels of recycling pickup by GFL in Stouffville and Newmarket being delayed due to malfunctioning trucks, weather delays and a decreased number of staff, garbage pick-up in Georgina was cancelled Jan. 7.

The town's 10-year contract with GFL was added to this week's council meeting agenda to address recent problems.

Wednesday's upcoming discussion comes only days after special meetings were called by councils in Aurora and Whitchurch-Souffville after residents flooded customer service departments with complaints their garbage was not picked up.

Aurora councillors expressed concerns not only with delays, but also the overall service GFL has exhibited during the past few weeks.

Aurora Mayor Geoff Dawe confirmed York Region's northern six group — which includes Georgina, Whitchurch-Stouffville, King and Newmarket — is going to take a look at the contract during the next couple of weeks.

Garbage delays experienced last week are not the first issue to crop up with GFL since it took over the 10-year service contract negotiated with Turtle Island Recycling Corporation in 2011.

King Township has voiced its displeasure on several occasions about the level of service from GFL.

In November, Ward 4 Councillor Bill Cober said the problem was so bad that "our waste management situation is a crisis".

Contracting solid waste and recycling collection services as a joint initiative, the northern six was able to achieve an annual savings of approximately \$800,000 per year.

While service delivery continued uninterrupted during Dec. 23, 2011 to Feb. 28, 2012 as GFL implemented new management and operating structures, recent problems have prompted a review of the contract to ensure service levels continue to be met and residents aren't kicked to the curb, and left there, with their garbage.

— with files from Simon Martin and Sandra Bolan



Crews were out Saturday to try and clear the backlog of household waste still uncollected in parts of northern York Region.

Waste contractor apologizes for poor Newmarket service

Newmarket Era

They're sorry.

Representatives of Green For Life, the waste collection contractor for Newmarket and several other municipalities in the Greater Toronto Area, have apologized for the company's oft-delayed local service over the last month.

The statement was made to Newmarket council members during a committee meeting last night.

"I wish we could have done something to improve the collections," GFL Environmental Corp. district manager Craig Nelson said. "It's something we're not used to. We understand there are issues with our collection. It's being looked at very seriously."

Newmarket is one of several local municipalities that has experienced delays in collection over the last few weeks.

Aurora council has asked for an immediate review of its collection contract, while Whitchurch-Stouffville councillors met this morning to debate the issue.

GFL blames last month's ice storm, heavy snowfall and recent extremely cold temperatures for the bulk of the problems. The weather caused driver injuries and vehicle breakdowns for the company.

Increased collection volume from the holiday season and GFL staff turnover also contributed to the backlog.

Everyone appreciates there were unique weather events, Councillor Chris Emanuel said, but these issues go back much further.

Councillor Joe Sponga refused to accept the apology.

"GFL is a national company. You expect me to buy this story?" he said, addressing GFL representatives. "You're making money on my back. It's private industry. I shouldn't feel sorry for you. Get your act together and pick up the garbage like you agreed to do."

The company has held the contract since 2012, after it purchased the previous provider, Turtle Island. Notable issues started surfacing in April 2013, when GFL missed yard waste collection dates.

However, Newmarket has received a "disproportionate" number of collection complaints since November.

That includes 750 during the first full week of January, public works services director Christopher Kalimootoo said in a report to council.

"Most of the complaints were for missed green and blue bin collection, as garbage pickup was near normal levels," he said.

Delays in collection have caused great confusion, frustration and anger with residents, councillors and staff, he said.

Council is expected to ask staff to review the GFL contract next week. If councillors proceed as planned, staff will determine if there is any legal recourse the town can take against GFL to recover losses associated with the collection slowdown.

GFL has taken several steps to address the issues, such as hiring several mechanics, adding a new collection route in Newmarket and placing more efficient collection trucks in its fleet.

Company representatives also pledge to improve communication with the town, so residents can be alerted to potential problems earlier.

The company will also issue a letter of apology through local media.

The extent of damage, in terms of the town's relationship with residents, is quite significant, Mayor Tony Van Bynen said, noting it's good to hear there's an action plan going forward.

— with files from Simon Martin



Garbage, recycling pickup delayed due to company issues

Monday, Tuesday pickups expected Wednesday, Jan. 8

Georgina Advocate

Wondering why your garbage is still at the end of your driveway?

Join the club.

Like many other municipalities, curbside garbage collection in Georgina by contractor Green for Life (GFL) was delayed due to extreme weather conditions.

On the heels of recycling pickup by GFL in Whitchurch-Stouffville and Newmarket being delayed due to malfunctioning trucks, weather delays and a decreased number of staff, garbage pick-up in Georgina was cancelled Tuesday, Jan. 7.

Any outstanding Monday collections, combined with Tuesday pick-ups, have been rescheduled for Wednesday, according to the town.

For residents with normal collection days on Wednesday or Thursday, garbage will be picked up one day after their normal collection day.

Residents are being asked to ensure their items are curbside by 7 a.m., including any Christmas trees.

GFL took over garbage collection in York Region's northern six municipalities after purchasing the former contract holder, Turtle Island, in December 2011.

For more information, visit the town's website at georgina.ca.

GFL can be reached at 1-866-421-5625.

Extreme cold stifles blue box collection again

This week's schedule pushed back a day, too

Stouffville Sun-Tribune

How cold is it?

Cold enough to cancel all school bus routes across York Region, including Whitchurch-Stouffville, today.

Whitchurch-Stouffville Fire and Emergency Services reported nothing out of the ordinary.

But blue box and green bin collection is once again delayed by the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville's contractor GFL Environmental because of the extreme cold temperatures.

Residents who were to have their recycling and compost picked up last Thursday, Friday or Saturday were to have them collected today, according to the latest media release supplied by the town.

Those items were expected to be collected yesterday.

Regular blue box and green bin pick up for this week has now been pushed back a day.

For example, if your collection day is normally today, it will be Wednesday. Friday's regular collection date will be Saturday, according to the media release.

All items need to be curbside by 7 a.m.

"In the event of non-collection please leave materials at the curb and crews will retrieve them as soon as possible," stated the town media release.

Residents are asked to not place receptacles on top of snowbanks as collection crews cannot climb them. Bins are to be left in the driveway until picked up.

Christmas tree collection scheduled for yesterday has also been delayed.

"Residents are advised to keep them at the curb until collected," Maria Schembri, town spokesperson told The Sun-Tribune via e-mail.



John MacKinnon makes his way across Main Street, at the Market street intersection. He said the cold doesn't bother him because he wore appropriate clothing.



Fareen Harji and her akita Nalla take a leisurely walk up Byer's Pond Way Tuesday.

Stouffville Weathers the Cold

Recycling boxes and green bins await pickup in Stouffville this week. Collection was delayed in several York Region communities.

Stouffville Weathers the Cold

This was a cute colourful scene on Park Drive. But, there would be no riding this or any bike today, even if the Christmas lights were turned on.

Stouffville Weathers the Cold

As if it weren't obvious, there is no ice skating (or polar bear dips for that matter) at the Stouffville Conservation Area.

Perfect storm delays recycling pickup in Whitchurch-Stouffville

Weather, staffing, trucks to blame: town

Stouffville Sun-Tribune

Malfunctioning trucks, weather delays and a decreased number of staff are why your recycling is still sitting at the end of your driveway.

But it will be collected by the end of today, according to Maria Schembri, spokesperson for the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

In order to do so, additional resources were called in by the contractor, Green for Life (GFL), according to Ms Schembri, who did not know if taxpayers would be on the hook to pay for the extra help or not.

Problems with GFL started a couple of weeks ago when, for the same reasons, garbage collection was delayed, according to Ms Schembri.

"As far as we've been advised, garbage collection is up to date," she said.

People took to Twitter last week to voice their frustration and to find answers. But the town account was silent on the matter. The first official town tweet regarding recycling pick up was posted around 10 a.m. today.

"All missed recycling pick-up will be collected today. Please ensure all items are at the curb. Thanks for your patience #TownofWS".

Councillor Phil Bannon sent out an e-mail blast about the delay and its effect on snow-clearing yesterday, telling residents their recyclables would be picked up by today.

"Social media didn't get out as fast as it should have," Ms Schembri said. "It is a new venture in social media for us and we're learning."

But when it comes to information regarding issues such as delayed garbage and recycling collection, residents should go to the town's website first, not Twitter, Ms Schembri said, adding notice of the problem was posted there prior to the holidays.

"We do want to apologize for the inconvenience and thank residents for their co-operation and patience," she said.

Residents are reminded to place garbage and recycling containers at the end of their driveway, not on top of snowbanks or in the street.

GFL took over garbage collection in York Region's northern six municipalities after purchasing the former contract holder, Turtle Island, in December 2011.

All of the other municipalities experienced recent collection issues, Ms Schembri said.

To contact GFL for more information, call 1-866-421-5625.

The 2014 waste collection calendar has been mailed to residents. It's also available online.

Additional Source Documentation — York Region.com

GFL takes turn in hot seat — Feb. 4, 2014

<http://www.yorkregion.com/news-story/4350582-gfl-takes-turn-in-hot-seat>

Waste collection back on track — Jan. 22, 2014

<http://www.yorkregion.com/news-story/4328655-waste-collection-back-on-track>

GFL may be one left at curb if politicians decide to scrap garbage contract — Jan. 17, 2014

<http://www.yorkregion.com/news-story/4321423-gfl-may-be-one-left-at-curb-if-politicians-decide-to-scrap-garbage-contract>

Angry Stouffville councillors demand answers from waste firm — Jan. 15, 2014

<http://www.yorkregion.com/news-story/4317141-angry-stouffville-councillors-demand-answers-from-waste-firm>

York Region's northern municipalities not satisfied with trash collection — Jan. 14, 2014

<http://www.yorkregion.com/news-story/4314483-york-region-s-northern-municipalities-not-satisfied-with-trash-collection>

Waste contractor apologized for poor Newmarket service — Jan. 14, 2014

<http://www.yorkregion.com/news-story/4314708-waste-contractor-apologizes-for-poor-newmarket-service>

Garbage, recycling pickup delayed due to company issues — Jan 7, 2014

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