

Strategy to Reduce Litter and Cigarette Butt Litter

Date:	March 26, 2014
To:	Public Works and Infrastructure Committee
From:	General Manager, Solid Waste Management Services
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	P:\2014\Cluster B\SWM\April\004PW (AFS#18852)

SUMMARY

The purpose of this staff report is to report back to the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee on the implementation of strategies to reduce litter City-Wide. Current litter reduction strategies include interdivisional collaboration on focused communications and joint initiatives such as inclusion of litter reduction messaging in new smoking By-law literature.

This report also discusses targeted cigarette butt litter reduction strategies including a pilot project on the effectiveness of decals to highlight cigarette butt receptacles on litter bins. This project will be jointly undertaken by both Transportation Services and Solid Waste Management Services in spring/summer 2014.

An overview of the enforcement of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 548, Littering and Dumping of Refuse is provided in the report. Future Inter-Divisional Litter Working Group initiatives include a review of Chapter 548 to identify potential amendments to further support litter reduction.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Solid Waste Management Services, recommends that:

1. The Public Works and Infrastructure Committee receive this report for information.

Financial Impact

This report has no financial impacts.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on March 19, 2013, the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee, Item PW21.12 entitled “Littering Issues” requested the General Manager, Solid Waste Management Services, the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, the General Manager, Transportation Services, in consultation with Municipal Licensing and Standards Division, to report back to the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee by the end of 2013 on a strategy to reduce cigarette butt litter in Toronto. The General Manager, Solid Waste Management Services was also requested at this meeting to review and make recommendations, as appropriate, on the City’s current initiatives to increase community engagement and discourage littering in the City of Toronto year-round.

The Public Works and Infrastructure Committee Decision document can be viewed at: <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.PW21.12>

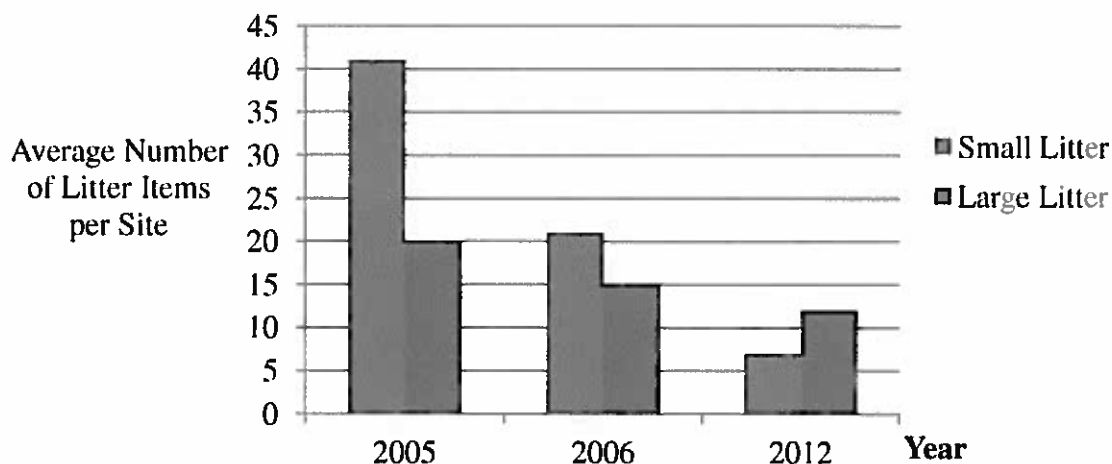
At its meeting on November 20, 2013, the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee, Item PW27.6 entitled “Strategy to Reduce Litter in the City of Toronto” requested the Deputy City Manager, Cluster B, to report back to the April 9, 2014 Public Works and Infrastructure Committee meeting on the progress made on the implementation of litter reduction strategies, a review of the litter By-law and effective enforcement of the By-law, feasibility of installation of cigarette butt receptacles at bars and restaurants, requesting the Province to consider financial tools to target cigarette butt litter and a cigarette butt recycling program.

The Public Works and Infrastructure Committee Decision document can be viewed at: <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.PW27.6>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Solid Waste Management Services undertook City-wide litter audits in 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2012 to measure the extent and composition of litter in City-maintained public space. Results from the 2012 litter audit show a reduction in the quantity of litter items in both the large and small litter categories, compared to previous years. There was a 21% decrease and 67% decrease in the quantity of large and small litter respectively from 2006 to 2012. In addition, Table 1 shows a decrease in the average number of large and small litter items per audit site in 2005, 2006 and 2012. However, in 2012, there was a 3% increase (19% to 22%) in the quantity of miscellaneous paper found in the large litter category. The largest component of the small litter category was cigarette butts (31%). To continue supporting City-wide litter reduction, a Multi-Divisional Litter Working Group was established in 2013. The Group’s objective is to strengthen the City’s litter reduction strategies and identify new opportunities for joint initiatives, including a focus on cigarette butt litter.

Table 1 - 2005, 2006, 2012 Litter Audit Results



Litter in the City of Toronto is managed by several City Divisions including Solid Waste Management Services, Municipal Licensing and Standards, Transportation Services and Economic Development and Culture. These Divisions participate together in a Multi-Divisional Litter Working Group to address City-wide litter concerns and work together to deliver litter abatement services and programs. Services and programs include:

- The management of litter in public spaces including sidewalks and roadways;
- Maintenance and servicing of public use litter and recycling bins (along the streetscape and in parks); and
- Participation in annual inter-divisional spring cleanups and various community cleanup events.

The Multi-Divisional Litter Working Group has committed to meet regularly throughout the year to share updates on pilot projects, any new initiatives and education campaigns that target litter and cigarette butt litter reduction. The formation of the group allows for better coordination of divisional resources and efforts, and facilitates regular communication between Divisions to identify new opportunities for joint litter and cigarette butt litter reduction initiatives.

COMMENTS

Progress Made on the Implementation of Litter Reduction Strategies

Multi-Stakeholder Engagement

In January 2014, the Multi-Divisional Litter Working Group invited the founder of the Litter Prevention Program to discuss strategies to target cigarette butt litter. The founder provided an overview of the Litter Prevention Program's current work targeting cigarette butt litter in Toronto. Highlights of the update to staff included efforts to engage cigarette manufacturers to promote and distribute personal cigarette butt containers to smokers and to provide and install permanent cigarette butt receptacles in Business Improvement Areas. The Litter Prevention Group has offered communication space in their weekly e-newsletter publication entitled, "Litterland" to the Multi-Divisional Litter Working Group to promote the City's litter reduction strategy. A communication piece that highlights the Transportation Services' cigarette butt ashtray decal pilot on street litter and recycling bins is scheduled to be included in their e-newsletter cover in April and May 2014.

Focussed Communication and Public Education

A coordinated and comprehensive message on litter reduction by the City and partnerships with external organizations (such as Litter Prevention Program and TerraCycle Inc.) that share a mutual concern for litter reduction will further support the City's aim to target litter and cigarette butt litter.

Currently, information to raise public awareness regarding the impact of litter and cigarette butt litter on the environment is being presented on the City's website and communicated through several Divisions' web pages and environmental programs such as Live Green Toronto.

To raise the profile of the impacts of litter, Solid Waste Management Services' website includes litter audits results and information on pilot projects. Solid Waste Management Services will also be introducing a communication and education campaign in Spring 2014 to promote litter reduction in the City.

The Multi-Divisional Litter Working Group is considering the introduction of additional dedicated web pages to communicate the new smoking By-law. The target audience for these web pages will be owner/operators for restaurants, bars, other commercial establishments and Business Improvement Areas that will include information packages to promote cigarette butt litter reduction messaging.

Work with Solid Waste Management Services staff and the Environment and Energy Division to review opportunities for Live Green Toronto Volunteers to raise public awareness on litter at City events, festivals and parades is currently under review. For example, Live Green Toronto Volunteers could promote making the event litter free through the use of visual aids such as banners or additional signage to highlight waste and recycling stations at the events.

Enforcement of the Litter By-law

Toronto Municipal Code (refer to the following link) [Chapter 548, Littering and Dumping of Refuse](#), prohibits the littering and depositing of refuse and dumping of waste. The by-law specifies the responsibilities of land owners to immediately clean and clear any refuse on their property, drain any collection of water or liquid deemed to be a health hazard, and take measures to prevent ponding and further accumulation. It also contains provisions around notice issuance, actions which may be taken by the City where a land owner fails to comply with a notice served – including recovery of expenses, and what constitutes an offence as well as applicable fines for those convicted.

Littering, which includes improper disposal of a cigarette butt onto City or private property, is a chargeable offence under Chapter 548, Littering and Dumping of Refuse, § 548-3 Littering and depositing refuse prohibited. The charge carries a fine of \$365.00 (\$300.00 plus a victim surcharge of \$65.00). Enforcement of the by-law is carried out by the Municipal Licensing and Standards Division, with Municipal Standards Officers having the ability to issue a Certificate of Offence (i.e. Part I, the Ticket) to individuals caught littering.

In practice, however, there are challenges with enforcing the by-law. A Municipal Standards Officer must witness an individual committing the act and issue a ticket at the time of action. For the purpose of accurate ticket issuance, individuals caught littering are also requested to provide identification, though there is no requirement that individuals must supply it. Municipal Standards Officers are often unable to obtain valid identification, which remains essential to issuing a charge to someone violating the by-law.

As one of the Inter-Divisional Litter Working Group initiatives, Solid Waste Management Services and Municipal Licensing and Standards will be conducting a comprehensive review of Municipal Code Chapter 548, Littering and Dumping of Refuse. The review will include an evaluation of relevant City by-laws, consultation with stakeholders, and a jurisdictional scan of municipalities. A resulting report will be presented back to the appropriate standing Committee with any amendment recommendations that further support litter reduction and enforcement. The consultation will include engagement with City of Toronto businesses and Business Improvement Areas.

Municipal Licensing and Standards is also reviewing the potential for the creation of targeted litter reduction educational material to be provided to businesses at the time of business licence issuance or renewal. The information material will include communications on the businesses responsibility with respect to Municipal Code Chapter 548, Littering and Dumping of Refuse.

Targeted Strategy for Cigarette Butt Litter

Promotion of new smoking By-law and anti-littering message

In December 2013, Toronto City Council endorsed changes to Municipal Code Chapter 709-Smoking and Chapter 608-Parks that expand smoking restrictions in public places. These changes now prohibit smoking within 9 metres of building entrances and exits, sports fields, certain parks amenities, ferry docks and some service lines, and at swimming beaches. Toronto Public Health is coordinating communication and enforcement activities to support these changes, in collaboration with Municipal Licensing and Standards Division and Parks, Forestry and Recreation.

Toronto Public Health and Solid Waste Management Services have partnered to co-promote information on smoking restrictions and cigarette butt litter. Anti-littering messages to curb a potential increase in cigarette butt litter will be included on:

- New 'No Smoking' By-law 709 signage for City buildings (refer to Appendix A attached– No Smoking Signage);
- The Toronto Public Health website, including links between their site and Solid Waste Management Services' site;
- In communications to building owners and property management companies; and
- Information that Toronto Public Health enforcement staff patrolling parks can distribute.

Toronto Public Health expects to evaluate the impact of the By-law changes in the future and anticipates including observations of cigarette butt litter in that process. This should complement litter audit activities done by Solid Waste Management Services or other Divisions.

Installation of Cigarette Butt Receptacles in Business Improvement Areas

As part of the Harmonized Street Furniture program, the City of Toronto has in place over 6,000 litter and recycling bins with dedicated receptacles to capture cigarette butts. The bins are located along major streets and roadways that experience high volumes of pedestrian traffic. The Multi-Divisional Litter Working Group has recognized that there may be further potential to reduce cigarette butt litter through the introduction of additional cigarette butt receptacles in high litter areas such as near bars and restaurants.

To discuss litter prevention opportunities in Business Improvement Areas, Economic Development and Culture invited the Litter Prevention Program group to speak to the Business Improvement Area Interdivisional Working Group about a pilot project to install ashtrays near bars and restaurants. The Litter Prevention Program group promoted a Cigarette Litter Prevention Program (to be funded through Keep America Beautiful, www.kab.org) and sought Business Improvement Area volunteers to participate in the program. In response to the proposal, Business Improvement Area representatives have requested the Litter Prevention Program group to provide complete information packages to share with their members.

Cigarette Butt Receptacle Decal Pilot

Transportation Services piloted sticker decals on street litter and recycling bins to draw attention to the cigarette butt receptacle. The decal was placed on 200 street litter bins in three business improvement areas including the Financial District, Kensington Market and the Entertainment District. Transportation Services, with assistance from Solid Waste Management Services, will be conducting a spring audit (when pedestrian traffic is expected to increase) to determine the effectiveness of the decal. The audit data will help staff determine if it is beneficial to expand the use of the decal to more litter and recycling bins.

Cigarette Butt Recycling Program

In December 2013, Solid Waste Management Services staff met with TerraCycle Inc. representatives to discuss opportunities for initiating a cigarette butt recycling pilot and the potential for an extended producer responsibility system that would have cigarette butt manufacturers help fund the cost of cleanup and management of cigarettes butts and the associated packaging. Solid Waste Management Services staff, with cooperation from TerraCycle Inc., is currently investigating the processing methods used to recycle the cigarette butts in order to verify that the processes in place would be considered waste diversion.

Extended Producer Responsibility

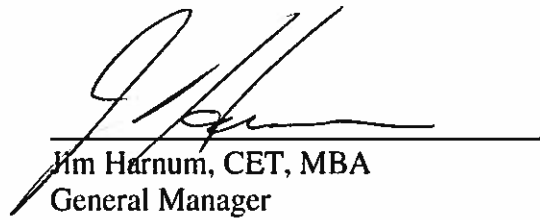
Solid Waste Management Services has sent a formal request to Ontario Minister of the Environment, Jim Bradley, (Appendix B attached) to consider the feasibility of introducing financial tools with a focus on extended producer responsibility to target cigarette butt litter. The letter requests the Province to give consideration to implementing a fee for cigarette manufacturers to help offset the costs incurred by the City for the cleanup of cigarette butt litter including costs of emptying cigarette butt receptacles in street litter bins. Collected fees could also be used to cover costs of public anti-littering education campaigns, signage in public spaces, cleanup and disposal of this waste material.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE



Jim Harnum, CET, MBA
General Manager
Solid Waste Management Services

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A – No Smoking Signage

Appendix B – Letter to Jim Bradley, Ontario Minister of Environment dated March 6, 2014

No Smoking within 9 metres of Building Entrance or Exit



Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 709

Please don't litter cigarette butts



John Lively, Deputy City Manager

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March 6, 2014

The Honourable Jim Bradley
Minister of the Environment
77 Wellesley Street West
11th Floor, Ferguson Block
Toronto, ON M7A 2T5

Dear Minister Bradley,

Re: Cigarette Butt Litter Reduction in the City of Toronto

The City of Toronto prides itself on being a clean city and has seen a reduction in litter over the last several years, yet litter, particularly cigarette butts, remains an area of concern. A 2012 litter audit found that the percentage of cigarette butts more than doubled, making cigarette butts the largest component of small litter at 31%.

Littered cigarette butts are problematic as they contain toxic substances that adversely affect wildlife, fish and the environment as well public health and quality of life. In an effort to reduce these adverse effects, the City of Toronto devotes significant time and money to removing cigarette butts from public spaces. It is estimated that the City of Toronto spends annually hundreds of thousands of dollars for the cleanup and removal of cigarette butt litter.

The City of Toronto has many initiatives to discourage cigarette butt littering including:

- Public promotion and education campaigns;
- Annual spring litter cleanup events that involve the participation of thousands of City of Toronto staff, residents, community groups, school and businesses;
- Street litter bins with cigarette butt receptacles and a pilot project of adding decals to increase visibility; and
- Increasing the number of litter bins (from 6,000 to over 12,000) over the next 14 years; and
- Establishment of an Inter-Divisional Working Group to improve coordination between divisions and strengthen existing anti-litter initiatives.



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HOST CITY



Littering, which includes improper disposal of a cigarette butt, in the City of Toronto is a ticketable offence under Municipal Chapter Code 548 – Littering and Dumping Refuse (By-law 1066-2009) and carries a fine of up to \$365. However, there are challenges in enforcing and issuing fines for butt littering.

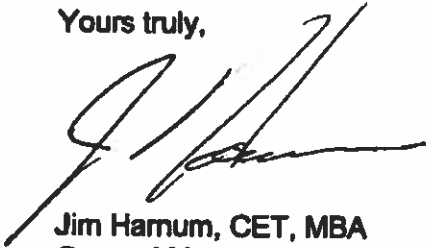
All of the above noted current initiatives and planned strategies to reduce cigarette butt litter require financial investments by the City of Toronto. This is in addition to the City of Toronto's ongoing costs of removing cigarette butt litter and emptying cigarette butt receptacles in street litter bins.

In November 20, 2013, the City of Toronto, Public Works and Infrastructure Committee, reviewed Solid Waste Management Services litter reduction initiatives and strategies to specifically target the reduction of cigarette butt litter. As part of this review, the Committee requested that the Solid Waste Management Services explore the feasibility of the provincial government implementing a fee for cigarette manufacturers to cover the costs of cigarette butt cleanup.

In accordance with the November 20, 2013, City of Toronto, Public Works and Infrastructure Committee Report PW27.6 – Strategy to Reduce Litter in the City of Toronto, we ask that you consider under the *Waste Diversion Act, 2002*, or any other related legislation, the introduction of steward fees for cigarette producers/manufacturers/first importers to cover the costs of cigarette butt management, including public education, signage, cleanup and disposal.

We look forward to receiving a prompt response and to working with your Ministry to develop an innovative and effective solution.

Yours truly,



Jim Hamum, CET, MBA
General Manager
Solid Waste Management Services

JM/vs/B

Copy to: Vincent Sferrazza, Director, Policy, Planning & Support, Solid Waste Management Services
Robert Orpin, Director, Solid Waste Collections, Solid Waste Management Services
Annette Synowiec, Acting Manager, Waste Management Planning, Solid Waste Management Services