

From: "Johnston, Sadhu" <Sadhu.Johnston@vancouver.ca>
To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"
CC: "City Manager's Correspondence Group - DL"
Date: 5/28/2020 11:55:31 AM
Subject: Response to Councillor Enquiry: Local Zero Waste facilities

Dear Mayor and Council,

We received a Councillor question regarding the recent closure of London Drugs recycling centre and Local Zero Waste Facilities. Below is the response from staff:

Question:

Recently London Drugs announced that their [What's the Green Deal Recycling Centres would be closing to the public \[greendeal.ca\]](#) in response to COVID-19. With five locations in the downtown peninsula alone I'm hearing from folks who valued it as a resource for recycling items otherwise not covered by curbside and MURB programs, like flexible packaging and soft plastics, appliances, styrofoam, batteries and assorted. For reference: In 2018 London Drugs diverted 12 million pounds of waste from landfills including 1 million pounds of plastic (across all their stores and 32 recycling centres).

For a free recycling option London Drugs has shown some great corporate responsibility, but the community's reliance on a private enterprise to meet our zero waste aspirations points to a flaw - especially where urban populations can't necessarily make it to the public Zero Waste centre at Kent and Yukon. Do we have an ability to run small pop-up recycling centres in civic owned facilities (like community centres)? The London Drugs model seems to have a pretty small and clean footprint.

Answer:

London Drugs closed their recycling centres in March due to COVID concerns. At this point we are not certain when or if they will re-establish their programs. The materials that they were accepting are all accepted at the Zero Waste Centre.

As part of our restart program we have been considering re-launching the community drop off events where we accept electronics, textiles and a wide variety of other materials, starting in September. We can consider including soft plastics and the types of materials London Drugs accepted as part of the re-launch. We had some drop off events scheduled for the summer however these community events have been cancelled due to COVID-19 response. The events tend to draw large numbers (several hundred) of people to generally small areas and maintaining physical distancing would be challenging at best, particularly with concerns around a second wave of infections. We will continue to monitor the changes in Provincial and City restart efforts as we prepare for the fall relaunch of the program and will adjust the timing for September or later as needed. In the interim residents can continue to deliver materials to the Zero Waste Centre where we have the ability to manage the approximately 500 residents that visit the site each day and can maintain appropriate physical distancing.

Best,
Sadhu

Sadhu Aufochs Johnston | City Manager
Office of the City Manager | City of Vancouver
604.873.7627 | sadhu.johnston@vancouver.ca

Pronouns: he, him, his



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples.