

From: "Johnston, Sadhu" <Sadhu.Johnston@vancouver.ca>

To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"

CC: "City Manager's Correspondence Group - DL"

Date: 1/11/2019 2:24:03 PM

Subject: FW: Letter from Developmental Disabilities Association re: Clothing Donation Bins

Attachments: 20190111141217280.pdf

Greetings Mayor and Council-

Please find attached a letter from the Developmental Disabilities Association regarding Clothing Donation Bins.

Best

Sadhu

Sadhu Aufochs Johnston | City Manager

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January 10, 2019



Dear Mayor Stewart,

Re: Clothing Donation Bins

Due to the recent tragic deaths of a man in a clothing donation bin in West Vancouver and a woman in Toronto, municipalities are justifiably concerned about the threat of such bins to public safety.

The Developmental Disabilities Association has successfully operated a bin program in your municipality since 2002. We are grateful for our partnership and would like to assure you that we are removing all bins with “rolling” chutes such as those involved in these and other deaths and are replacing them with “open chute” bins, which we have had out since we started our program. There has never been a fatality in an open chute bin, since people can climb out of them. In the cities where we have had the opportunity to present this chute design, we have received approval for use. DDA has no bins on city property – they are all hosted on private property through agreements with property owners.

Since community safety is a top priority for our association, we have been working with Dr. Ray Taheri, Professor of Engineering at UBC Okanagan regarding bin design. We intend to continue working with him to further improve bin safety. Our collaboration has so far resulted in a competition where engineering students presented prototypes for potentially safer designs. We are encouraged by the innovation and ideas that have resulted so far.

Attached, please find a media story about the City of Richmond’s decision regarding clothing bins in the face of recent tragedies. As you may know, Richmond has conducted extensive research in the recycling of donated goods and has a bin licensing program. They have confirmed that they will continue to approve our open chute bins.

A major benefit of clothing collection is the diversion of re-usable items from public land-fills. Millions of tonnes of waste are diverted from land-fills by charities – at rates of \$90 to \$142 per tonne in disposal costs in Metro Vancouver, clothing collection bins reduce municipal garbage costs and save taxpayers money. DDA alone diverts at least 2722 tonnes of clothing and housewares from the waste stream annually. The need for this type of re-use and recycling is needed now more than ever due to the advent of “fast” or “throwaway” fashion. Consumers are buying more clothes, wearing them less and disposing of them at an unprecedented rate. Clothing is the fastest-growing category of waste today because the apparel industry stimulates demand through massive marketing campaigns, shortens the time it takes for an item to get from the runway to retail and uses cheaper materials and production methods to allow people to purchase clothing at costs low enough to throw away quickly-dated trendy clothes. Another challenge to the environment is that recyclable natural fibers are rarely used anymore – most are mixed with synthetic materials that do not decompose.

The proceeds of our clothing collections are entirely used for the benefit of people with developmental disabilities, augmenting areas where governments have decreased their commitments to funding.

It is up to the public, through its elected representatives, to decide whether the benefits of clothing bins outweigh identified risks, but we must also understand that the problems driving people into clothing bins and dumpsters – poverty, addictions, mental illness and especially homelessness – need urgent attention and public support if we are to reduce the needless suffering and deaths of our fellow citizens everywhere in our communities. Charities like the Developmental Disabilities Association are here to help.

We would be happy to meet with you at any time to further discuss textile recycling and its benefits to our communities.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alanna', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Alanna Hendren
Executive Director

cc Sadhu Johnston
Jenniffer Sheel, P.Eng.



Developmental
Disabilities Association

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION - OPEN CHUTE BIN

Chute Measurements:

14" Wide x 16" High x 20" Deep

* Some have 2 hooks, some 4 hooks and some are without hooks.

Note: The chute doesn't move, and there are no moving parts. This is an old bin design and has been in operation with DDA for 18 years. The design is simple, in that the chute size doesn't change, so if someone is able to get in, they could get back out in the same way. The recent tragedies, as we understand, are because of pinch points, and this bin design does not have any.



Richmond city demands removal of 24 donation bins

Richmond News

JANUARY 8, 2019 12:00 PM

The bins need to be removed within 24 hours or, if not logistically possible, they must be locked until they can be removed, according to city spokesperson Ted Townsend.

"We're also advising the organizations that this donation slot configuration will not be allowed in the future, and any future permit applications will require a configuration that addresses this safety concern," he said in an email to the News.

Twenty-four donation bins will be removed from the city of Richmond following the death of a man who got stuck in a bin in West Vancouver followed by a similar death in Toronto this morning.

The city is in the process of contacting five organizations whose bins have the same type of opening as the Inclusion BC bin where the man got stuck.