

From: "Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>

To: "[Direct to Mayor and Council](#)"

Date: 4/11/2025 2:18:39 PM

Subject: Memo - City Residential Waste Collection Services Update

Attachments: Memo - City Residential Waste Collection Services Update.pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please see attached memo from Lon LaClaire with an update on the status of residential green bin and garbage collections. This memo:

- Provides Council with an update on collection vehicle replacements and staffing levels.
- Presents an overview of recent and upcoming changes, including:
 - an upcoming collection service change for approximately 1100 buildings (about 1% of City's customer base) and;
 - discontinuation of text messaging reminders for waste collection; customers can switch to app notifications, email or phone reminders instead.
- Provides a summary of the expected outcomes to improve service reliability, cost effectiveness, and efficiency.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Lon LaClaire at 604-873-7336 or lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca.

Best,

Paul

Paul Mochrie (he/him)

City Manager

City of Vancouver

paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

MEMORANDUM

April 11, 2025

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Paul Mochrie, City Manager
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Sandra Singh, Deputy City Manager
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Maria Pontikis, Chief Communications Officer, CEC
Teresa Jong, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Mellisa Morphy, Director of Policy, Mayor's Office
Trevor Ford, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office

FROM: Lon LaClaire
General Manager, Engineering Services

SUBJECT: City Residential Waste Collection Services Update

RTS #: N/A

Further to the memo to Council dated December 2, 2024, this memo provides an update on residential waste collections and informs Council of additional upcoming service changes to further improve overall service reliability, efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

Equipment and Staffing Update

- **Truck Replacement:** The City continues to replace its aging automated collection truck fleet, and we are currently on a positive trajectory. Five additional new units were put in service in early 2025, and the remaining 24 units on order are expected to arrive in 2026. Since 2022, five additional new units have been added to the fleet, bringing the total to 34 units, along with three leased units to assist in the short term.
- **Utility Coordination:** Staff continue to work with utility companies to address height conflicts between the new, taller trucks and low-hanging (non-compliant) communication lines in some laneways. To date, approximately two-thirds of the City has had these lines raised and all lanes are anticipated to be cleared in 2025.

- **Driver Staffing:** With recent hiring and on-going service consolidation and optimization efforts, staffing levels are currently sufficient. We will continue to monitor and hire as needed to manage expected attrition.

Recent Changes

- **Green Bin Collection:** Over the last three years, green bin collections were shifted from weekly to bi-weekly for January and February to address staffing and fleet challenges, support weather response, and reduce overtime. This permanent change has been well-received by the public, improved weather response, reduced fuel costs, and allowed for more efficient planning and delivery of annual training programs.
- **Christmas Tree Collection:** This extra service for Vancouver residents has historically been scheduled to occur on two weekends in January. Due to the volume of work and inclement weather, service was frequently delayed, often resulting in additional unplanned overtime. For 2025, the collection schedule was updated and overtime was avoided by using staff from reduced Green Bin collection.
- **Extra Leaf Collection:** In 2024, the extra leaf bag collection schedule was further optimized to reduce overall staff overtime costs to deliver this service.

Upcoming Changes

- **Consolidating City Residential Waste Collection Services:** As mentioned in previous memos, there are currently 88,000 customers (99% of the customer base) that receive garbage service every-other-week, while approximately 1,100 customers (1%) receive weekly garbage collection, and weekly green bin collection year-round. This separate service for a small customer base was kept in place to support some buildings (multi-family, small commercial, etc.) during the rollout of the green bin program and accompanying switch to every-other-week garbage collection for the rest of the city in 2013. Service to these buildings is resource-intensive and inefficient, requiring special service maps and a separate collection calendar. Starting in September 2025, service to these buildings will be switched to align with the rest of the City and routes will be re-optimized to increase operational efficiency.

In mid-April, staff will send letters to notify impacted customers that the City will:

- change their weekly garbage collection to biweekly service starting in September 2025, and
- align their green bin collection schedule to the rest of the City (weekly collection March-December, biweekly collection in January and February).

Staff will support customers with this transition with a comprehensive communications and outreach plan.

- **Discontinuing VanCollect Text Messaging:** The VanCollect App provides waste collection reminders and service alerts. Customers can sign up to receive reminders through app notifications, phone call, email or text message. Since 2021, text messaging costs have increased by about 340%. Due to the increased costs and availability of other options, text

message notifications will be discontinued as of May 31, 2025. VanCollect users that subscribe to text messaging (11%) will receive notification to switch to app notifications, emails, or phone calls.

Expected Outcomes

The above initiatives will further improve service reliability, efficiency and cost-effectiveness, and are part of an overall continuous improvement program in collections that will continue in the years ahead.

- Eliminating text messaging, changing the service delivery model for Christmas trees and extra leaf bags, and the seasonal reduction of green bin collection is expected to result in an annual savings of about \$180,000.
- Harmonizing collection services across the City and optimizing routing is expected to result in approximately a 15% reduction in trucks required to deliver garbage collection services, freeing up an additional 2 trucks and associated staff to reallocate to other core services and respond faster to customer requests.

If you have any questions on the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lon LaClaire', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lon LaClaire, M.Eng., P.Eng.
General Manager, Engineering Services

604.873.7336 | lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca