

From: ["van Dyk, Donny"](#)

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

Date: 9/11/2025 11:43:28 AM

Subject: Memo to Mayor and Council - Update on Residential Waste Collection Services - September 11, 2025

Attachments: ENG- Memo- Update on Residential Waste Collection Services.pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please see the attached memo from Jimmy Zammar, providing Council with an update on the City's residential waste collection services. Key points include:

- Fleet renewal, staffing, service consolidation, and routing adjustments are improving reliability and efficiency.
- This month, the remaining 1% of customers transition from weekly to biweekly garbage collection.
- Overview of performance metrics, cost savings, and next steps in technology and innovation.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Jimmy Zammar at 604-871-6880 or jimmy.zammar@vancouver.ca.

Thanks,
Donny

Donny van Dyk (he/him)
City Manager
City of Vancouver

MEMORANDUM

September 11, 2025

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Donny van Dyk, City Manager
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Sandra Singh, Deputy City Manager
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Maria Pontikis, Chief of External Relations
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: Jimmy Zammar
Deputy General Manager, Engineering Services

SUBJECT: Update on Residential Waste Collection Services

RTS #: N/A

Further to the April 11, 2025 memo, this update outlines key improvements in the City's residential waste collection program and upcoming changes designed to further increase service **reliability, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness**.

Equipment and Staffing Progress

- **Truck Fleet Renewal:** Five new automated trucks were added in early 2025. The remaining 24 units on order are scheduled to begin arriving in Spring 2026, through to early 2027, bringing the total to 34 new trucks since 2022. Staff are monitoring potential delivery delays due to tariff uncertainty.
- **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. Approximately 75% of low-hanging communication lines have been raised to-date with full clearance expected by end of 2025.
- **Driver Staffing:** Staffing levels are currently stable following recent hires and route optimization. Staff will continue to monitor and adjust as needed.

Recent Service Adjustments

- **Green Bin Collection:** Shifted to biweekly in January and February to reduce overtime, support weather response, and improve training delivery.
- **Christmas Tree Pickup:** Changed collection schedule in 2025 and redeployed Green Bin staff to reduce overtime.

- **Leaf Bag Collection:** Optimized in 2024 to reduce staffing costs.
- **VanCollect Notifications:** Discontinued text messaging on May 31, 2025 due to a 340% increase in vendor costs. Customers can still receive reminders via app notifications, email, or phone.

Upcoming Change: Consolidation of Residential Waste Collection

- As mentioned in previous memos, starting **September 8, 2025**, approximately 1,100 customers (1% of the customer base) currently receiving weekly garbage service will transition to **biweekly collection**, aligning with the rest of the city.
- This legacy service model was retained to support certain buildings (multi-family, small commercial, etc.) during the 2013 rollout of the green bin program. It is now being phased out to streamline operations and eliminate the need for separate routing and calendars.
- A comprehensive outreach plan supported the transition, with notifications in April, May, and July. Staff worked directly with larger complexes to ensure bin capacity is adequate. To date, **98% of affected customers** have opted to remain on City service under the new schedule.
- The service consolidation is **expected to reduce garbage truck requirements by 15%**, freeing up two trucks and associated staff for other core services and faster response to customer requests.

Performance and Outcomes

- **Missed Collections:** In Q2 2025, missed call volumes **decreased by 7%** compared to the same period in 2024. Weekly averages show approximately 330 missed collection calls out of 132,000 pickups — representing 0.25% of total service activity.
- **Service Alerts:** Only **7 alerts** have been issued by City operations in 2025 YTD, compared to 55 in 2024 and 49 in 2023 — a clear sign of improved reliability. Although not a like-for-like comparison, GFL — the curbside recycling service provider working on behalf of Recycle BC — has issued **27 service alerts** so far this year.
- **Cost Savings:** Recent service changes — including the discontinuation of text messaging, seasonal adjustments to green bin collection, and optimized leaf and tree pickup — have resulted in **annual savings of approximately \$180,000**. In addition, **overtime costs for January through August 2025 are 50% lower than the same period in 2024**, which were themselves **50% lower than in 2023**.

Next Steps: Technology and Innovation

- **AI-Driven Insights:** A new collaboration with Technology Services is leveraging artificial intelligence to analyze 311 data. The goal is to identify patterns and uncover opportunities to enhance customer experience and improve service delivery.
- **Fleet Modernization:** Staff have initiated a procurement process to pilot in-cab driver display technology. This initiative aims to support driver safety, optimized routing and dispatch, paperless workflows, and two-way communication

As outlined above, operational efficiency and continuous improvement remain central to our approach. Staff would be happy to brief Council to allow in-person time for questions and feedback, if that is of interest. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact me directly.



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