



## **Town Expands Waste Collection Program with New Contractor in 2019**

*(November 30, 2018 – Ponoka, Alberta)* – Following a competitive bid process, the Town of Ponoka has selected a new contractor to provide services for curbside collection of household waste, recyclables, and organic compost materials. The new contractor, Can Pak Environmental Services, will begin providing service to Ponoka residents on January 2, 2019 as part of a three-year contract (2019-2022) with the Town of Ponoka.

The new curbside collection contract will include the following services beginning on January 2:

- A new full organic, green cart compost program that will allow Ponoka residents to compost food waste and yard waste year round in their green carts, including kitchen food scraps, meat, fish, bones, food-soiled paper and cardboard, pet waste, cat litter, wood shavings, coffee grinds, tea bags, popsicle sticks (wooden), toothpicks (wooden), cooking oil (small amounts), nuts and shells.
- Organic waste in the green carts will be picked up weekly from May 1 – October 30; and bi-weekly from November 1 – April 30.
- Household garbage will continue to be picked up bi-weekly year round.
- Recyclables will continue to be picked up bi-weekly year round.
- Recyclables and garbage will be picked up on the same day, beginning on January 2. Compost will be picked up on alternate weeks.
- Waste, recycling and compost will continue to be picked up at the front curbside.

### **Increased Level of Service at Lower Cost**

“Our new curbside collection contract will provide the Town with an increased level of service at a significantly reduced cost than our current waste and recycling contract,” says Ponoka Mayor Rick Bonnett. The new contract will generate a cost savings of just over \$375,000 in the first year of operation when compared to the Town’s current curbside collection contract.

Mayor Bonnett notes that Town of Ponoka utility rates for solid waste are expected to remain at the same level in 2019 as they are currently at now. “That’s because in 2018 year our solid waste utility rates did not cover the full cost of our curbside waste and recycling program. Those rates had to be subsidized by budget reserves and property taxes in order to cover our full program costs,” he explains.

“With this new program, the cost of our curbside collection program will now be funded entirely by our utility rate for solid waste, which means residents will be getting a higher level of service in 2019 for the same price they’re paying this year,” says Mayor Bonnett.



### **Very Few Changes to Collection Schedules**

There will be very few changes to the collection schedule with the new curbside collection contract. The only change will be:

- Residents in Zone 2 whose waste is currently picked on Mondays will have their collection day moved to Wednesdays beginning January 2.
- Residents in Zones 1 and 3 whose waste is picked up on Thursdays and Fridays will see no change to their collection schedule.

### **Residents Will Continue Using Existing Grey and Green Carts**

Residents will also continue to use their existing grey carts for household waste and their existing green carts for the full organic compost program when the new contract begins in January. “Our goal is to make the transition to this new contract as smooth as possible for our residents. The contractor is working with us to ensure that happens,” explains Dwayne Kwolick, Manager of Operations for the Town of Ponoka.

Updated collection calendars and a complete list of items that are and are not accepted in the green carts as of January 1 will be posted on the Town website in the coming weeks. Copies of the new collection calendars and lists of recyclable and compostable items will also be available for pick up at the Town Office (200, 5604-50 St.) and will be mailed out with Town utility bills over the coming weeks.

The addition of the new full organic compost program to Ponoka’s curbside collection program follows a public consultation process and review of the Town’s waste and recycling program earlier this year. The public consultation included two public open houses and two public input surveys that showed the majority of survey respondents and open house attendees were in favour of a new full organic compost program.

“We expect the new green cart program will resolve a lot of the concerns we’ve heard from residents about our current waste and recycling program,” says Kwolick. “It will remove most smelly items from the grey garbage bins and reduce the amount of waste placed in those bins as people compost more,” he adds.

The new curbside compost program is expected to increase diversion of Ponoka’s household waste from the landfill by up to 15 per cent. That would bring the Town’s total household waste diversion rate up to about 50 per cent as Ponoka continues to work toward achieving the provincial goal of 80 per cent waste diversion.

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