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HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE 2006 PROMOTIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL CAMPAIGN

The Solid Waste Management Committee recommends the the following:

- 1. The presentation by Michael Birett, Manager, Solid Waste Management Branch, be received; and**
- 2. The recommendation contained in the following report, August 11, 2006, from the Commissioner of Transportation and Works, be adopted:**

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that this report be received for information.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to update Committee and Council on the success of the Region's 2006 Household Hazardous Waste Promotional and Educational Campaign.

3. BACKGROUND

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) consists of household products that are flammable, corrosive, poisonous, and/or explosive, such as all purpose cleaner, motor oil, batteries, and medications. While HHW represents only one to two percent of the residential wastestream, it can be very hazardous to human and animal health if stored inappropriately and dangerous to the environment if discarded improperly. The Region currently operates four HHW drop-off depots located in the Towns of East Gwillimbury, Georgina, Markham, and City of Vaughan.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

In June 2006, the Minister of the Environment, the Honourable Laurel Broten, announced her intention to designate HHW. Designation of a material is the first step in securing industry funding under the Waste Diversion Act to support its collection and disposal by municipalities. Implementation of an HHW promotion and education campaign was established as a priority for the Branch in 2006 in anticipation of the pending regulatory change.

4.1 HHW Promotion and Education Campaign Overview

Past experience has shown that residents accumulate their HHW for long periods of time. Therefore, the Region's multimedia Campaign focused on raising awareness of the hazards:

- Stored HHW can pose to children and pets
- Improper disposal can cause damage to the environment

The campaign was designed to encourage residents to dispose of their HHW in a timely manner. It included development of newspaper advertisements, a brochure, information tag, exterior bus advertisements, an article in YorkWorks and awareness-raising activities at special events.

4.1.1 Print Media Advertising

Six advertisements were placed in local and ethnic newspapers from the middle of April 2006 to the end of May 2006. The first three consisted of "teaser" advertisements intended to raise residents' awareness of the underlying issue behind proper HHW management. The remaining three consisted of "reveal" advertisements, which identified types of HHW and the locations of the Region's HHW drop-off depots. A half page article providing an overview of the promotional Campaign was also included in the summer issue of YorkWorks.

4.1.2 HHW Informational Brochure

A brochure was created which provided additional information about what constitutes HHW, where it can be found in the home, why it should be taken to a depot, and where the Region's depots are located. Local real-estate agents and the York Region Welcome Wagon were asked to participate in distributing the brochures to clients moving to or from York Region. The objective of this activity was to inform home sellers where to take their stored HHW prior to moving and to educate new residents about proper HHW management in the Region.

4.1.3 Paint Can Information Tag

Discarded paint represents approximately 70% of HHW collected at the Region's HHW facilities. An information tag was developed to attach to the handle of paint cans at the point of sale. Local paint retailers were asked to participate in the campaign by distributing the tags on all cans of paint sold in their stores. In total, 21 paint retailers participated in the campaign. This increased residents' awareness of the proper disposal of the purchased product. The paint retailers were very receptive to this promotional tool as they field many questions about paint disposal on a daily basis.

4.1.4 Exterior Bus Advertisements

Twelve exterior advertisements were placed on the back and side of York Region Transit buses in Vaughan and Newmarket. They featured the question "Exposing Your Family to Unnecessary Risk?", a large picture of examples of HHW, and gave the Region's phone number and website for more information. These advertisements were created to compliment the advertising being run simultaneously in local newspapers.

4.1.5 Promotion of the HHW Campaign at Special Events

A widely promoted contest was held on June 24th at all four of the Region's HHW depots to encourage their use. Residents dropping off HHW were given a 25 litre bag of compost and entered into a draw to win one of four \$100 gift certificates from Canadian Tire.

The HHW informational brochure was also distributed by York Region staff at Compost Awareness Week and Public Works Week events, Goodwill reuse events, and public information sessions for the Durham York Waste Study.

4.2 Campaign Results

Two surveys were conducted at the end of the HHW campaign to measure residents' awareness of proper HHW management and to measure the results of the HHW Promotional Campaign. The first survey was conducted at the special event on June 24th at all four of the drop-off depots and had approximately 550 respondents. A follow up survey of 150 residents was conducted by telephone in May and June of 2006.

According to the telephone survey, 40% of respondents had seen the Region's advertising. Of those residents who know about the Region's drop-off depots, 10% indicated that they learned of them in the last four months. Approximately one-third of respondents to this survey recall seeing information about the depots in the form of newspaper advertisements and 14% recalled the brochure (see Chart 1). Results from this same survey indicate that respondents ranked information tags as one of the top three best promotional tools to use in educating the public (see Table 1).

Chart 1
Where Residents Saw HHW Depot Information

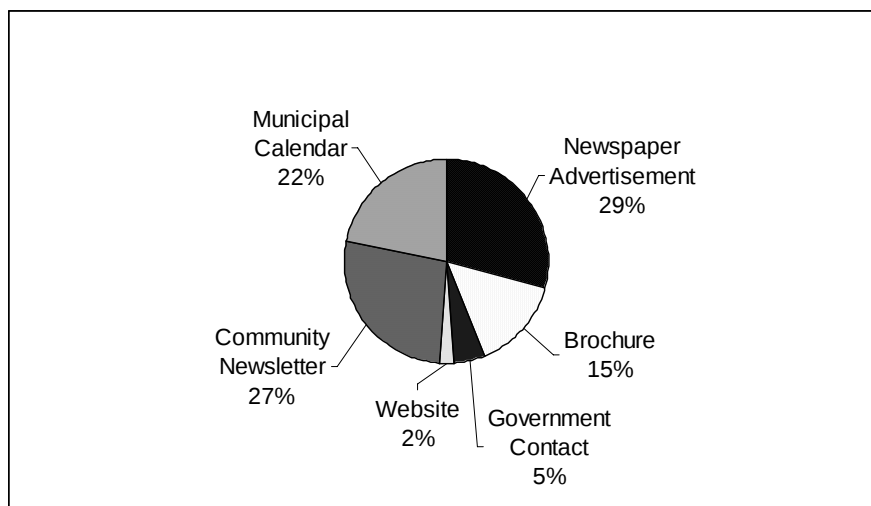
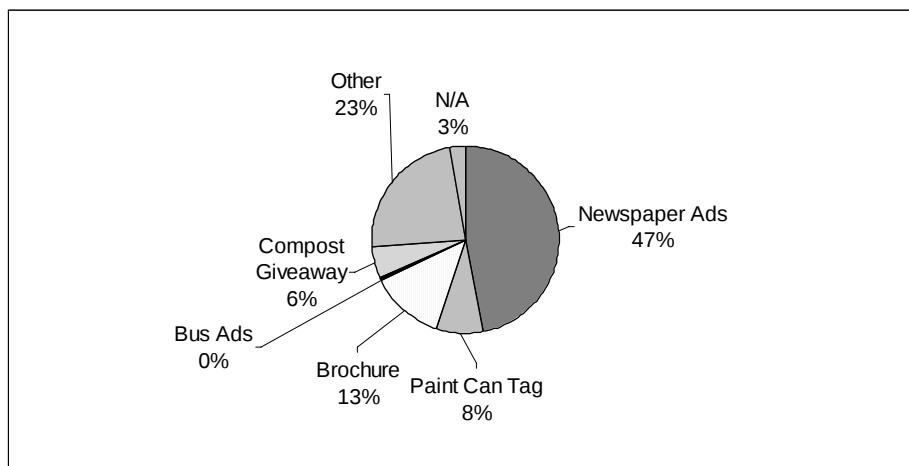


Table 1
Best Promotional Tools to Educate the Public

Rank	Communication Method	Percentage of Respondents
1	Calendar of Activities	87%
2	Community Newsletter	84%
3	Information tags on HHW products	84%
4	Label affixed to Blue/Green box	81%
5	Local Newspaper	80%
6	Fridge Magnet Reminders	74%
7	Radio	65%
8	Brochures	62%
9	Advertisements on public bus	55%
10	Billboards	52%
11	Road/Mobile signs	41%
12	Region's website	33%

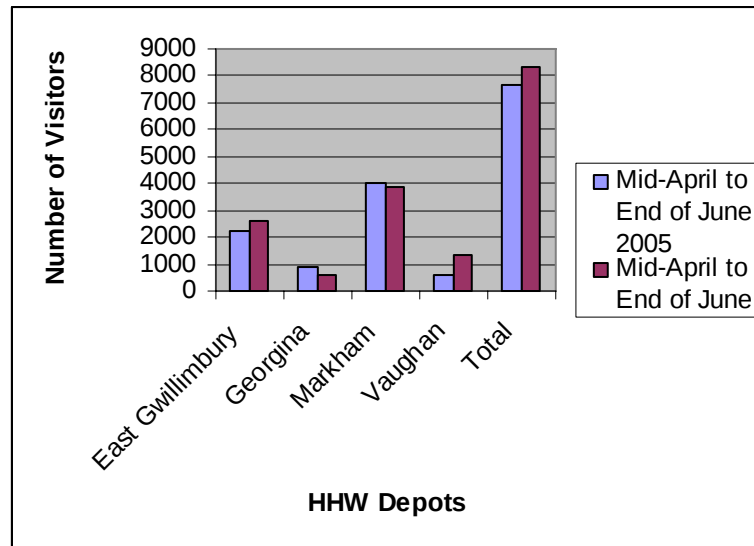
The survey conducted at the four HHW depots provided a clearer picture of which promotional tools motivated residents to properly dispose of their HHW. Out of the 550 residents who attended the event, approximately 40% of these were first-time users. A break down of what motivated these first-time users to drop-off their HHW at a Regional depot can be found in Chart 2. Results of the two surveys were consistent in identifying the promotional medium people were most likely to recall having seen.

Chart 2
What Motivated First-Time HHW Depot Users to Drop-off HHW



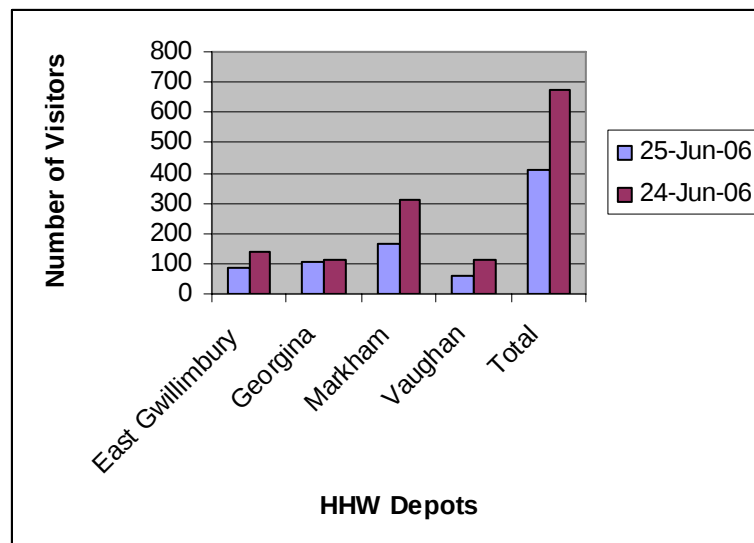
In total, there was a 12% increase in traffic at the HHW depots during the period of April to June 2006 compared to the same period in 2005. The largest increase in traffic was at the Vaughan HHW depot, where there was approximately a 122% increase in traffic (see Chart 3).

Chart 3
Traffic Counts for April to June From 2005 to 2006



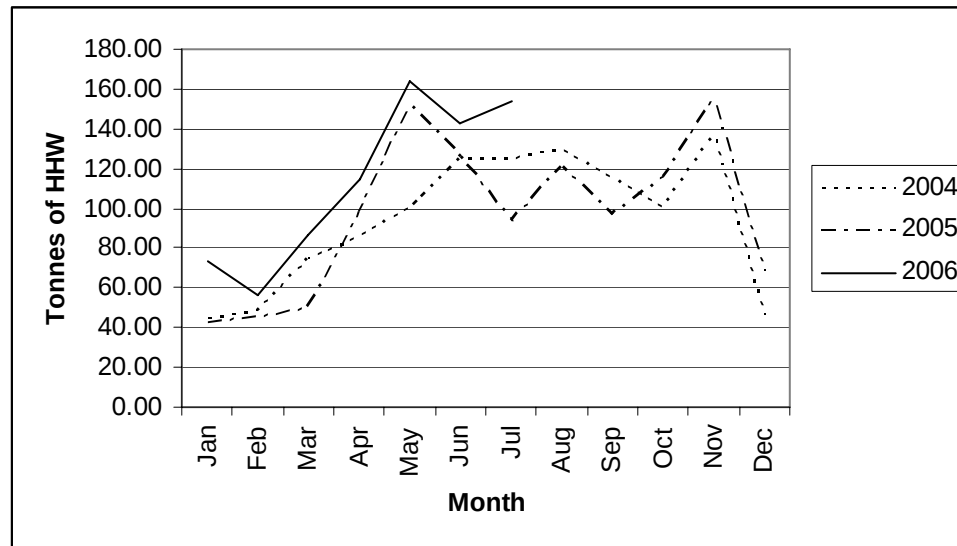
On the day of the special event, there was an overall traffic increase of 63% across the depots compared to the traffic flow on the same weekend in 2005. Again, the HHW depot in Vaughan had the highest traffic increase at 91% (see Chart 4).

Chart 4
Comparison of Traffic Counts June 24th 2005 to 2006



The total tonnes collected in each month at the HHW depots is higher in 2006 than in 2005 or 2004 (see Chart 5).

Chart 5
Tonnes of HHW Collected Per Month*



*Please note that the 2006 information displayed in Chart 5 is subject to change upon receipt of invoices indicating final total tonnage.

4.3 Future Plans

Separation of HHW from the waste stream will become increasingly important as the Region proceeds with its plans to construct an Energy-From-Waste (EFW) facility in conjunction with Durham Region. Inappropriate disposal of HHW in these types of facilities can impair their ability to comply with relevant air emission regulations. Staff intend to reinforce the success of the 2006 Campaign through additional advertising in 2007 and 2008.

Information obtained from the surveys conducted as part of this campaign shows that residents who do not take their HHW to a depot fail to do so primarily because of the perceived inconvenience of using the depots. Staff propose to review the hours of operation of the current depots in an effort to address this concern. Moreover, plans to construct at least three Community Environmental Centres (CECs) throughout the Region are currently being developed by staff. These additional facilities will help to decrease the distance residents are required to drive to drop off their HHW.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The total cost of the HHW Campaign in 2006 was approximately \$184,000 (see Table 2).

Table 2
Total Cost of the HHW Campaign

Campaign Elements	Details	Cost
Creative Development	Development of 6 advertisements, educational brochure & information tag	\$26,000
HHW Brochure	Production of HHW brochure	\$2,000
Information Guide	Production of updated Household Waste Guide	\$4,000
Information Tag	Production & delivery of tags to be placed on paint cans at time of purchase	\$3,000
Bus Advertisements	Production of 12 bus panels plus space rental for 4 weeks	\$48,000
Newspaper Teaser Advertisements	Full colour, ¼ page	\$20,000
Newspaper Reveal Advertisements	Full colour, full page	\$60,000
Special Event	Delivery and administration of HHW contest at all 4 depots	\$17,000
Compost	Compost for giveaway to residents participating on the day of the contest	\$3,000
Materials and supplies		\$1,000
Total Cost for HHW Campaign		\$184,000

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

As a result of our efforts to comply with Michigan landfill requirements, all of the local municipalities have by-laws which prohibit HHW from being placed in the regular garbage. Improved awareness by residents of the need to dispose of their HHW properly reduces the risk of unanticipated exposure of residents and curbside collection workers to HHW. Negligently disposed materials may end up in sewers and local waterways, which can negatively impact the environment.

7. CONCLUSION

The Region's HHW Promotion and Education Campaign was held from the middle of April until the end of June 2006. A multimedia Campaign was developed in order to increase residents' awareness of the existence of the Region's HHW depots and the need to properly dispose of HHW. A successful special event was held in late June to further promote the use of the Region's drop-off depots. Further efforts to build on this Campaign and improve the convenience of the HHW depots are planned for the future.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.