



City of Kelowna
1435 Water Street
Kelowna, BC V1Y 1J4
250 469-8500
kelowna.ca

Council Policy

No Exemption Policy – Garbage Collection Tax Levy

APPROVED April 29, 1996

RESOLUTION: R375/10/04/26

REPLACING: R1039/08/11/24; R345/96/04/29

DATE OF LAST REVIEW: April 2010

Under City of Kelowna Solid Waste Management Bylaw No. 10106, every owner of a residential dwelling premise within the garbage collection area shall use the garbage collection system established by the City pursuant to this bylaw and shall pay the rates and fees set out in the Bylaw, except those who have been granted a waiver of service by the City Council.

To date, requests for exemptions have been limited in number but several common themes have emerged as to why a resident does not wish to receive or pay for garbage collection service. Reasons which are not considered adequate for exemption from the mandatory garbage collection service are listed below and are subject to revision by the Kelowna City Council.

A. REASONS FOR WHICH THE CITY COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT A WAIVER OF SERVICE

1. Household generates little or “no garbage”.

It is definitely possible to reduce your waste through smart shopping, composting, and recycling. However, given our modern lifestyles, it seems there is always something to throw out that cannot be re-used, such as toothpaste tubes, broken dishware, and expired light bulbs. Some items cannot be recycled locally but are part of the unavoidable packaging we buy with everyday products, such as peanut butter jars, plastic film wrap, and waxed milk cartons. These items need a proper method of disposal, which means they must somehow get to a local landfill. Without a mandatory service, the City has no way of verifying that this will happen.

Residents must also realize that most of the collection service costs are incurred by driving the garbage collection route, not by stopping at a specific house to pick up a varying number of garbage containers. Furthermore, one must be aware of the social, legal and environmental benefits of the service such as tidier streets, less traffic, increased responsibility in the management of household garbage, and achievement of waste reduction goals. These benefits outweigh concerns about variations in the level of use.

2. Residents are away from home for extended periods of time because of job requirements, vacation, and alternate winter residence.

This service is similar to others such as sewer, library, and water which have fixed operating costs all year round. Most of the collection service costs are incurred by driving the garbage collection route, not by stopping at a specific house to pick up a varying number of garbage containers. Social, legal and environmental benefits of the service such as tidier streets, less traffic, increased responsibility in the management of household garbage, and achievement of waste reduction goals outweigh concerns about variations in the level of use. Furthermore, occupancy of a dwelling cannot be monitored to ensure abuse of an exemption is not taking place.

3. Property is a recreational home and is only occupied during the summer.

This service is similar to others such as sewer, library, and water which have fixed operating costs all year round. Most of the collection service costs are incurred by driving the garbage collection route, not by stopping at a specific house to pick up a varying number of garbage containers. Social, legal and environmental benefits of the service such as tidier streets, less traffic, increased responsibility in the management of household garbage, and achievement of waste reduction goals outweigh concerns about variations in the level of use. Furthermore, occupancy of a dwelling cannot be monitored to ensure abuse of an exemption is not taking place.

A. REASONS FOR WHICH THE CITY COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT A WAIVER OF SERVICE (CON'T)**4. Resident prefers to pay private hauler and have a more flexible service.**

Since the City's contractor will be driving past this home anyway, there is no need to increase truck traffic in a residential neighbourhood. The costs of the program can only be minimized and stabilized if everyone contributes. Private haulers are not necessarily working towards waste reduction goals and therefore, have no interest in limiting or monitoring quantities of waste picked up. This will not be an affordable option due to market conditions resulting from a majority of households being on a separate collection contract.

5. Property is not easily accessible and owner does not want to bring garbage to a common area for collection.

Property owners must accept the consequences of choosing a particular location for their home and are solely responsible for making their property accessible. It is also nearly impossible to administer an exemption based on this reason and to verify that the objectives of the garbage collection program are being met. It will reduce vehicle traffic and air pollution even if residents drive their garbage to a public roadway instead of the entire distance to the landfill.

6. Resident prefers to go to the landfill directly.

Taking garbage directly to a local landfill is allowable, but a tipping fee is paid at the site. At local landfills, the charge for residential waste is currently \$6.00 for loads up to 250 kg. This provides a monetary incentive to reduce garbage but does not meet other objectives of the garbage collection program, such as reducing vehicle traffic associated with garbage disposal and providing a strong correlation between the cost of garbage disposal and the amount of waste being disposed. At \$87.40 per annum, (for 26 collections), a weekly collection service is less expensive than 15 trips to the landfill, without even factoring in private vehicle operating costs and the value of the driver's time. As well, there is no way of verifying that garbage not collected as part of the regular service is actually going to the landfill and not being disposed of illegally at a different location.

7. Resident prefers to take garbage to the dumpster at work.

Taking garbage to a commercial bin is unacceptable for many reasons. Most significantly, this method of disposal subverts the Regional District's ability to monitor and discourage the creation of garbage in favour of the goals of the Regional Solid Waste Management Plan. There is no direct cost incentive to reduce waste going into a commercial bin, unless you happen to be the owner or renter of that bin. Many business owners and hauling companies have resorted to locking up their bins in order to avoid paying for extra garbage placed there by residents who are not using the traditional residential garbage collection programs. Since the City cannot possibly enforce or verify the legitimacy of residential waste in commercial bins, this means of garbage disposal cannot be considered as a reason for exemption.

8. Resident is on a fixed or low income.

Garbage collection service is not different from other mandatory municipal services. At \$87.40 per annum for a basic level of service, this service is one of the lowest priced services for garbage collection in North America. Furthermore, regardless of income, waste is still being generated and must get to a local landfill. In some cases, the new service is significantly cheaper than previous options, such as a private hauling service or direct trips to the landfill.

9. Resident has a physical inability to get garbage to the curb.

In most cases, the garbage leaves the house by the same manner in which it got inside - through the help of neighbours, friends, or relatives. Higher levels of service and special consideration is available for extreme cases but to-date the demand for this has been limited.

10. Resident burning waste on property.

Burning is not an acceptable long-term solution for managing waste. Smoke from open burning has become a significant environmental problem in British Columbia, threatening health and reducing visibility. Under the Provincial Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation, domestic waste is a prohibited material for burning, even if a permit from the Ministry of Forests or the Fire Department has been granted.

A. REASONS FOR WHICH THE CITY COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT A WAIVER OF SERVICE (CON'T)**11. Resident is burying waste on property.**

All waste must be disposed of in a manner approved by the Ministry of Environment, Land and Parks. In the Central Okanagan, wastes are only permitted to be buried in an approved landfill.

REVISION OF THIS POLICY IS SUBJECT TO CONSIDERATION BY THE KELOWNA CITY COUNCIL.

REASON FOR POLICY

To provide equitable service levels to each household.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Council Resolution.

PROCEDURE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Applications for waivers where the applicant can demonstrate special circumstances that warrant consideration will be brought by the Community Services Division to Council semi-annually for approval.