

DATE: May 9, 2018

FILE: 5360-04

TO: Chair and Directors
Comox Valley Regional District
(Comox Strathcona Waste Management) Board

Supported by Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

R. DYSON

RE: Year-end Review of the Comox Strathcona Waste Management Illegal Dumping Prevention Program

Purpose

To provide an overview of the first year of the Comox Strathcona Waste Management (CSWM) Illegal Dumping Prevention Program to the Comox Strathcona Waste Management Board.

Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer

None. This report is presented for information only.

Executive Summary

This report covers the period April 24, 2017 to April 24, 2018.

The CSWM Illegal Dumping Prevention Program is based on education and enforcement. During the first year, the focus was on a new media campaign rollout, a co-ordinated approach with our partners and an increased proactive response to identify offenders and reduce illegal dumping. An extensive amount of data has been collected from areas reporting across the service area. The data collected has identified that the problem persists throughout the service area, however, with better awareness and reporting options the community appears more willing to bring forth complaints.

The following are highlights noted from the program:

- Promotion of community clean-ups and co-operation with our partners by advertising their successes through press release and media interviews during Earth Week;
- Visits to Gold River, Sayward, Tahsis and Zeballos to brief staff and provide resources. Meetings were also held with bylaw and communications staff from the Village of Cumberland, City of Courtenay, Strathcona Regional District (SRD), City of Campbell River, Town of Comox and Village of Cumberland to ensure a co-ordinated education/enforcement of illegal dumping was conducted;
- Temporary signage noting that dump site areas were being monitored have been successful in garnering online community discussions that the CSWM is taking the matter seriously and actively looking to identify illegal dumpers;
- New signage has been installed at the waste management centres (Appendix A). Pamphlets and online resources have been made available to RCMP, Crime Stoppers, CSWM waste educators, communications and bylaw staff throughout the service area and staff of each of the smaller communities;

- A Most Commonly Dumped Items pamphlet was developed and placed in newspaper ads, CSWM website, and online sources and provided in hard copies as required. This was well received and cleared up some misconceptions related to waste management costs;
- Discussions were held and continue with timber companies, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI), BC Hydro, First Nations (FN) and other large landowners to limit access to problem areas;
- Following on the success of the program launch, we are moving into the implementation of the second phase of the media campaign which will be focussed on Campbell River and the surrounding area. The campaign will be primarily digital but will feature some bus ads as well (Appendix B);
 - Agreements with partners were made to post signage within each other’s jurisdiction. MOTI no dumping signs were installed on Forbidden Plateau, CSWM temporary no dumping signs have been installed on MOTI, BC Hydro, FN and timber company property to deter activities;
 - Volunteer groups continue to support and promote the program through online sources and speaking with the public. In addition, timber companies like TimberWest as well as FN have recognized that volunteer groups are valuable and have allowed access to their properties for monitoring and clean-ups;
 - An extensive body of data has been collected from across the service area and will allow for a more accurate picture of the situation as we move into the second year using additional data for comparison. Getting the message to the community that a lack of curbside garbage pick-up, access and tipping fees are not the sole cause is ongoing. It is noted that there are fewer comments in this regard following the year end press release in comparison to the start of the program; and
 - Large percentage of illegal dumping sites continue to be on timber company properties. Communications with those companies significantly improved with signage, access, large clean-ups and sharing of information. For example, Hancock Forestry is actively pursuing installing cameras on their property around Comox Lake and will share any information they get.

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Stakeholder Distribution (Upon Agenda Publication)

Member municipalities and Strathcona Regional District (via CSWM advisory committee)	✓
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Background/Current Situation

The CVRD strategic priorities list, as well as the 2012 Comox Strathcona Solid Waste Management Plan, included direction to implement an Illegal Dumping Prevention Program.

The CSWM Illegal Dumping Prevention Program was launched on April 24, 2017 to coincide with Earth Week. The education component began with a news release, updated web page with 1-800 reporting and links to graphic videos related to our main themes of education and enforcement. The CSWM webpage was subsequently modernized and an online reporting feature was added. TV interviews and live and recorded radio interviews were conducted by bylaw staff at the start of the campaign in April 2017 and again following a news release announcing the one year anniversary of the program in April 2018.

A new media campaign set to launch in mid May 2018 will be concentrated on the northern communities of the CSWM service area. The campaign focuses on the theme “illegal dumping sucks” and will also be highlighted on buses for the first time.

Policy Analysis

At the January 9, 2017 meeting, the CSWM Board approved the CSWM Illegal Dumping Prevention Program and on June 8, 2017, Bylaw No. 470 being “Comox Strathcona Waste Management Illegal Dumping Regulation Bylaw No. 470, 2017” a bylaw to regulate illegal dumping of waste throughout the CSWM service area was adopted.

Financial Factors

The Illegal Dumping Program is a component of the CSWM financial plan with a 2018 budget for tipping fee waivers, education/communication, material development, and legal and office expenses of \$59,000.

The costs for new signage and communications expenses, legal and office expenses were within the budgeted amount for 2017.

The CSWM service currently utilizes volunteers for the collection and disposal of illegally dumped material resulting in no labour and transportation costs to the service for the 90,000 kg collected. The volunteers sort and divert as much recyclables from the material as possible to ensure it is not all being landfilled. Staff estimate that the volunteers have saved the service approximately \$82,000.

Legal Factors

No legal changes are proposed for the Illegal Dumping Program.

Regional Growth Strategy Implications

The Illegal Dumping Program works towards achieving many of the goals set out in the Regional Growth Strategy, including those associated with the environment and ecosystems, public infrastructure and public health.

Intergovernmental Factors

Regular discussions are held with municipal partners under the Illegal Dumping Program. The CSWM service continues to offer support and guidance for implementing the program and administering the regulations and ticketing bylaws. Two videos that provide information about illegal dumping and ways to stop illegal dumping were created and significant cost savings were realized due the partnership between CSWM and the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities.

Interdepartmental Involvement

CSWM works closely with Bylaw Compliance to administer the Illegal Dumping Program.

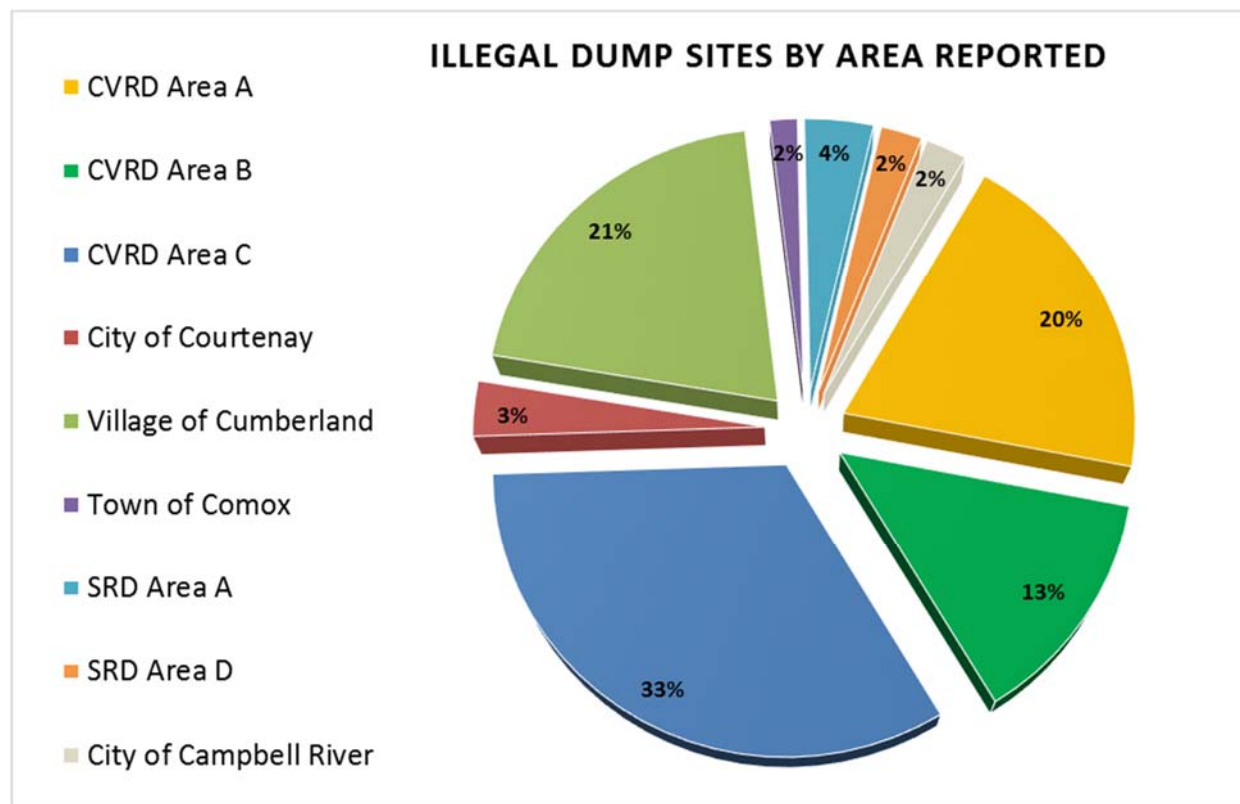
Citizen/Public Relations

Initially, two videos were launched to highlight what illegal dumping is and how to prevent and report it. The videos produced significant discussion and feedback. Many comments received suggested that lower tipping and access fees at the waste management centres would solve illegal dumping. Several comments related to free dump days or free curbside pickup for furniture or larger items. Similar comments were received following the year end press release, however the number of comments was significantly lower.

The success of the program is dependent on support from community groups and volunteers. During this first year, clean-ups and assistance were provided by groups such as Stop Comox Valley Illegal Dumping, Comox Valley and Campbell River ATV clubs, Millard Creek Stream clean-up, Courtenay Fish and Game, B&D Containers, Pacific Woodwaste, and the K'ómoks First Nation.

Amount of waste removed and jurisdictions affected

The areas most identified by illegal dumping based on complaints received are CVRD Area C and the Village of Cumberland at 33 per cent and 21 per cent respectively.



Prior to the implementation of a formal illegal dumping program, illegally dumped material was collected by volunteers and fees were waived under the CSWM tipping fee waiver (community clean up) policy. Between 2012 and 2015, the CSWM service collected 97,585 kg including derelict boats. Currently, material collected during Earth Week events is processed through the tipping fee waiver policy and coded as community clean up events, however, a large majority of this material is illegally dumped. In actuality, the amount of illegally dumped material collected is closer to 90,000 kg, not including the clean-up of derelict vessels. When including derelict vessel clean ups, the service, since April 2017, has collected and waived fees for over 130,000 kg of material.

Major clean-ups were conducted in areas such as Strathcona Parkway, Cook Creek, Forbidden Plateau, Duncan Bay Main (Campbell River), Hamm Road, Elk Falls and areas adjacent to Courtenay Fish and Game.

Twenty-six per cent of the sites identified contained items which would have been free to dispose of.

Reports received and actions taken

During the first year, the Illegal Dumping Program received 128 additional reports of illegal dump sites across the region varying from yard waste to household garbage and business materials to boats and campers. As the program has rolled out over time and staff efforts have been better coordinated; more reports were received from the SRD electoral areas and City of Campbell River.

Proactive responses, witness information and searches of materials left at sites has allowed for follow up action in approximately 15 per cent of the incidents.

Traceable information from sites	18/128
Warnings issued (pre-bylaw adoption or lacking some evidence)	6
MTI issued	3
Dumpers caught onsite and voluntarily cleaned area	9

Attachments: Appendix A – “Waste Management Centre Signage”
Appendix B – “New Media Campaign”



Appendix B

Illegal dumping sucks.

If you see an illegal dump site, report it.



Comox Strathcona
Waste Management

reportdumpsites.ca