

DATE: March 9, 2022

FILE: 5360-04

TO: Chair and Directors
Comox Strathcona Waste Management Board

FROM: James Warren
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

Supported by James Warren
Deputy Chief Administrative
Officer
J. Warren

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

Purpose

To provide an update to the Comox Strathcona Waste Management (CSWM) Board on progress and data collected for the CSWM Illegal Dumping Prevention Program.

Recommendation from the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer:

This report is presented for information only.

Executive Summary

The CSWM Illegal Dumping Prevention Program (the Program) is based on education and enforcement and is focused on being proactive, increasing the risk to offenders and reducing the reasons and excuses for illegal dumping. We continue to work with lessons learned to reduce the amount of illegal dumping across the service area. This report covers the period January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021 and provides comparisons with previous years.

A few key highlights:

- The program is working across the CSWM area; with continuing decreases in sites being reported due to increased online and word of mouth communications and effective advertising on how to properly dispose of items.
- On average, staff receive 4.8 calls per month, down from 7.6 per month from last year. In 2021, 43 reports were within CSWM Rural areas and 15 reports were within municipalities.
- Data indicates 51 per cent of dump sites contain items that would be free to dispose of or recycle, down from over 75 per cent in previous years.

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Government Partners and Stakeholder Distribution (Upon Agenda Publication)

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

The program was launched on April 24, 2017. An extensive database documents any reported illegal dump sites. To date, 444 reports have been entered from across the CSWM service area. A detailed breakdown of reports received from 2018 to 2021 is shown in Appendix A.

Amount of Waste Removed and Jurisdictions Affected

The amount of illegally dumped waste removed from the environment and properly disposed of from the CSWM service area during the 2021 reporting period was 29.1 tonnes (\$4,112.75 in waived tipping fees), a 26 per cent increase compared to 2020 (23.2 tonnes totaling \$3,027.00 in waived tipping fees).

It should be noted that approximately 51 per cent of sites contain items that could have been disposed of for free and/ or recyclable items, down 6 per cent from the 2020 reporting year. Items not recycled are a lost commodity and present potential environmental hazards, as some electronics contain hazardous wastes such as mercury and lead. Through the CSWM illegal dumping clean up volunteer program, illegally dumped materials are sorted to ensure recyclables are separated and properly recycled.

Although the service received a significantly lower amount of calls reporting dump sites, the volumes collected are still on par with previous years, which can be attributed to the earth week clean-up event from older historic dump sites.

Reports Received and Actions Taken

During this reporting period, there were 58 new complaints of illegal dumping reported to the CSWM. These reports generated investigations resulting in two tickets being issued and four warnings. In addition, three apology letters were received identifying regrets for mistaken actions after voluntary clean-up. To date, no repeat offenders have been identified.

The locations of dumping sites and types of material being discarded are attached to this report in Appendix B. While the types of materials being found has not changed significantly, there has been a continuing decline in reports of large sites containing construction waste which indicates that companies previously involved in this activity are aware of the proactive approach to enforcement. A review of the program was done for consideration on evolving the program. Education and advertising have been done extensively. More focus is anticipated on enforcement and coordination of cleanups. Proposed changes would include bylaw staff assisting with smaller clean ups after conducting an investigation and advertising of illegal dumping on CVRD bylaw vehicle to promote the program. Breakdown of proposed changes attached as Appendix C.

Community clean ups were cancelled in 2020 due to COVID-19 but the service was successful in operating an earth week clean up event in 2021, utilizing volunteers from local Rotary clubs, community groups and local businesses. All together seven Rotary clubs participated from within the service area collecting over nine tonnes of garbage. Two additional clubs from outside the district also participated. The event gathered interest for a Rotary district clean up in 2022, with over 90 clubs participating throughout British Columbia and into the United States.

The new illegal dumping video has attracted interest from various community groups, particularly those that travel the backcountry and want to help keep our region beautiful. Presentations on illegal dumping to community groups are a great way to raise awareness and gather volunteers to help conduct clean ups and will help promote the program and raise awareness during earth week.

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 program is a component of the CSWM financial plan and operations. The program includes a communications plan promoting awareness of illegal dumping and opportunities for the public to provide insight.

The 2021 budget for tipping fee waivers, signs and materials is \$22,000. This does not include education or communications expenses. Staff will continue to monitor the budget and adjust it as required. The use of volunteers to collect and deliver waste to the landfill maximizes the available budget. Rather than spending money on labour and trucking, the service can focus on waiving fees, which maximizes the amount of material we can remove from the environment.

Legal Factors

No legal changes are proposed for the illegal dumping program in 2022.

Regional Growth Strategy Implications

The Program works towards achieving many of the goals set out in the CVRD 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 in both the CVRD and Strathcona Regional District (SRD) under the Program. The CSWM service continues to offer support and guidance for implementing the Program and administering the regulations and ticketing bylaws.

Interdepartmental Involvement

CSWM works closely with bylaw compliance to administer and enforce the Program. The ability to issue Municipal Ticket Information (MTIs) and warnings as an enforcement tool has been effective to date. However, the MTI system does have challenges with the need to locate and personally serve tickets. The CVRD has introduced a Bylaw Adjudication ticketing system which will allow for the use of bylaw notices to reduce costs and time, avoid unnecessary attendance of witnesses if the matter is disputed, court appearances and eliminate the requirement for personal service of tickets.

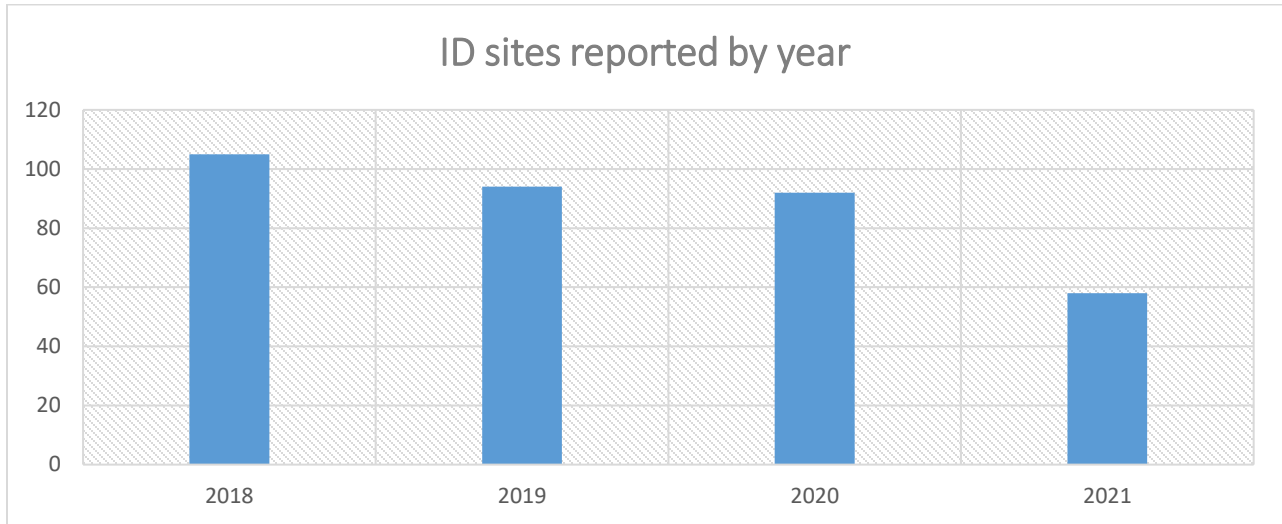
Citizen/Public Relations

In 2021, CSWM staff initiated an earth week clean up challenge with Rotary. The success of this event has led to a Vancouver Island wide earth week challenge in 2022 through the Association of Vancouver Island Coastal Communities. Furthermore, the Rotary has challenged all clubs in the district for a total of 94 Canadian and United States clubs participating. The CSWM service is hoping to get participation by all jurisdictions including member municipalities within the service area and discussions have begun with local businesses, including Mosaic Forest Management. The residents who volunteered as part of the earth week clean up in 2021 were grateful for the opportunity to help with the event and are interested in participating in 2022.

Attachments: Appendix A – 2018 – 2021 reports to CSWM
Appendix B - Illegal dumping reported locations
Appendix C – 2022 program changes

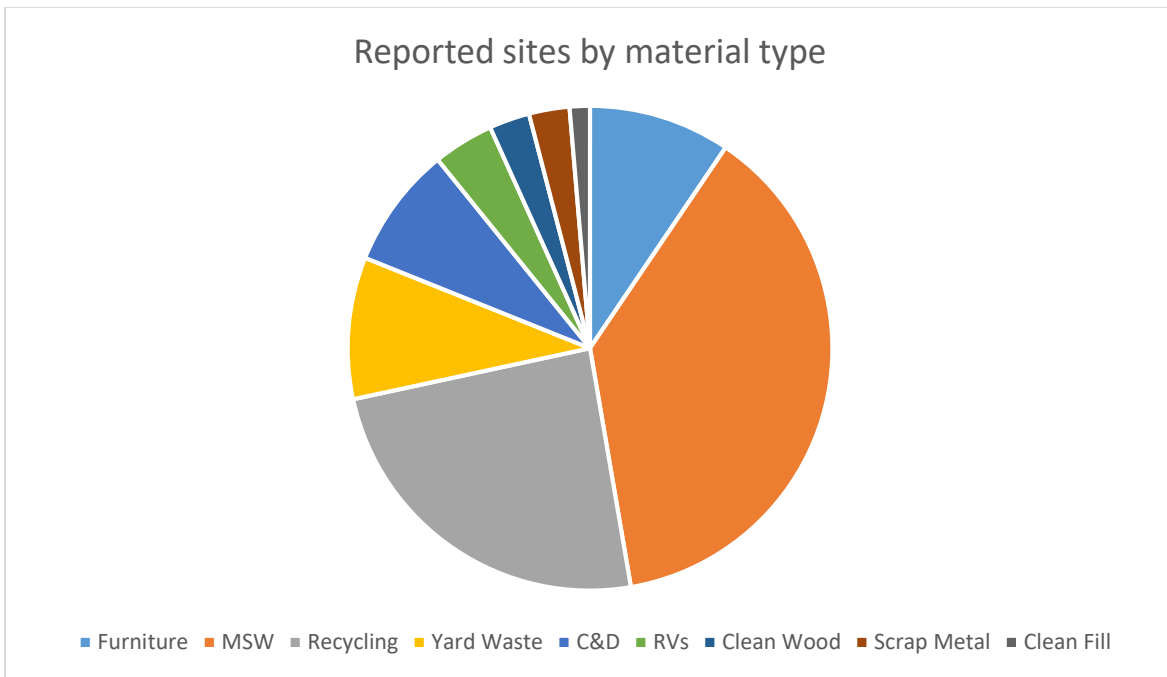
Appendix A

2018 – 2021 Reports to CSWM



Appendix B Illegal Dumping Reported Locations

2021 Illegal Dumping Site Location Reported	No. of reports	Sites containing free items	2020 Illegal Dumping Site	No. of reports
City of Courtenay	5	3	City of Courtenay	14
CVRD	30	13	CVRD	40
SRD	13	11	SRD	18
Town of Comox	0	0	Town of Comox	2
City of Campbell River	6	1	City of Campbell River	11
Village of Cumberland	4	2	Village of Cumberland	7
Total	58	51%	Total	92



Comox Strathcona Waste Management Illegal Dumping Program in 2022

A review of the program was done through discussions with bylaw and Comox Strathcona Waste Management (CSWM) staff. Reporting of sites has been dropping since 2017 however the problem persists. Education and advertising has been done extensively so focus can move toward improved enforcement and clean ups. Proposed changes would include:

- As Regional Districts are unable to utilize Public Works as per municipalities (Comox, Cumberland, Courtenay and Campbell River), there is a reliance on volunteers for cleanups. Some changes in consideration are:
 - Trial the use (in Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) electoral areas) of bylaw staff to physically clean and remove illegally dumped items after file has been opened, area checked, photographed and any evidence gathered for enforcement follow up.
 - Patrols will be conducted proactively and can also assist with cleanups of smaller sites identified during patrols that were not reported to lessen the amount of illegal dumped items visible to the community.
 - Bylaw staff can dispose of items at waste management site, and coordinate with CSWM waste management staff on set day(s) per week while focusing on other bylaw files during remainder of the week.
 - Continue utilizing volunteers and stakeholders (forestry, BC Hydro, Rotary Clubs etc) on larger clean ups and coordinated thru the CSWM Services Coordinator.
 - Continued coordinated clean ups of historical sites thru organized events during Earth Week.
- Utilize social media to target individuals without naming as an educational tool. Example: photo of blacked out name on receipt found at illegal dumping site with statement attached such as “all we need is this and you are getting a \$500 ticket ... think twice.” In addition, post additional examples of successful identifications without naming individuals.
- Use CSWM marking on back (tail gate) of new bylaw truck to promote how to report. Costs of signage as per CSWM operating budget. This step will provide advertising of the program while the vehicle is seen transiting the solid waste area.
- Commence use of recently approved Bylaw Adjudication ticketing system and assist staff across the CSWM with implementation and any required training with the ticketing process. The new adjudication ticketing system is a process which will help manage bylaw disputes locally rather than through the Provincial Court system. All administration and processing will be handled thru the CVRD bylaw compliance office.

