

Clear Bags "answer question nobody asked"

The more I look at the Clear Bag Program, the more questions I have.

According to their own reports, York Region can't process all the recyclables they already collect ? excess gets sent to the landfill. The Toronto Star reported on November 18 that York Region trucks their Green Bin waste to Ottawa, and London to be processed. In Ottawa electricity is produced from a Landfill to Energy facility. In London, the organics are composted. Neither facility benefits York Region or Aurora.

Except for large bulky items, our black bag garbage is incinerated in a Waste to Energy facility to produce electricity.

That was being done in New York but is now supposed to happen at the new Durham facility ? not York, but at least it's next door. York Region was so excited about the Waste to Energy aspect they actually factored in electrical generation as an increase in their diversion rate.

(By the way, the Province said ?no' to that bit of creative accounting)

So exactly how is collecting more recyclables and Green Bin organics helpful to the environment in York Region? More items in the landfill? More trucks on the road? Has anyone provided costing on this? Or how about the net environmental impact?

The amount of material picked up at the curb each week is only part of the equation.

Why is Aurora Council so excited about upping the diversion rate?

The way it stands, one ton of organics diverted away from creating electricity at the Durham incinerator is one ton trucked to Ottawa to create electricity there.

I fail to see the environmental benefit.

Worker safety is purported to be a key reason for implementing clear bags.

GFL serves many municipalities, so is safety only an issue in Aurora? Is GFL insisting that other municipalities adopt clear bags?

Then we have the argument claiming the need to prevent hazardous waste such as household batteries from being incinerated.

A single AA battery is about 1cm X 3cm and easily hidden in any kind of garbage bag, even the small opaque bag we'll be ?allowed? to use.

And why the Orwellian approach?

Are Aurorans a town of eco scofflaws that can't be trusted to recycle?

Is ?We're watching you!? really the way to treat taxpayers?

Have you considered education?

How much Green and Blue Bin material is rejected because it contains improper items?

How many residents are up on all the dos and don'ts of recycling?

How much better could we do for the environment if we all knew things like pizza boxes with grease stains don't go in the Blue Box but that empty paint cans do?

How many Aurorans know the locations where they can correctly dispose of household batteries?

Sorry ? I'm all for recycling, but in my view the Clear Bag Program is all about playing environmental politics. Vision Quest Environmental, for planning and implementation fees of \$45K, shows Council how they can earn their eco-friendly merit badges.

So, whatever happened to responding to the needs, wants and wishes of the taxpayer?

Since when was raising our diversion rate a hot topic? Electoral or otherwise?

As far as I can see - Council used my money to buy a solution and then tried to create a problem to justify their purchase.

The Clear Bag program is the answer to the question that absolutely no one was asking ? least of all Mother Nature.

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