

# Make sure you bag all your garbage before tossing it into your curbside bins: new bylaw

**By Brock Weir**

You may need to stock up on more garbage bags, following Council's approval of a new waste bylaw last week.

Rest assured, however, you don't need to buy clear garbage bags (at least not yet), but you will have to give special consideration to some of the more inconsequential pieces of trash you might throw haphazardly into your curbside bins at home.

The new bylaw was approved last Tuesday after a few stops and starts on just what kind of impact the bylaw would have on area residents.

Originally appearing before Council in June, it was temporarily put on ice after Councillors raised alarm bells that its wording could cause confusion within the community. Their concerns included worries that no provisions were made for garbage put in bins and other receptacles.

Under the previous bylaw, residents were able to put up to three garbage bags or garbage containers curbside for pickup.

The proposed new bylaw did away with that provision, accounting households to put out up to three garbage bags and up to five bulk items with no mention of garbage containers.

"I have heard from two different residents with regards to the language in the new bylaw [and how] it seems to imply a reduction in the amount of bags you can have on the curbside," said Councillor Michael Thompson at the time. "If you compare it to the previous bylaw, it sort of said bags/containers. I would like the language to be the same in this new one as it was in the previous one. I don't want anybody to think we're reducing the amount of garbage."

A report last week, however, seemed to allay most of these concerns.

In his report, Ilmar Simanovskis, Aurora's Director of Infrastructure and Environmental Services, said a primary difference between the new bylaw and the old was a requirement to put garbage in a "waterproof plastic bag before putting it into a rigid receptacle" while the previous bylaw allowed individual pieces of garbage to be thrown in with the rest of the bags.

"The new practice was recommended by staff to address health and safety concerns raised by the collection personnel as loose garbage and small bagged garbage is more difficult to handle when being transferred from a garbage can to a collection vehicle," said Mr. Simanovskis. "The operators' preference is to have all the garbage "whether bagged only or bagged and placed in a receptacle "to be placed in its own standard-sized plastic garbage bag."

At last week's meeting, however, Councillor Thompson still sought clarification that Council was not imposing "limits" on how much could be put on the curb.

"The perception from some of the residents who have seen this and contacted me is that if I put out two bags in one container, all of a sudden is that going to be counted?" he said. "They are perceiving it as a reduction in the amount of garbage they can put to the curb, not just residentially but commercially there is no reference to them in the new bylaw, and they had up to 10. That is what I had hoped would come back in the memo, to get clarification on whether there is or there isn't."

Warren Mar, Solicitor for the Town of Aurora, as well as Anka Mihail, addressed these concerns on behalf of Mr. Simanovskis, who was not at the meeting. They reiterated there would be no further limits, with Mr. Mar adding that handling smaller bits of garbage, such as loose banana peels, creates its own problem.

"Our service providers would then be forced to pick that up and it makes a mess," he said. "It goes everywhere and they were trying

to address that concern. My understanding is there should be no change to commercial pickup.?

Added Councillor Thompson: ?If that is what we're going to communicate out [to residents] I am fine with supporting it. If?we can assure the community this is just an update of the current bylaw and there is no reduction in the service levels whatsoever, then so be it. I am fine with that.?