



Waste Check Annual Report

Gus Green, General Manager
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Waste Check Annual Report



Champion of the Environment Scholarship

The recipient of the \$2,500 scholarship by Divert NS for region 7 was Aaliyah Horner from Digby Regional High School. Aaliyah has long known the importance of preserving the environment. As a long time member of Girl Guides of Canada, she participated in numerous beach and community cleanups, planted trees and reused waste items in crafts or other projects. While working at a farmers' market, she noticed a lot of produce being thrown away. She developed a plan to trim and cut up any produce that were perfectly edible but didn't look "perfect." Other produce, like cucumbers and fruit that were getting ripe or were bruised, were turned into pickles and jams. This significantly reduced the amount of food waste and created additional products to sell at the market.



To read Aaliyah's winning essay follow this link:

<https://divertns.ca/scholarship-competition/2021-scholarship-champions>



You can watch the full video announcement of the Champion of the Environment Winners on youtube at <https://bit.ly/3rIOBlv>

2021 Mobius Awards

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and its related restrictions, the 2021-22 Mobius Awards celebration gala was not held. This year, the Mobius Awards presented a celebration of Champions who, despite a global pandemic, never gave up on their environmental actions and even took on new waste-reducing initiatives and habits. Nominated candidates were featured in the local saltwire publications in November 2021 and through Divert's social media accounts.

Waste Check submitted the following as our champions:

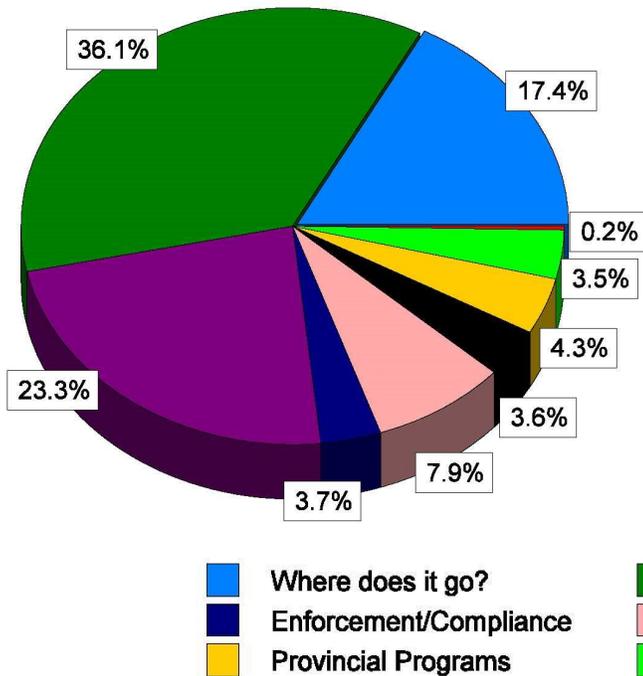
- **Acadia First Nation**—*Yarmouth Rollout of Waste Management Program and Education at Acadia First Nations Yarmouth Community.*
- **Sylvia Surette**—*Naturally Canaan Sustainable Products Naturally Canaan Sustainable Products aims to make and offer products that won't end up in landfill. They create their items to be either reused, recyclable or compostable.*
- **Tim MacKinnon**—*for his commitment to cleaning up the environment when his schedule allows and for the many litter clean ups he conducted in 2020-21.*



To learn more about our champions please visit:

<https://divertns.ca/mobius-awards/2021-mobius-award-champions>.

Hotline Update



A database is kept of all the calls that come in on the hotline. The total calls received from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022 was 3517. There was an increase of 6.2%. The pie chart shows the different categories of calls that were recorded.

Green Cart Update

Carts continue to be a busy area of service for Waste Check. Our original carts are over 20 years of age, Waste Check expects that replacements will continue to increase. Covid-19 created some supply/shipment challenges. Wait times for 65g carts delivered to residents increased slightly but had minimal impact.

Deliveries - Fiscal 2021-2022

Total carts delivered

952 (35g – 553, 65g – 399)

Delivered Per Municipal Unit

Municipality of Argyle (147 – 15%) 35g – 98, 65g - 49

Municipality of Clare (211 – 22%) 35g – 122, 65g - 89

Municipality of Digby (151 – 16%) 35g – 87, 65g - 64

Municipality of Yarmouth (229 – 24%) 35g – 149, 65g - 80

Town of Digby (66 – 7%) 35g – 47, 65g - 19

Town of Yarmouth (148 – 16%) 35g – 50, 65g - 98

“Own less stuff. Enjoy more freedom. It really is that simple.”
Joshua Becker

Covid-19

Covid-19 still had significant impacts on Waste Check's "normal" for 2021-22. Staff followed Provincial recommendations and temporarily closed the office to the public on two separate occasions (May and January). Staff adapted well during the initial phase of Covid-19 and the services to the public continued uninterrupted. Although Waste Check's offices were closed during these times, Staff were working remotely and were still accessible to the public via phone, email, social media platforms and the free Recycle Coach app. Cart deliveries and repairs were still being completed and Bylaw complaints were being followed up on.



Social Media

Waste Check has several social media platforms, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. All are actively used to reach residents. Facebook continues to be the most popular with residents. Waste Check shares Municipal and Provincial partner Facebook posts as well as posting about common waste related issues/topics. We've created targeted campaigns throughout the year. We try to post at least three times a week and share other posts in between. There has been a very positive response to our posts. The partnership between Waste Check and the Municipal units continue as they are sharing our posts to their pages as well which increases the awareness of our programs throughout the Region.



This past Summer, Waste Check joined Halifax Solid Waste as well as many other regions in the **Let's Be Clear...#LitterDoesntBelongHere** campaign. Pictures were taken of litter across our region by Waste Check staff and hashtagged #LitterDoesntBelongHere. This campaign was promoted on both our Facebook and Instagram platforms.



Provincial News

All Provincial organizations that Staff are members of continued to meet. The majority of meetings during the year continued to be held virtually due to Covid-19 restrictions.

A presentation from Hon. Tim Halman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change was given at a Regional Chairs meeting. The minister announced that “Extended producer responsibility is one of the most effective ways to keep waste out of landfills and move us from a throw-away economy to a circular economy. EPR drives innovation as producers design products with less environmental impact and creates economic opportunities and jobs in the recycling and packaging sector. EPR will bring many benefits to our communities, our environment and our economy.”

The Department conducted targeted stakeholder consultation throughout the winter with: municipalities, Divert Nova Scotia, the retail sector, specifically, large grocery and retail store chains, the Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses and the Retail Council of Canada, waste management facility operators and haulers, apartment building property groups and associations, academia, industry and business associations, environmental stewardship organizations and other relevant stakeholders. Staff from NS Environment and Climate Change presented their “Extended Producer Responsibility for Printed Paper and Packaging – Targeted Stakeholder Engagement” presentation during the consultations. This included an overview on EPR, the highlights of the Municipal EPR Framework completed by the Priorities Committee some years ago, and some additional thoughts the Government has on EPR for Nova Scotia. Feedback was also requested on additional materials that the department is considering for EPR including expanded electronics, batteries under 5Kg and lighting. The Province has indicated that they feel there is considerable “power” in a “unified Municipal response” to this EPR stakeholder consultation. While they will welcome any and all responses, they feel that our Municipalities carry greater influence when they speak with a single voice. The Regional Chairs tasked the Priorities Committee to compile this unified Municipal response to the Provinces EPR consultation. The unified Municipal response was submitted April 11, 2022.

Divert NS Contracts

The 21-22 contracts held with Divert NS were renewed and there were no significant changes in the contracts from the previous year. Waste Check holds contracts that assist in funding for Enforcement, Education and Regional Coordinator.



Divert NS Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Funding

Funding in the amount of \$140,000 was allocated to Municipalities in the Province to assist in the disposal of HHW. The funds are distributed equally among the seven regions in the Province. Waste Check submitted requests for the three regional HHW depots.

Clean Leadership Internship Program

The Clean Leadership Summer program partners with organizations to invest in training and employment for students in clean tech and environmental jobs. The position was for university-level students and they do require that the students take some sort of a leadership role for at least part of their job. Divert NS partnered with Clean to offer additional funding for summer internships related to waste management. Waste Check hired Colby Stoddard, a student from Acadia University for 15 weeks to act as Waste Diversion Inspector/Educator. The wage for this position was covered at 100%, Clean covered 60% and Divert NS contributed the other 40%. Curbside Audits were conducted, he assisted with managing the litter program, attended some day camps and small community events/markets. Colby also worked for us during the summer of 2019 as a summer student.

Clean



Schools

The school year continued to be challenging. Although schools were open to students, there continued to be restrictions for visitors. Our Education Coordinator continued to reach out to schools in the Yarmouth and Digby County area via email to let them know that she is available to assist with waste reduction education in-person or virtually and made them aware of the lesson plans available through Divert NS. This year the Education Coordinator developed targeted emails and posters for the following groups:

NS Home School Association, Grades Primary to 5, Grade 6 (Divert NS Education Contract requirement), Middle School (Grades 6-8) and High School (Grades 9-12).

In-person presentations were given to the Digby Elementary School Pre-Primary Class and the Yarmouth Consolidated Memorial High School Grade 9 Discovering Opportunities class.

A full waste audit was also done at Maple Grove Education Centre. Students voiced their concern about the amount of litter in the school and on the grounds at an SAC meeting. The Principal invited the Education Coordinator in the school. A full report of the audit and recommendations were provided to the Principal.

Presentations were given in-person to the Continuing Care Assistant (CCA) Class and the Carpentry Class at NSCC Burrigge Campus. These focused on the waste generated in each of their fields. A presentation was also given to the Achieve Program at NSCC Burrigge Campus on 4-stream sorting.

The Education Coordinator held face to face training for the Resident Advisors at Universite Sainte Anne. This session was held in French and included new and returning Advisors. She was also in attendance for Orientation day, She spoke about sorting and encouraged students to download the Recycle Coach app. Students/advisors are from other regions in Nova Scotia, other Provinces and International.

Virtual Learning

The Education Coordinator presented to the split grade 3/4 class at Weymouth Consolidated on sorting and played a game of How Long Does it Last, taken from the Divert NS Curriculum.

A virtual presentation on the Environmental Impact of Plastic Pollution was delivered to the Grade 6 class at Ecole Joseph Dugas. This virtual learning experience on Ocean Plastic Pollution was developed in French from start to finish by our Education Coordinator. It is designed to be an Inquiry Based learning program and focuses on the impact of plastics on the ocean and how the plastics end up in gyres that create garbage patches. The students were presented with the question of *What can we do, as individuals, to reduce the impact of plastic pollution on the Environment?* The students researched 1 of 4 single use plastic items, then used the information they found to create a poster explaining why it is best to reduce the use of the item, refuse the use of the item they chose and what alternatives are there to replace this plastic item. It was well received and students were very engaged.

WASTE EDUCATION

VIRTUAL OR FACE TO FACE EDUCATION
The Education Coordinator is always happy to visit your home school environment either in person or virtually to deliver curriculum aligned presentations.

PRESENTATIONS TAILORED TO MEET LEARNING OBJECTIVES
Lesson plans available suitable for students from pre-primary to grade 12, the Education Coordinator can also tailor presentations to the needs of your student.

divert NS
Nothing Wasted

WASTE DIVERSION CURRICULUM
Divert NS offers curriculum-based lesson plans tailored to the learning outcomes for grades Primary to 6 in Nova Scotia.
<https://divertns.ca/education/lesson-plans>

waste Déchèts

CONTACT US TODAY
Contact Anne LeBlanc, Education Coordinator, Waste Check for Yarmouth and Digby Counties and find out what she can offer your home school plan.
anne@wastecheck.ca
(902) 742-9340

www.wastecheck.ca



Litter

There are four Municipal Units who offered a litter clean up incentive program. We continue to support these programs by promoting on social media and providing litter kits.

Waste Check developed a sticker for residents to use on their bags of collected litter. The sticker enables residents to place the bag(s) for curbside collection without worrying about having the bag rejected. Often, recyclables are picked up during a cleanup that can not be cleaned making it garbage. Having this material in the clear bag can make it confusing for the collector.



Adopt a Highway/ The Great Nova Scotia Pick-Me-Up

Waste Check continues to be the Regional distribution centre for free litter kits on behalf of the program. There were some delays with Provincial covid-19 restrictions but once the restrictions were lifted there were many groups eager to clean up.

Waste Check assisted with 26 registered clean ups during the year by responding to inquiries on how to register, creating and delivering litter kits.



Yarmouth Life Skills community cleanup

Adopt a Block

The Town of Yarmouth Communities in Bloom (CIB) committee once again promoted the Adopt a Block program. Waste Check also promoted it through social media and assisted with both registration and kits. The CIB Committee held a clean-up August 4th and picked up 44 kgs of litter.



Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup—materials collected.

Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup

Waste Check was invited and participated in the Municipality of Clare's *Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup* on August 29th. The event was very successful with many participants cleaning up the Meteghan beach.

Scotian Shores & Ocean Warriors

Angela Riley, Scotian Shores has been a great advocate for the Environment by both organizing and cleaning up shorelines around Nova Scotia. Many cleanups have taken place within the Region. She has helped promote and bring attention to our very own Ocean Warriors. Waste Check both assists with these organized cleanups and pick up materials cleaned up as resources allow.

Recycle Coach

Waste Check continues to promote the Recycle Coach app through social media as well as over the hotline. Residents can download it for free and have access to a customized collection calendar for their address, a reporting feature for illegal dumping and green cart repair/replacement. It also includes a searchable database for what goes where.

The app had 15,573 users for the fiscal year. 1,275 Mobile, 12,598 web, 1,272 calendar and 428 communication users in the Region.



Resources

Staff continue to develop resources to assist with Waste Management education.

The Education Coordinator continues to develop presentations in both English and French based on the audience she has been asked to speak to. Some of these include, **How Big is My Ecological Footprint** (adapted from the book *Teaching Green, The Middle Years, Hands on Learning in Grades 6-8*) and **The Environmental Impact of Plastic Pollution**. Both were developed to use in Schools.

Hackathon

WREN and NSCC are working together to put on a Hackathon event. This idea is that in small teams, students will come up with solutions for Beach Waste. Waste Check was invited to be a part of this event and provide information and perspective. The Education Coordinator has done extensive work for this event, gathering information and developing documents to present. There is no date confirmed for this event.

New Homeowners Brochure

Waste Check created a New Homeowners brochure to provide comprehensive program info to new residents to Digby and Yarmouth Counties. Throughout Covid, we have seen an increase of new residents in our Region. The brochure is available in both English and French and gives new residents an overview of how to manage their household waste. This brochure is available on our website and has been provided to local Realtors.



Training/Professional Development

Environmental and Health Impacts of Covid-19 Related Plastic Waste (Webinar)

The Education Coordinator attended a webinar on the Environmental and Health Impacts of Covid-19 Plastics. Very informative with great information that can be incorporated into presentations about the disposal of single use masks, plastic gloves and statistics on the impact so far observed on our environment. This free webinar can now be viewed on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/URi8dAMz9Lk>.

Teaching Climate Change

The Education Coordinator attended a Free Course on teaching Climate Change that was presented by The Clean Foundation. This project was undertaken with the financial Support of *Environment and Climate Change Canada*. Participants learned how to tie in Climate Change lessons to the renewed 7&8 Curriculum for the province of Nova Scotia. Each participant was provided with incredible assets, books & activities that can be used to build relevant, curriculum related lesson plans and content.

Chamber of Commerce Courses

The Assistant Manager participated in *Workplace Education* offered through the Yarmouth & Area Chamber of Commerce. During the Fall she completed *Essential Communication Skills for the Modern Workplace* and also completed the *Transformational Leadership* during the Winter.

First Aid

First Aid training was held in the office on December 8th. All staff are trained in Emergency first aid and CPR.

In the Community

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, there were not as many organized festivals or large social gatherings. However, as some restrictions eased over the summer, we had the opportunity to go into the Community.

Compost Awareness Week

Compost Awareness week was from May 2-8, 2021. There were still Covid-19 restrictions in place so we were unable to do what we had originally planned. Instead we went virtual. Our Education Coordinator, Anne LeBlanc hosted a webinar: Peels to Petals. The webinar introduced the basics of our composting program, building your own backyard compost pile and how to compost with worms. We also had a focused social media campaign around Compost for the week. Seeds that were provided by the Compost Council of Canada's Plant, Grow, Share a Row program were offered to community gardens, garden clubs and individuals through social media. These were mailed due to the restrictions in place.



Environment Week

Waste Check has multiple spider plants in the office, pieces were taken to root in the spring. These were planted in reusable mugs using potting soil and vermicompost. They were offered free of charge to anyone that wanted one. They were set-up outside of our office at the end of the week for contactless pick up. There were very few remaining. The reduce-reuse theme was promoted through social media as well.



Campgrounds

As restrictions eased and visitors once again were visiting our beautiful area, Waste Check visited the campgrounds and Provincial parks in the Region. Overall the Education Coordinator was well received by campground owners and was able to assist many campgrounds with tips and tricks for sorting, provide signage and a camping waste sorting guide.

Farmers Markets

Waste Check was able to visit with residents at farmers markets in our region. Notably, we visited Belliveau Cove Farmers Market. This was a huge success and we were able to give away the rest of the spider plants we had planted. It opened conversations regarding composting; municipal, home and vermicomposting.



We were also invited to spend the day at the New Digby Artisans and Farmers Market. During our visit to this market the Education Coordinator was able to hold an impromptu session on vermicomposting with children, who were out visiting the market, from the Learning Grove.

We have seen a lot of new residents coming from out of province to our region and both of these markets were an excellent opportunity to speak to these new residents about our waste management programs.



In the Community Continued

Waste Reduction Week

Waste Reduction Week 2020 took place October 18 - 24 , 2021. The theme this year was focused on the benefits of sharing, swapping and thrifting instead of purchasing new.

Ice Sports Equipment Swap

Waste Check focused on the swapping component for Waste Reduction Week and hosted 2 events on swapping Ice sports equipment. Waste Check partnered with both the Digby Minor Hockey and the Mariner Centre. The swaps were held at the Digby Arena on October 19th and the Mariner Centre on October 22nd. They were well attended.



Community Group Presentations

Despite Covid-19 restrictions in place, Waste Check still offered presentations. They were made available in-person when restrictions allowed and virtually. Presentations were made to Digby and Area Community Garden, Girl Guides, Yarmouth Life Skills and Aiden's Place.

Vermicomposting

Our colony of worms continue to grow. The colony was harvested in the Spring and it resulted in approximately 4 pounds of worms. These were separated into new bins. The compost yielded was used to plant spider plants in reusable coffee cups to give away. One of the bins was given to the Digby and Area Community Garden in the Spring. The Education Coordinator assisted with harvesting their colony in the Fall. The Education Coordinator continues to collaborate with the Plymouth Elementary School that have a worm bin.



Festivals/Parades

Digby Scallop Days

Waste Check was happy to get out in the Community with a booth for two days for the Digby Scallop Days. During the festival there was a lot talk about litter cleanups, composting and gave Staff the opportunity to talk to new residents to the Region and visitors from other Regions in the Province.

Festival Acadien de Clare—Children's Parade

Waste Check was invited to participate in the Children's parade. Mr. Green Bin had the honour of leading the parade. Mr. Green Bin always presents a great opportunity for the children to come and ask questions.



Day Camps

The Education Coordinator with the assistance of the Clean Intern was able to attend some day camps over the summer. Waste Check was invited as a guest speaker at the Little Jem's Day Camp and the Juniper House Day Camp. The Juniper House Day Camp was for 1 hour a week for seven weeks.

Clare Community Swap

Waste Check was invited to assist CIFA Radio, Clare Recreation and Inclusion Clare to host a community swap in Saulnierville in December. It was so much of a success they are expecting to host another in Spring 2022.

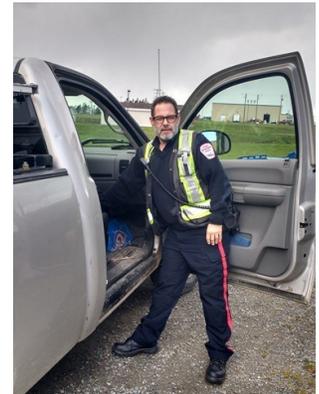
Enforcement Corner / Compliance Activity

Activity	Residential		ICI		Total	
	2020-21	2021-22	2020-21	2021-22	2020-21	2021-22
Number of complaints/calls requiring \documentation and/or follow up	470	495	73	58	543	553
Number of illegal dump sites reported	132	128	27	21	159	149
Number of residential and/or business site visits	216	227	19	13	235	240
Number of waste management/ receiving facility inspections/audits	66	95	11	7	77	102
Number of residential and/or business site visits triggered by inspections/audits	66	5	11	9	77	14
Number of warnings issued	184	207	38	26	222	233
Number of directives/orders issued	71	44	10	9	81	53



Rejections

Rejections continue to take place. The hauler has both stickers for the bags and cards for the green cart with places to check off informing the resident as to why their material was rejected. Waste Check staff contact and visit as resources allow especially to civics that are rejected more than once.



Disposal Numbers

The finalized provincial disposal rate numbers.

Region 7:

Disposal Rate: 383 kg per capita

Diverted materials 11,278 mt

Provincial:

Disposal Rate: 400 kg per capita

Diverted materials 362,382 mt

