

## Staff Report

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**Report To:** Operations Committee  
**Report From:** Heidi Jennen, Supervisor of Environmental Services  
**Meeting Date:** February 20, 2025  
**Report Code:** OP-25-007  
**Subject:** Household Hazardous and Special Products Events and Leaf and Yard Waste Site Charge Rates for Municipal Partners

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### Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report OP-25-007 respecting Household Hazardous and Special Products Events and Leaf and Yard Waste Site Charge Rates for Municipal Partners, the Operations Committee recommends that City Council:

1. Approve maintaining the per-vehicle charge of \$60, with an additional \$60 fee for vehicles carrying more than 54 litres of waste and an administrative fee of \$1,565 to participating municipalities for the Hazardous and Special Products events for 2025 and 2026, with a review planned in 2026;
2. Direct staff to bring forward a by-law to execute the 2025 and 2026 Hazardous and Special Products Agreements with Georgian Bluffs, Grey Highlands, Meaford, and Chatsworth municipalities;
3. Approve maintaining the annual cost for non-city municipal usage of the leaf and yard waste site at \$26,000 for 2025 and 2026, with a review planned at the end of 2026; and
4. Direct staff to bring forward a by-law to execute the 2025 and 2026 Usage Agreement for the Leaf and Yard Waste site with the Township of Georgian Bluffs and the Municipality of Meaford, pending approval of their 2025 and 2026 budgets.

## **Highlights:**

- Staff recommend keeping the Hazardous and Special Products annual municipal administration fee at \$1,565, the per-vehicle charge at \$60 for 2025 and 2026, and the \$26,000 municipal yearly usage fee for the Leaf and Yard Waste site.
- Staff will reassess program expenses for both services in 2026 to ensure fees correspond with operational costs, municipal participation, and evolving waste management needs.
- The shift to full producer responsibility was expected to expand drop-off options in the Province using the “Where to Recycle” map. However, the reduced availability of collection sites has led residents to rely more on municipal depots.

## **Strategic Plan Alignment:**

Green City. Supporting stable and accessible waste management programs helps promote environmental sustainability and responsible disposal practices.

## **Climate and Environmental Implications:**

This supports the objectives of the City’s Corporate Climate Change Adaptation Plan by creating conditions to minimize health and safety risks.

## **Previous Report/Authority:**

[OP-23-050 Household Hazardous Waste Charge Rates for Municipal Partners – 2024 Adjustment](#)

[OP-23-006 Household Hazardous Waste Charge Rates for Municipal Partners – 2023 Adjustment](#)

[OP-23-043 Leaf and Yard Waste Compost Site – Process Review and Business Plan](#)

## **Background:**

### **Household Hazardous and Special Products Waste (HSP)**

In 2023, Council approved Staff’s recommendation in Report OP-23-006 to increase the per-vehicle charge from \$45 to \$50 and the administration

charge from \$1,400 to \$1,565 for partnering municipalities. For 2023, Staff recommended a temporary per-vehicle fee increase based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for 2020 through 2022, recognizing that some municipalities had already set yearly budgets.

Staff reviewed costs following the final 2023 HSP event and reported to the Operations Committee in 2024. Based on this review, Staff recommended increasing the per-vehicle charge for participating municipalities to \$60 for vehicles carrying up to 54 litres of waste. Vehicles exceeding this limit would incur an additional \$60 fee. This adjustment is better aligned with the increased costs arising from the collection contract with Photech. The administration fee covers fixed program expenses, while the per-vehicle charge reflects participation levels and the volume of waste processing.

On October 1, 2021, the new producer responsibility regulation for Hazardous and Special Products (HSP) came into effect, shifting funding from Stewardship Ontario to agreements with Producer Responsibility Organizations (PROs) such as Product Care, Call2Recycle, and AMS for designated hazardous materials. Staff initially believed this shift would expand drop-off options for residents. The Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority (RPRA) introduced a "[Where to Recycle](#)" map, identifying where to take certain hazardous materials within the Province. Unfortunately, many drop-off locations identified initially, particularly for paint disposal, have since disappeared, leading residents to rely again on municipal depots.

Although municipalities receive some funding from the PROs to support hazardous and special product waste collections, only specific materials qualify for reimbursement, for example, paints, coatings, aerosols, lighting, miscellaneous organics, pesticides, and batteries. Other hazardous materials, such as fertilizers, acids, pharmaceuticals, caustics, oxidizers and non-refillable pressurized containers, are no longer HSP regulated and remain unfunded. Funding received by the City is distributed to partner municipalities on a pro-rata basis but is not included in overall program costs.

## **Leaf and Yard Waste Site**

In 2023, Council approved Staff's recommendation to continue charging participating municipalities \$26,000 annually for access to the Leaf and Yard Waste site.

Security counts at the Leaf and Yard Waste site indicate that overall vehicle numbers in 2024 were comparable to 2023. Percentagewise, visits from Owen Sound residents are higher, likely due to the increased debris brought in after the damaging windstorm in June.

Participation rates remain relatively consistent with previous years, with Meaford accounting for approximately 10% of users and Georgian Bluffs slightly less. A notable surge in visits occurred following the June 14–16 windstorm, when 774 people used the site—86% from Owen Sound and 14% from Meaford and Georgian Bluffs. To help cover the costs of grinding wood debris from the June storm, an additional \$10,000 was drawn from reserves.

As the 2024 season progressed, staff noticed discrepancies between security counts and camera data. Due to staffing changes, new staff were unfamiliar with calibrating the system. To ensure more accurate data for the entire season, these issues will be resolved before the site reopens in early April, with staff working alongside customer support to improve system accuracy. While enhanced technology could further refine tracking, it would require additional funding. Periodic on-site security remains the most effective approach, as it helps ensure proper site use and has reduced illegal dumping.

A slight budget increase is planned for contractor payments in 2025, as the grinding and compost screening contracts are due for renewal. These processes are essential for maximizing site space. Free screened soil and mulch remain available to residents, helping to optimize space usage.

## **Analysis:**

### **Hazardous and Special Products Events**

After reviewing 2024 program expenses, staff recommend maintaining the per-vehicle charge at \$60 for 2025 and 2026, with an additional \$60 fee for loads exceeding 54 litres. This ensures consistency for municipalities that have already set their budgets. Since 2022, the cost per vehicle the City has

charged to municipalities to participate in the program has increased by 33.3%. Staff will review the costs in 2026 once updated figures are available, and we have a clearer understanding of expenses.

The administration fee of \$1,565 covers fixed program costs, while the per-vehicle charge reflects participation levels and waste processing expenses. Any funding provided by the Producers, such as Product Care or Call2Recycle, is distributed to partner municipalities on a pro-rata basis. These are not factored into overall program costs.

All municipalities have confirmed their intent to continue participation in 2025 and are aware of this report recommending that fees remain at 2024 levels.

### **Leaf and Yard Waste Site**

Staff recommend maintaining the annual fee for participating municipalities at \$26,000 in 2025 and 2026. In 2026, staff will review expenses to ensure fees align with operational costs, municipal participation, and evolving waste management needs. A review may be conducted earlier if significant changes occur, such as increased participation from a participating municipality or additional budget allocations for site improvements.

## **Financial Implications:**

### **Hazardous and Special Products Events**

In 2024, 1,625 residents used the service, with 43.5% from Owen Sound—a slight usage decrease from 1,684 in 2023. Despite lower participation, the 2024 fee increase generated an additional \$5,500 in user fee revenue, helping to offset program costs. The City received \$37,383.88 (plus HST) in funding for 2024, with Owen Sound's share allocated based on its participation rate.

The City's contract with Photech runs until March 31, 2026, with an option to extend to 2028, which provides some stability in collection expenses. Based on the 1,625 vehicles that attended Hazardous and Special Products events in 2024, the net cost per vehicle was \$73.37—\$1.45 less per vehicle than in 2023. These costs fluctuate annually based on material types and volumes collected.

### *2024 Operating Budget - Expenses*

<b>Item</b>	<b>Actual Costs 2024</b>
Wages	\$19,946.00
Materials and Supplies	\$10,621
Contractor/Contract Services (Photech and Safety Kleen)	\$88,658
Expenses	\$119,225

### **Leaf and Yard Waste Site**

### *2025 Proposed Draft Operating Budget*

<b>Item</b>	<b>Proposed Budget</b>
Wages	\$63,338
Contractor payments (screening and mulching)	\$60,000
Consultant fees (mandatory lab testing)/security	\$6,500
Materials, supplies and waste tipping fees	\$2,000
Equipment charges and reserve contribution	\$58,200
Net draft budget	\$190,038

Staff recommend maintaining an annual fee of \$26,000 for participating municipalities in 2025 and 2026. This fee revenue has already been factored into the draft operating budget.

### **Communication Strategy:**

Each municipality will be notified once Council approves the recommendation.

### **Consultation:**

Manager of Engineering Services

**Attachments:**

None.

**Recommended by:**

Heidi Jennen, Supervisor of Environmental Services

Lara Widdifield, Director of Public Works and Engineering

**Submission approved by:**

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Heidi Jennen, Supervisor of Environmental Services, at [hjennen@owensound.ca](mailto:hjennen@owensound.ca) or 519-376-1440 Ext 3223.