

'Big Three' firms courted to handle Halton's waste

By PAUL DORSEY

Halton Region is planning on courting North America's biggest garbage conglomerates in the hope of finding a manager for its long-term waste system.

But putting waste management in hands of people whose primary interest is profit is POWER's chief reason for opposing the joint regional chairmen's garbage initiative, so Halton council is likely to hear from the citizen's group next week.

Regional Chairman Pete Pomeroy, Chief Administrative Officer John Fleming and then-public works commissioner Bob Moore met waste company officials this past summer to discuss the possibilities, councillors were told Wednesday.

"Based on these discussions, there is confidence in the private sector's ability to design and operate a system that meets (Provincial waste diversion targets)," a staff report said.

"We were impressed with their ideas and creativity," Fleming added.

Canadian arms of the megacorporations known as the Big Three — WMI Waste Management of Canada Inc., Laidlaw Waste Systems Ltd. and Browning-Ferris Industries (BFI) — are among six firms being invited to submit proposals in Halton's own mini-version of the SWISC garbage initiative.

SWISC (Solid Waste Interim Steering Committee), comprised of the chairmen of the five regions in the Greater Toronto Area, had member municipalities consider small-scale "demonstration projects" of their own involving garbage handling facilities.

Halton is taking that a giant step further to look beyond the short-term. It wants ideas by next March for a waste management system capable of tackling immediate needs and, by 2000, diverting half

the material it currently landfills or burns.

An Energy From Waste garbage incinerator may be a component of the system, which would obviously also involve the Region's new landfill in Milton, Councillor Bill Johnson was told.

But newsprint, clear and colored glass, metal, boxboard and cardboard, paper, plastics and compostables would have to be removed first. The system would handle both domestic and commercial/industrial waste.

Staff noted that most of the Region's existing contracts with waste handlers expire at the end of 1991, just before the new landfill opens. Its contract with Halton's Recycled Resources Ltd., the Oakville firm that does most of the recycling conducted here, can be terminated without penalty with a year's notice.

But the firm is also on the short list of companies being invited to submit proposals. Also included are Niagara Waste Systems Ltd., which already handles Halton's exported garbage, and Stinnes Enerco Ltd.

And Pomeroy indicated Wednesday that joint ventures by two or more companies, including firms not listed, will be considered. Only six companies were named, he said, because "the list is (potentially) endless."

Staff indicated the short list contains firms already involved in waste management that know Ontario's industry, recycling philosophy and approvals process. All have the finances and manpower to tackle the job.

Proponents will have to provide details on their technologies, costs, available manpower and financing, government approvals needed and scheduling.

As with the status of SWISC itself, it is not yet clear whether the selected proposal will be eligible for partial financing as a SWISC demonstration project.

Citizens are supposed to have a say in the choice of firms: the Joint Municipal-Regional Waste Management Committee now being put together will participate. Staff acknowledged this week that "the evaluation process will be challenging."

"Even with the committee, we don't have control," POWER's Rita Landry said in an interview. "The public will have no control over how much it all costs, and it's impossible for the Region to watch over the (chosen company's) shoulders day and night."

Landry cited a Nov. 14 report in the *Globe and Mail* on BFI's and WMI's latest legal defeat. The firms were jointly fined \$50 million U.S. for price fixing in Philadelphia, according to the *Globe*.

It's the most recent example of the two multinationals being convicted for conspiring on the prices they charge customers for hauling and disposing of waste.

Landry said she is not aware of any complaints regarding BFI's local operation — it bought Leferink Disposals' transport operation earlier this year — but has documented the company's infractions on both sides of the border.

Hydro switched off

A switch for a hydro transformer on Hyde Park in Georgetown caught fire last Tuesday afternoon. The cause of the fire was undetermined, according to the fire department. Firefighters remained on the scene until Halton Hills Hydro personnel arrived.



Santa Claus in Georgetown: parade at 1 p.m. today (Sat.)

Santa Claus visits Georgetown today just in time for some HO-HO-HOs in the annual Lions Club parade.

Forty bands and floats start rolling at 1 p.m. from Moore Park Plaza, through downtown Georgetown to Maple Ave., back to Guelph St. and along the highway to Mountainview Rd. It'll then turn south and follow Mountainview to Campbell Gate for the triumphant procession into the Georgetown Market Place.

During the parade, the Halton Hills British/Canadian Club will be accepting donations of non-perishable food and new, unwrapped toys, which will in turn be passed on to the Salvation Army for its annual food and toy drive. Parade watchers are welcome to drop off donations at the G. Kent double decker bus which will be parked in Moore Park Plaza before the parade and in the Market Place afterward.



Two men rob Acton Legion

Halton Regional Police are continuing their investigation after a pair of suspects were chased from the Acton Legion early Wednesday morning.

Sometime between 12:30 a.m. and 3:40 a.m. the culprits entered the Legion after a rear door was pried open. An officer observed the pair inside the building but when he tried to apprehend them, the pair fled on foot.

A quantity of alcohol and beer was removed from the Legion, located on Wright Ave. The service's K-9 Unit was called to the scene but a search of the area produced "negative results," police said.

The first suspect is described as a male white, 18-20 year, 5'10" to 6' tall. He has long curly black hair and at the time of the incident the suspect was unshaven, possibly with a thin moustache. He was wearing a black leather jacket with frills, blue jeans and white runners.

The second suspect is described as a male white, 18-20 years, 5'8" to 5'10", with medium length brown hair. He was wearing a brown suede-like coat and blue jeans.

Anyone with any information about the break-in is asked to call Detective Sergeant Mike Eacrett at 878-5511 ext. 415 or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-668-5151.

Tools taken

About \$2,250 worth of tools were removed from a van parked behind a Mountainview Rd., N., Georgetown business Tuesday night. According to police, someone smashed a side window of the van, unlocked the door and removed carpentry tools including electric saws, electric drills, a portable compressor and a nail gun.

Beer and chips taken

Two cases of Labatt's Blue and several bags of Hostess potato chips were removed from the Acton Curling Club sometime between 1 a.m. and 6 a.m. Tuesday. Police say the building was entered after a

Police beat

door was pried open. The goods were worth about \$50.

Car stolen

No charges were laid after a 15-year-old Milton youth took a vehicle from his father's car lot for a "joy ride" Sunday. At about 6:45 p.m. the 1986 Volkswagen Golf was eastbound on 15 Sdrd. near the Fourth Line when it went out of control and ended up in the ditch on its side. The vehicle was reported stolen but the youth later contacted his parents and "admitted to the wrong doing," police said. The unlicensed driver was returned to his parents.



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