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Blue Box scavengers could face a fine from Halton Region

By Julia Le
Metroland Media Group

Early Tuesday morning or late Monday night, before garbage and recycling gets picked up for the day in his neighbourhood, an Oakville resident observes a woman sifting through the Blue Boxes lining his street.

She parks her car on the side of the street where there's no stopping. When she's done, he can hear the glass bottles clinking as she closes the trunk of her car.

Iain Stuart, who lives in College Park, says it's been a weekly occurrence since the fall and he's had enough.

The longtime Oakville resident contacted Halton Region to get answers about the legality of foraging through someone's trash.

Although there is a bylaw that prohibits scavenging waste, including recyclables that have been set out at the curb for collection, it can be difficult to enforce.

David Miles, manager of Waste Planning and Collection at the Region said regional

staff do respond to reported complaints and inquiries. They attempt to speak to the person scavenging and issue a warning in cases where they have received contact information.

Halton Region also has authority to issue tickets.

A conviction for an offence under the anti-scavenging provisions of the Region's waste services bylaw has a set fine of \$100, said Miles.

The Region also notes it hires a contractor to sell the recycled material on its behalf. The contractor and Halton Region share proceeds, which partially offsets the cost of its waste management program.

Stuart, who often works from home, says it still feels unsettling that someone is going through his trash.

They can also report people scavenging by contacting Halton Region by dialling 311.

Halton waste collection staff will then follow up and try to talk to the scavengers to discourage them, he said.



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