

HALTON SEES STEEP RISE IN WASTE DURING PANDEMIC

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doors during this time — a situation they believe would benefit from an upgrade to automated waste collection.

"It would certainly be helpful to seniors and physically disadvantaged residents," said Marc Pearce, a 66-year-old Georgetown resident. "It is truly challenging to store garbage and scraps ... feeling the constant stress of wondering if any critters will be raiding our open garbage bins."

Halton Hills residents receive recycling and organic waste pickup every week, and garbage pickup every alternate week. Residents are provided with an organic bin and smaller recycling boxes, but nothing to store garbage in.

Unlike other regions that have upgraded to a

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- Avarnya Goel

wheeled cart program for the automated collection of solid waste, in Halton, all curb-side waste has been collected manually by the region's waste collection contractor since 1995, shared Andrew Farr, commissioner of public works.

While some residents say the current system works just fine as a thorough separation of organic and recycling waste leaves them with little garbage, for young mother Avarnya Goel, things look different.

"Garbage was never an

issue until we had kids," said Goel, who's been living in Georgetown for two years. "With small kids, the amount of garbage goes up and keeping it for two weeks is a problem."

Likely due to the pandemic, Halton saw a significant increase in waste generated in 2020, shared the region's website. It added that continuation of these elevated levels could shorten the life of the Halton Waste Management Site (HWMS) — currently expected to stay open until



Reeti M. Rohilla/Metroland

Marc Pearce is among many local residents who feel a waste collection upgrade is in order.

2044-2048.

"In Halton, approximately 45 per cent of materials in the average bag of garbage could have been composted or recycled," shares the region's web-

site.

Georgetown resident Pratik Babaria, who prefers storing garbage bags in bins, said the waste collection crew often roughly handled his personally

bought bins as compared to the organic and recycling ones supplied by the region.

The bins cost around \$25. After having two bins broken since January, Babaria said he switched to manually carrying the heavy garbage bags to the curb instead.

Farr said region staff are currently evaluating the feasibility of implementing a cart collection program, working toward an upcoming collection contract in 2025 or 2026.

More details on the consideration of a curbside wheeled cart collection program are available in the region's Solid Waste Management Strategy.

STORY BEHIND THE STORY: With talks around the need and benefits of a wheeled cart garbage program among many Halton Hills residents, we wanted to look at Halton Region's future plans for waste collection.



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