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Region a step closer to total trash control**MELANIE HENNESSEY**

Special to The IFP

A bylaw that would give the Region full jurisdiction over garbage collection decisions cleared its first hurdle last week.

The new regulation was approved by regional council during its meeting Wednesday. Now, a majority of the local municipalities will also have to give their consent to the bylaw for it to come into effect.

If that happens, the bylaw would see service level decisions made at the regional level—something the local municipalities can currently alter themselves. The Region's plan is to have weekly Blue Box and GreenCart collection and bi-weekly garbage collection with a six-bag limit.

With the new bylaw though, local councils would be able to request 'enhanced' levels of service, such as when it comes to bulk waste and metal collection in the rural area.

Halton Commissioner of Planning and Public Works Peter Crockett told council the Region's ability to control service levels will help achieve Halton's waste diversion targets.

He noted that the bylaw could be seen as negative from a local council perspective, since they can presently control service levels for their own municipalities.

Crockett also pointed out again that the Region has no intentions of implementing garbage bag collection in rural Halton Hills, which doesn't currently have the service.

"That (lack of garbage collection) is a significant diversion incentive," he noted.

During last week's planning and public works committee meeting, Crockett was asked if Milton would have an option to reverse the previous decision it made to have garbage bag pick-up in the rural area.

He said if the new bylaw is in place then it would be up to regional council

to make that service level decision. In this situation, he said staff would recommend maintaining the Blue Box and GreenCart pick-up in rural Milton.

Milton Councillor Barry Lee voiced his opposition to the bylaw saying he's troubled that the bylaw would be on regional council's agenda for approval before it goes to the local councils for consideration.

He also noted that the bylaw has the potential to be extremely punitive to the agricultural community, referring to the change from having six garbage bags collected every week to six bags every two weeks.

"They're going to have to go ahead and provide their own waste management," he said. "It's going to be quite punitive and frustrating for them."

The local municipal councils are being asked to pass a resolution that gives consent to the bylaw by the beginning of April 2008. Three out of the four municipalities will have to approve the bylaw for it to come into effect.

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