

Councillors discuss issues with waste collection

By Angela Gismondi

Problems with the Township's waste collection provider keep piling up.

The matter was brought up yet again under new business at a recent King council meeting.

Most of the councillors said they have been inundated with phone calls and complaints about waste management company Green for Life (GFL) Environmental.

"Our waste management situation is a crisis," said Councillor Bill Cober. "The service is disgusting."

He added one of his constituents was so irate with the service that he dumped five bags of garbage in front of the councillor's house.

While he recognizes it is the service provider's fault, unfortunately the Township is getting a bad rap because of it.

"When something like this goes bad, it's branded as the Township," said Cober. "This is causing great problems for our municipal representatives and it's not fair to you folks (staff) who work your butts off to make King Township a great place. It's impacting all of us."

Residents have been voicing complaints about the service provider not picking up their garbage and leaving a mess in front of their properties after picking up their garbage. Now it has escalated to the point where residents are confronted the waste collectors.

Councillor Cleve Mortelliti said he's had residents complain that the collectors are "rude and belligerent."

Mayor Steve Pellegrini said the problem is that the service provider, which took over garbage collection for the northern six municipalities not too long ago, didn't give residents time to adjust to the new collection system. Practices that were acceptable with the old service provider are not up to the standard of the new service provider and that is where most of the problems lie, he explained.

"Residents haven't been given the time to change the patterns they've been doing for years," said Pellegrini.

For example, he explained, some residents have been using the same container for recycling for years but the new service provider won't pick it up anymore because the materials are not in the proper bin.

Rob Flindall, director of engineering and public works for the Township of King, said staff has had a number of meetings with GFL and they are aware of the concerns. He said they are working out the glitches with the new system, but said it will take some time.

For now, Flindall said residents should bring their complaints to the Township, not confront the drivers.

"They're just doing their jobs," said Flindall. "If you have a problem, please call the Township."

Information about the Township's waste collection, including information about new, bigger size recycling bins which are now available, can be found at www.king.ca.