



Press Release

PORT COQUITLAM TO COLLECT ALL FOOD SCRAPS ON NOV. 2

Port Coquitlam, B.C. – September 21, 2009... Port Coquitlam residents will be able to put all leftover food scraps into their green waste carts for City pickup as of Nov. 2 – and they'll be the first in Metro Vancouver to do so.

Port Coquitlam City Council voted Sept. 21 to expand the City's kitchen green waste collection program to accept all food scraps. That means that as of Nov. 2, Port Coquitlam residents will be able to put meats, dairy, bones and food-soiled papers into their green waste carts, in addition to yard waste and vegetable and fruit scraps.

"This is another first for Port Coquitlam. We were the first city in Metro Vancouver to start collecting kitchen green waste, and soon we'll be the first in our region to collect all food scraps," Mayor Greg Moore said. "People are always asking what the City is doing to reduce costs, and this program is a good example. Aside from diverting more garbage from the landfill, it will help keep costs down for taxpayers as garbage disposal rates keep going up. But to achieve the benefits, we need our residents to participate."

The new program could save as much as \$45,500 each year in tipping (waste disposal) fees, which property owners pay through their utility taxes. Regional garbage disposal rates are expected to rise almost 14% next year, to \$82/tonne from \$72/tonne, while green waste disposal costs will remain at \$50/tonne. Given that up to 34% of all garbage is compostable kitchen waste, the savings can be significant with high resident participation.

Local residents who tested out the new program in a six-week pilot study this summer successfully diverted almost 36% of their household waste into their green waste carts – almost a 10% increase. All in all, study participants were able to divert almost 65% of their household waste into their green waste and recycling carts. Two hundred households took part in the pilot, which also tested out bi-weekly garbage collection.

At the moment, Port Coquitlam residents divert 52-55% of their household waste from the landfill through the existing recycling, yard waste and kitchen waste collection programs.

"With this new program, we'll be much closer to reaching Metro Vancouver's goal of diverting 70% of garbage from the landfill," noted Cllr. Sherry Carroll, who chairs the City's Environmental Enhancement Committee. "It will also be much simpler for residents, because they won't have to separate their food scraps. Combined with recycling, pretty soon we won't have hardly anything in the garbage anymore – and that's our goal."

Once the new program takes effect, it will be even more important for residents in areas known to attract bears to secure their green waste carts, as required by the City's revised Solid Waste Bylaw. Like garbage, food scraps may attract bears and other wildlife. Options for securing green waste carts include storing them in a wildlife-resistant enclosure (such as a garage) or using a Bear Aware-approved locking system (such as Critter Guard). More information about securing the carts is available at www.portcoquitlam.ca/bears.

As of Nov. 2, Port Coquitlam residents can put the following their green waste carts:

- anything from the dinner plate: meat, bones, pasta, bread, rice, dairy, sauces, vegetables and desserts,
- eggshells, coffee grounds/filters and tea bags,
- food-soiled papers: pizza boxes, plates/cups, towels/napkins, ice-cream cartons
- vegetable and fruit peels, seeds and pits, and
- yard waste: grass, leaves, weeds, prunings, houseplants and branches up to 4" in diameter and 40" long.

Items not accepted in green waste carts include recyclables, diapers and pet waste.

More information about the new program is available at www.portcoquitlam.ca/greenwaste.

- 30 -

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