

For Information Only

Communication Plan: Change in the Garbage Bag Limit

Presented To: Operations Committee

Presented: Monday, Jun 03, 2019

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Type: Correspondence for Information Only

Resolution

For Information Only

Relationship to the Strategic Plan / Health Impact Assessment

This report supports the "Quality of Life and Place" and the "Responsive, Fiscally Prudent, Open Governance" pillars of the Corporate Strategic Plan.

Report Summary

This report provides an update on the implementation of the one bag limit change scheduled for October 1, 2019 and how it will be communicated with citizens. The report identifies risks and strategies that will be employed to mitigate them. Statistical data on current (2018) solid waste programming are presented and establish a baseline that will be used to measure and evaluate progress following the one bag limit change.

Financial Implications

There are no additional financial implications at this time. The costs associated with the previous Council approved implementation plan have been incorporated within the 2019 budget.

Signed By

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Introduction

This report provides an update on the implementation of the one bag garbage limit change and how the change will be communicated with citizens.

The planned change from a two garbage bag limit to a one garbage bag limit per week is scheduled for October 2019. This is the next transitional step in garbage collection leading to the final change in 2021 with every other week garbage collection.

Background

In 2016, City Council approved changes in the garbage collection limit and the garbage collection frequency in order to reduce landfill space consumption and to improve waste diversion and recycling program effectiveness, especially in the Green Cart organic program.

There are three phases in the plan to increase diversion and reduce household garbage disposal:

Phase 1 - October 2016 – Completed



Garbage bag limit changed from three bags per week to two bags per week.

Phase 2 - October 2019 – Coming Soon



Garbage bag limit changes from two bags per week to one bag per week.

Phase 3 – February 2021

Future

Garbage and leaf and yard trimmings collection frequency changes to every other week with a garbage bag limit of two bags every other week.

In all three phases, the collection of leaf & yard trimmings will continue to be unlimited and there will be no change in the weekly collection frequency of unlimited Blue Box recyclables, Green Cart organics and large furniture, appliances and electronics.

In order to ensure a seamless transition for residents in the upcoming implementation of phase 2, a number of existing programs are being maintained and new programs and tools will be made available, including:

- Promoting reduction and reuse of waste.
- Promoting external diversion and disposal programs (e.g. take it back programs for tires, pharmaceuticals, sharps, electronics, etc.) – these programs are expected to expand over time as the Province transitions to full producer responsibility.
- Maintaining the new drop-off depots within the Azilda and Hanmer landfill sites.
- Maintaining the weekly 50 kg landfill tipping fee residential exemption.
- Maintaining the Spring and Fall Residential Tipping Fee Exemption weeks.
- Maintaining a garbage bag tag program to allow residents to place extra garbage out for collection if required.
- Maintaining collection services for small businesses on a residential collection route.
- Maintaining the home visit and field inspection program.
- Maintaining the 'no charge' fee for Blue Boxes and Green Carts.
- Maintaining the subsidy on the large capacity "Big Blue" recycling container.
- Maintaining the Waste Wizard and the Waste Wise app.
- Maintaining school programs and program mascots.
- Maintaining special support programs to provide assistance for:

- children's disposal diapers and cloth diapers;
- assistance for citizens with additional waste due to medical circumstances;
- pet waste digesters for pet owners
- Implementing a program to provide assistance for citizens with additional dog and cat waste. This will be launched in September 2019.
- Developing waste storage options or disposal opportunities prior to the changes in 2021. These options will be tabled to the Operations Committee in 2020.
- Developing additional opportunities to divert construction and demolition waste once the Construction & Demolition Material Recycling Area is completed at the Sudbury Landfill. These options will be tabled to the Operations Committee in 2021.

Staff will also continue to recommend additional waste diversion program such as mattress and textile recycling as new opportunities develop.

Evolving Waste Management Practices

In national and provincial contexts, waste management views and practices are being reshaped and redesigned. The focus is shifting from a linear approach of production, consumption and disposal to a circular economy approach that keeps products and materials at their highest utility level.

Governments at all levels are paving the way for more responsible waste management practices, increased waste diversion and waste prevention. Provincially, this is being done through the Waste Free Ontario Act, the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act and the Waste Diversion Transition Act.

At a municipal level, it is important that we align our own waste management views and practices with those that support a circular economy. Landfill space must be used optimally and valued as a scarce resource. Our waste management policies and practices should reflect the new era of regarding waste as a potential resource which can be re-integrated back into the economy as a new product or reintroduced into the natural environment with benign and beneficial impacts. Our City will benefit from diverting materials that can be reused or recycled and minimizing the inefficient use of landfill capacity by postponing the expensive cost for closing landfill sites and constructing new sites. These funds can then be diverted to the maintenance of other important infrastructure requirements.

Phase 1 Post Implementation Review (three garbage bags to two garbage bags)

The implementation of the Phase 1 change from a 3 garbage bag limit per week to a 2 garbage bag limit per week was a smooth transition. This can be attributed to the fact that the majority of households were already only generating 2 garbage bags or less.

Meeting with and providing training to 3-1-1 Call Center Representatives prior to the change proved to be beneficial, including the frequently asked questions and answers form.

Prior to the change, staff received feedback from residents that the special support program application forms should be made available prior to the change. Residents wanted to be ready and compliant with the change and staff agreed to move up the date. This was a lesson well learned and would be considered for future program changes.

Phase 2 Implementation and Communication Plan (Two garbage bags to one garbage bag)

The change from a two garbage bag limit to a one bag limit per week will take effect on October 1, 2019. Prior to implementation, a number of activities are planned to ensure that our internal resources are equipped with the knowledge required to provide residents with information to ease them through the change.

Training will again be provided to 3-1-1 staff to ensure they can answer as many questions as possible. Additional part-time hours have also been budgeted for this area to handle the expected increase in calls.

In addition, there will be a number of expertly trained Environmental Services staff who will deal directly with residents to answer questions and provide solutions.

In the first 4 weeks of implementation (October 1 to October 25, 2019), flexibility will be employed in the return to collect policy to address issues during this transition period.

The new pet waste special support program application forms will be available one month ahead of the change. This will be in addition to the existing special support programs.

Staff is also reviewing the option of providing 10 free garbage bag tags for each residential property, expanding the locations where garbage bag tags are sold and selling garbage bag tags on-line.

Communications and Key Messaging

The main objective of the communication plan is to make citizens aware that the next change is coming, encourage participation in diversion programs (in particular the Green Cart organics program) and provide information regarding the solutions that are available for them (refer to Appendix A for additional details).

Communication Activities, Events and Timelines

Communications are planned in four phases. They will be developed and deployed in a joint collaborative effort between the Environmental Services Division and the Communications Section.

Phase 1: The Build-Up - January 1 to May 31, 2019

- Public communications focusing on waste reduction, reuse and diversion:
 - Earth Care Minute videos
 - Green Living advertisement
 - Social media posts
 - City Connect newsletter
- Reviewing and presenting information to internal staff
- Training for the 3-1-1 Call Center Representatives

Phase 2: Pre-Launch - June 1 to September 1, 2019

- Public communications announcing the change to a 1 garbage bag limit on October 1, 2019:
 - Newspaper advertisements – conventional and electronic
 - Social media advertisements (including paid push ads)
 - Waste Wise App notifications
 - Meetings and presentations with interest groups (e.g. Community Action Network Groups, environmental groups, etc.)
 - Posters at Citizen Service Centers
 - Direct mail City wide flyer
 - City website banner
 - Public service announcements
- City Connect newsletter
- Frequently asked questions and answers for website, internal staff and Councillors

- Continued weekly internal communication
- Invite Councillors to one on one meetings to review program plans

Phase 3: The Launch - September 1 to October 1, 2019

- Public service announcement
- Bell Park digital billboard advertisement
- Earth Care videos focusing on waste diversion programs
- Media interviews/media pitching
- Radio advertisements
- Newspaper advertisements
- Bus back advertisements
- Pet waste exemption support program posted on the City's website
- City Connect newsletter

Phase 4 - Post-Launch: Responding to Questions, Resolving Issues, and Celebrating Successes

- Continued focus on education and customer service
- Flexibility in the return to collect policy to address issues over a 4 week transition period
- Home visits and field inspections
- Collaboration with the By-law Section to resolve issues
- Collect statistical program data for 2019
- Conduct a second participation study in 2020 and collect 2020 program statistics to measure, evaluate and report progress

Risk and Mitigation Strategies

It is expected that some citizens may not be immediately willing to change their waste disposal habits. Change can be difficult and therefore, it is important to identify risks and develop mitigative strategies that will reduce threats to success.

The flow chart in Appendix B illustrates the risks and mitigative strategies that will be employed prior to, during and preceding phase 2 implementation.

Measuring and Evaluating Effectiveness

The last step in the implementation and communication plan will be to measure and evaluate results following the change. This information will be reported back to the Operations Committee on an annual basis.

The Communications Section will measure Facebook analytics on paid and non-paid ads, web analytics for web page clicks, media coverage and 3-1-1 statistics and data.

Statistics collected by the Environmental Services Division are presented in Appendix C. These 2018 statistics will form the baseline data prior to the implementation of phase 2 in October 2019. Participation rates, set-out rates and number of containers per household will be evaluated again after the 2020 participation study. All other statistics will be collected annually.

Appendix A – Frequently Asked Questions

- Why did we reduce the bag limit from two bags to one bag?
 - We estimate that approximately 45% of residential garbage going to the landfill could have gone in the Blue Box, Green Cart or other divertible stream. These recyclable or compostable materials are valuable resources, and should not be buried in the landfill, even though our landfill capacity is over 25 years. Landfill space remaining should be reserved for non-recyclable or non-compostable materials. The cost of a new landfill site is currently estimated at \$40 to \$50 million (to replace the Sudbury Landfill) and could be up to \$100 million to replace the current three landfill sites. Increase that cost to \$200-\$300 million if waste to energy is selected rather than landfilling.
- Here we go again! The City is reducing services and not lowering my taxes!
 - Actually, we're not reducing services, we're just changing it. All we're asking is that you re-direct the waste to a different container. The reduction in the garbage bag limit is part of the transitional plan to ease residents to every other week garbage collection scheduled to commence in February 2021. If residents participate in all diversion programs, a minor portion of their waste material will be left for the garbage stream which makes weekly collection obsolete. Adapting to less frequent garbage collection, in turn, makes diversion programs, especially Green Cart organic collection more attractive even to program hold-outs. Reduction in garbage collection frequency has the added benefit of reducing garbage collection costs and postponing expensive landfill closure and new construction costs. Funds allocated for garbage collection can then be re-allocated to other priority services.
- Recycling is difficult and confusing!
 - There have been many changes to products and packaging over the years and we understand the confusion. This is one of the reasons that the Waste Wizard searchable tool was created. The tool allows you to search a particular item and then it tells you what container to place it in or whether it requires special disposal. You can access the Waste Wizard online on the City's website or download the Greater Sudbury Waste Wise app. If you're not fond of computers, just call City Services at 3-1-1.
- Using the Green Cart will attract bears.
 - Yes, bears and other wildlife are attracted to smelly items, such as food waste. But they will not be more attracted to the food waste if you place it in a Green Cart rather than a garbage bag. In fact, your food waste is better protected in the hard shelled lockable Green Cart than a garbage bag. Tips to prevent wildlife are available on the City's website.

- Why should I waste my time participating in the Green Cart program when the material will compost in the landfill.
 - Organic materials, such as food waste does not compost in the landfill. It will eventually rot, but this will produce methane. Methane is a significant contributor to global greenhouse gas emissions and all efforts should be made to minimize its production.
- I don't need to participate in the Green Cart program because I do backyard composting.
 - Great! We encourage you to continue with your backyard composting but you likely are not managing all you organic food waste and non-recyclable papers in your backyard composter. Did you know that the Green Cart program can divert all those food waste items that you can't manage in your backyard composter such as meat, bones, shells, pasta, sauce and gravy, bread and baked goods, cooking oils and dairy products. So, whatever you can't put in your backyard composter, we are happy to take in your Green Cart.
- The triplex next door already has garbage problems and this will just make it worse!
 - We understand that looking at the garbage mess next door is frustrating and we'll be paying particular attention to problematic properties. This will include educational resources and enforcement techniques. If you're concerned with a particular property or illegal dumping, please call City Services at 3-1-1.
- I don't have a car and you're just making my efforts more difficult to clean-up my property!
 - The City currently sells garbage bag tags and this allows residents to place additional garbage at the roadside for collection. To find locations where bag tags are sold, visit the City website or call City Services at 3-1-1.
- I have two children in diapers and there's no way I can meet the new one bag limit!
 - No worries. The City has developed a special support program to collect those bags of diapers as long as you participate in waste diversion and recycling programs. Better yet, you can apply to the City for a cloth diaper rebate of up to \$100 per household and create no waste at all. Application forms for both programs are available on the City's website.
- I have a medical circumstance that causes me to produce additional non-recyclable waste. Do you have any programs to assist me?
 - Yes, we do. We can provide garbage bag tags due to a medical circumstance for waste such as incontinence products or unrecyclable medical packaging. You must register for the program and agree to participate in the City's waste diversion and recycling programs. Further details are provided on the application form available on the City's website or pick up a print copy at any City Citizen Service Centre or Library.

- I have pets. Are there any programs for pet owners?
 - If you're unable to include your pet waste within your current garbage (10% pet feces to 90% garbage - we don't want our garbage collectors being sprayed with feces when they compact the waste in the garbage truck), you may qualify for the following programs:

Purchase a dog waste digester and manage your dog waste right at home. We'll provide a rebate of up to \$50 per household. Further details are provided in the dog waste digester rebate application form on the City's website.

If you have a licensed dog or cat and you participate in all of the City's waste diversion programs, you could be eligible for a garbage container limit exemption for pet waste. Approved applicants must place their waste in clear plastic bags (one small grocery bag size privacy bag allowed in each clear bag) to have up to 2 clear bags of garbage with no more than 10% pet feces in each bag collected every week. Further details are provided in the application form available on the City's website.

- Do you have any tips to reduce or re-use waste?
 - The first method in reducing your garbage is to try and reduce the amount of waste that is purchased. Companies that manufacture and sell products sometimes package items in ridiculously large and bulky packaging. If there's an alternative product with less packaging, consider buying that one. Certain retailers may even allow you to take the product without the packaging.

Following your attempt to reduce waste at the source, maybe consider a re-use opportunity. Greater Sudbury is host to a variety of reuse organizations and you could donate gently used items to those organizations. If you have the time, you can even hold a yard sale or try to sell the item online.
- You want me to participate more in recycling programs, but I'm tired of finding my empty Blue Boxes or garbage can in the middle of my driveway when I get home.
 - Waste collectors are trained to return empty containers in a certain manner and they regularly do so, but the process is not perfect. If you arrive home to find your containers in an awkward location, consider whether the wind pushed them over or whether your garbage can on wheels is tippy once emptied. If you don't believe this is the situation, please call City Services at 3-1-1 so we can monitor and rectify the situation.
- I may go over the garbage bag limit periodically and I don't mind driving it to the dump but I hate driving to the garbage pile especially when it's raining.
 - The City now has drop-off pads with containers at each landfill site. This will make it easier for you to drive and unload your waste material.

- How do I get a Blue Box?
 - You can get a Blue Box delivered to your home by calling City Services at 3-1-1 or filling out the online form on the City's website. Please allow up to 2 weeks for delivery.
- How do I get a Big Blue?
 - Big Blues are sold at a subsidized price of \$10. They can be purchased at the Recycling Center located at 1825 Frobisher Street in Sudbury or at any Citizen Service Center (call ahead to make sure they have them in stock).
- How do I get a Green Cart?
 - Simply Call City Services at 3-1-1 and we will deliver a Green Cart to your home at no charge. Please allow up to 2 weeks for delivery.
- How can I exchange my broken Green Cart?
 - You can exchange your broken Green Cart at the Recycling Centre located on Frobisher Street in Sudbury. Don't want to go to the Recycling Centre? No problem! You can call City Services at 3-1-1 to get a replacement cart delivered to your home (delivery can take up to 2 weeks) and you can place your broken Green Cart at the curb on your regularly scheduled collection day with a note "please collect broken cart". The recycling truck will then collect it.
- How can I discard of a broken Green Cart?
 - The most convenient way that you can discard of your broken Green Cart is by placing it at the curb with a note "please collect broken cart" and it will be collected by the recycling collection vehicle. Alternatively, you can deliver it to the Recycling Centre on Frobisher Street in Sudbury.
- How much garbage can I bring to the landfill site every week?
 - There's no limit on the amount of garbage that can be delivered to your landfill site. You can reduce tipping fees if you segregate your waste and we do have a weekly 50 kg allowance for household garbage delivered in a private motor vehicle. Fees vary so please refer to the tipping fees listed on the City's website for more information.
- Is there a limit on recycling or organics?
 - There is no limit for Blue Box recyclables or Green Cart organics. In fact, the more the merrier! Other unlimited roadside programs for households are leaf & yard trimmings and eligible large furniture, appliances and electronics.

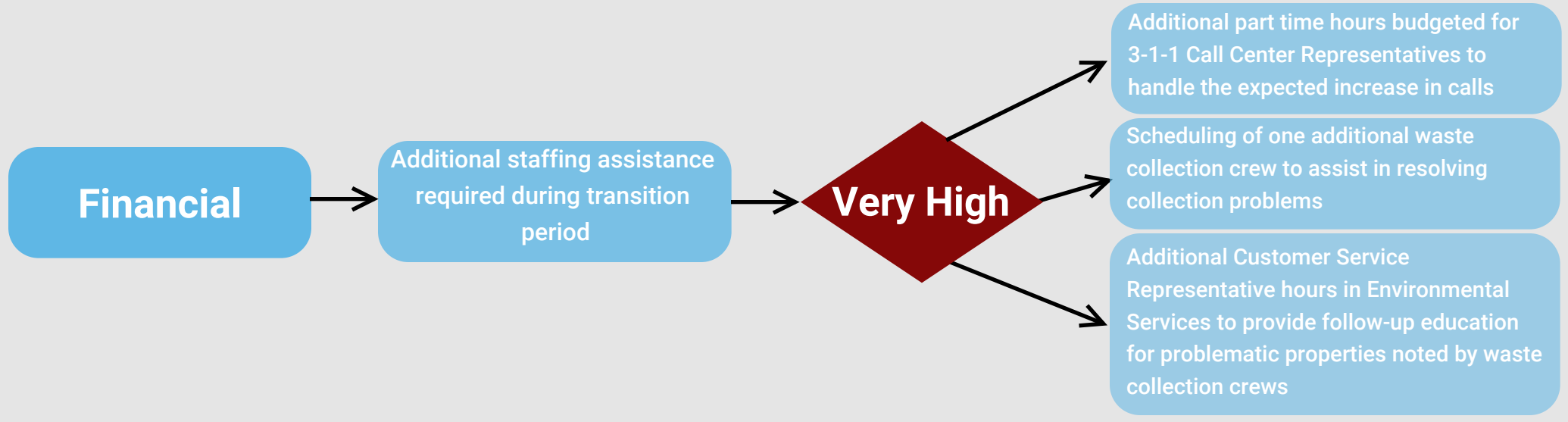
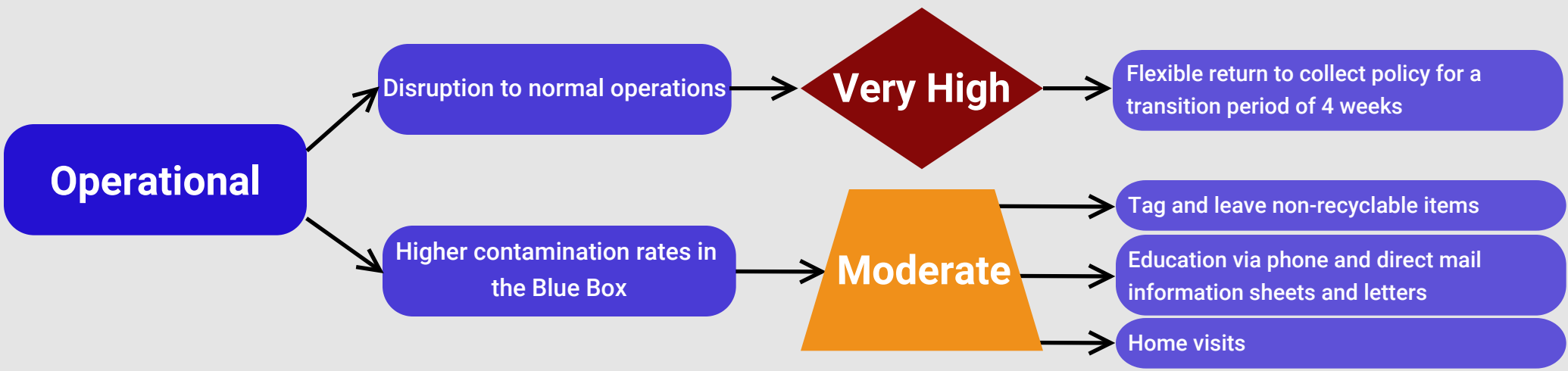
- I run a small business in my home; does the one bag limit apply to me?
 - This information is for household waste collection only. If you run a small business, please view our yellow Biz Bag program on the City's website. There, you will also find options for diverting waste through our Biz Box recycling and Biz Cart organics programs.

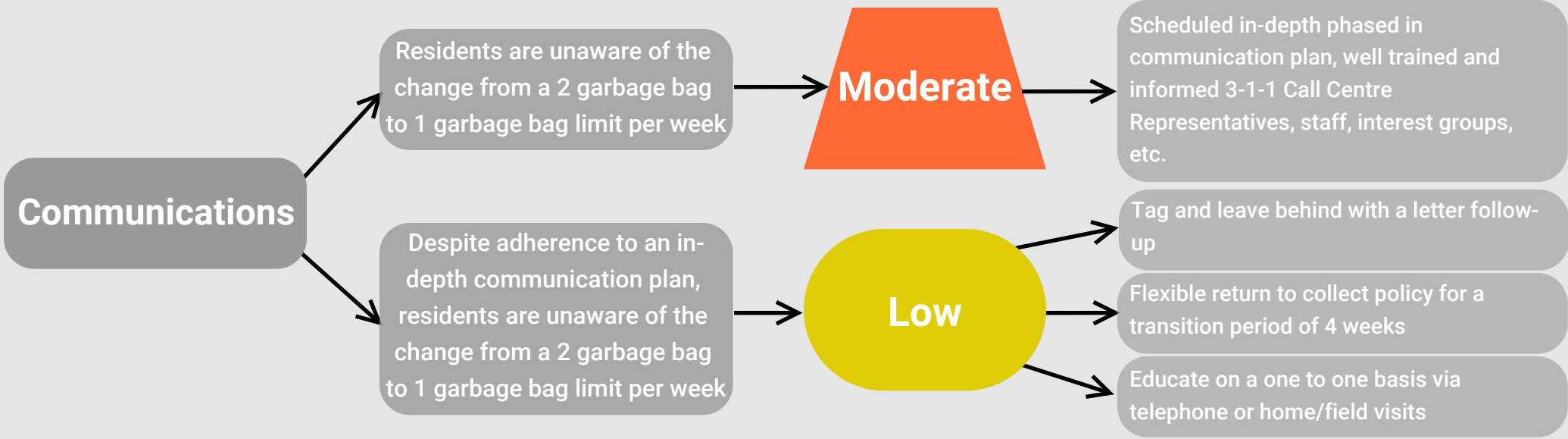
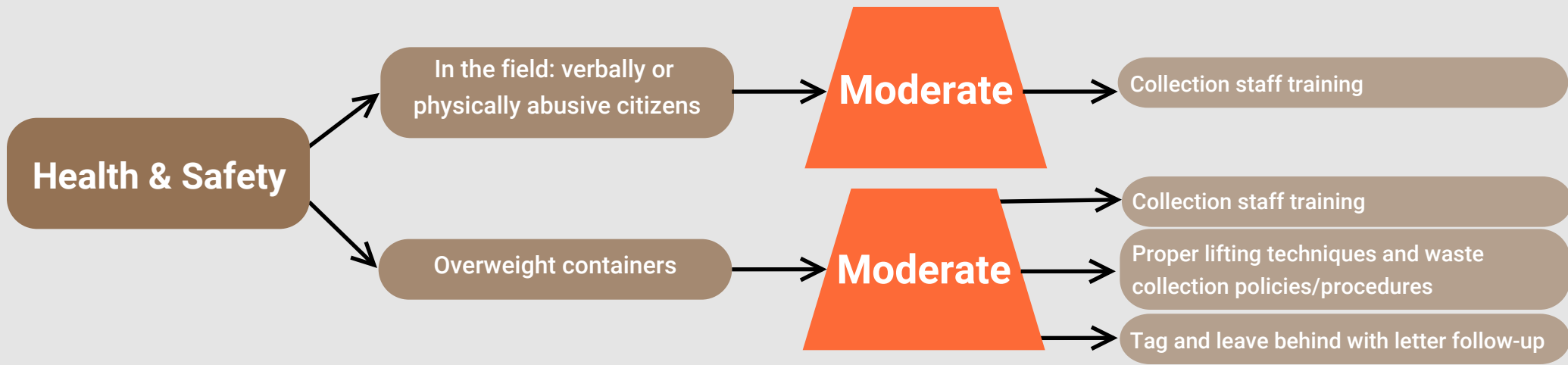
RISK CATEGORY

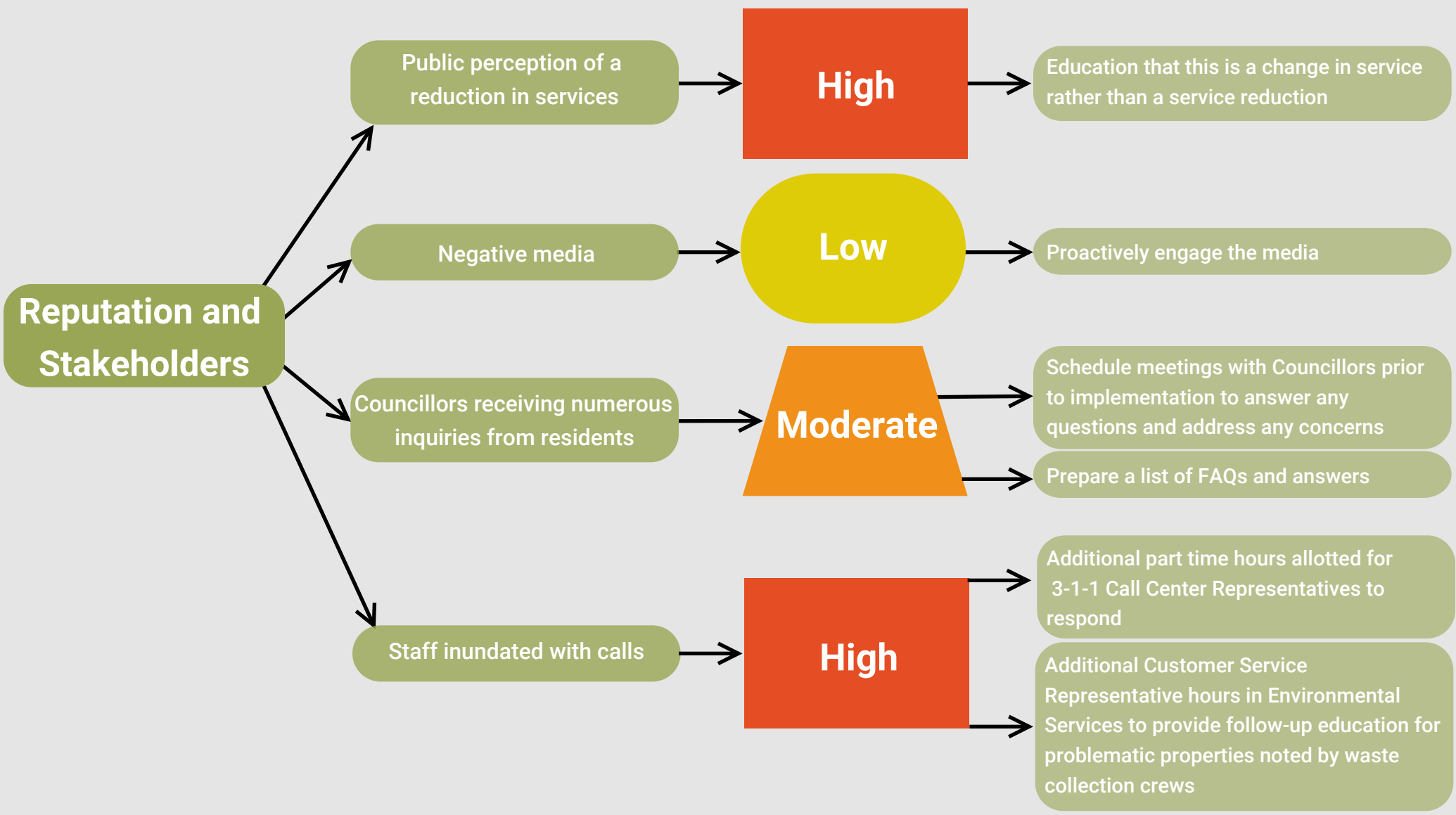
IDENTIFIED RISK

RISK PROBABILITY

MITIGATIVE STRATEGIES







RISK CATEGORY

IDENTIFIED RISK

RISK PROBABILITY

MITIGATIVE STRATEGIES

**Natural
Environment**

Increase in illegal dumping

Low

Provide education and information for programs to reduce and recycle waste

Maintain the bag tag program, the weekly 50 kg landfill tipping fee residential exemption and two residential tipping fee exemption weeks

Field monitoring and enforcement

Excessive garbage at the roadside or on properties

High

(Oct-Nov 2019)

Moderate for multi-unit residential properties

Provide education and information for programs to reduce and recycle waste

Tag and leave behind with a letter follow-up

Field Officer monitoring and enforcement for roadside programs

Support from the By-law Section for property standard matters and assistance for repeat offenders for roadside issues

Purchasing garbage bag tags or delivering garbage to the landfill rather than diverting

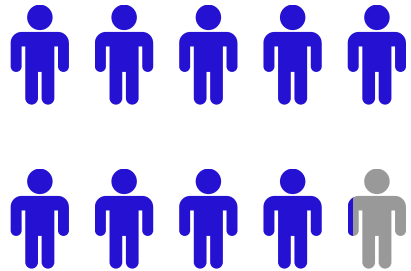
Low

Provide education and information for support programs and how to reduce and recycle waste. Focus on benefits of diverting waste and convenience of roadside services

BLUE BOX RECYCLING

2018

PARTICIPATION RATE = 10%



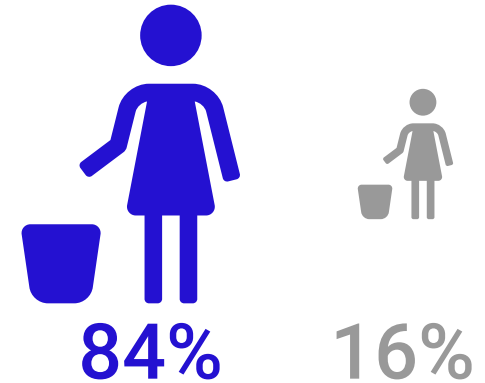
91%

91% of households are currently participating in the Blue Box program

Participation Rate: The percentage of households on a roadside collection route who set out recyclables at least once in a consecutive four week period.

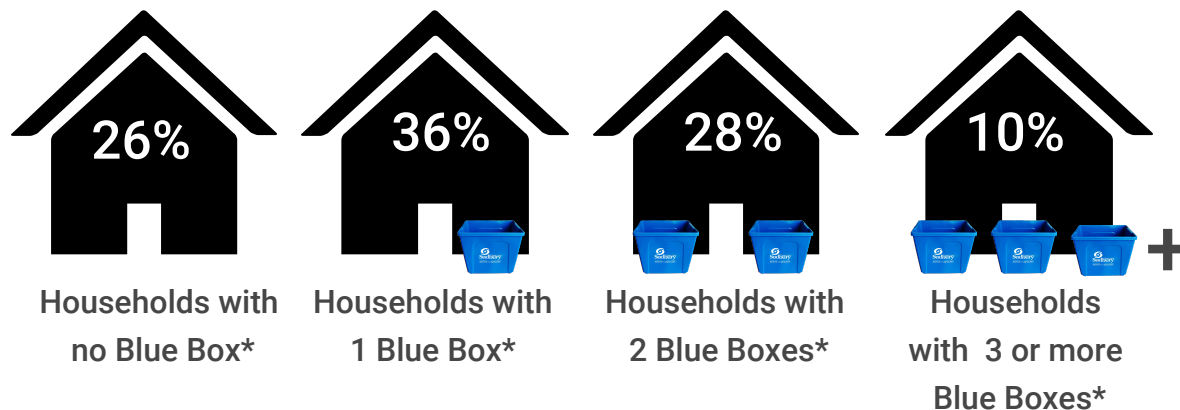
SET-OUT RATE

84% of households set out a Blue Box Recycling Container on collection day

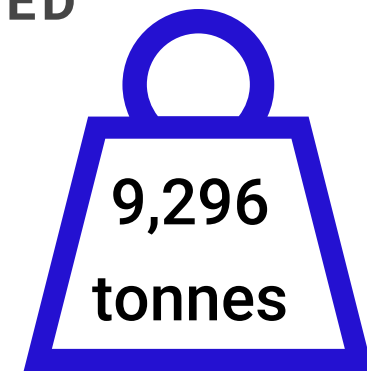


Set Out Rate: The percentage of households on a roadside collection route setting out recyclables on the day of collection. As a percent, the set out rate is the number of households setting out recycling on a collection day divided by the total number of households available to set out material.

NUMBER OF BLUE BOX RECYCLING CONTAINERS PER HOUSEHOLD



TONNES OF RESIDENTIAL BLUE BOX MATERIALS DIVERTED



GREEN CART ORGANICS

2018

PARTICIPATION RATE = 10%



27%

27% of households are currently participating in the Green Cart program

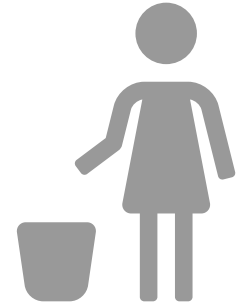
Participation Rate: The percentage of households on a roadside collection route who set out organics at least once in a consecutive four week period.

SET-OUT RATE

22% of households set out a Green Cart on collection day



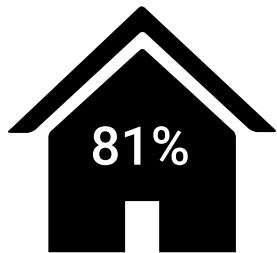
22%



78%

Set Out Rate: The percentage of households on a roadside collection route setting out organics on the day of collection. As a percent, the set out rate is the number of households setting out organics on a collection day divided by the total number of households available to set out material.

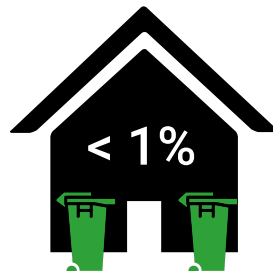
NUMBER OF GREEN CART ORGANICS CONTAINERS PER HOUSEHOLD



Households with no Green Cart



Households with 1 Green Cart



Households with 2 Green Carts

TONNES OF RESIDENTIAL GREEN CART MATERIALS DIVERTED



ROADSIDE GARBAGE COLLECTION

2018

PARTICIPATION RATE = 10%



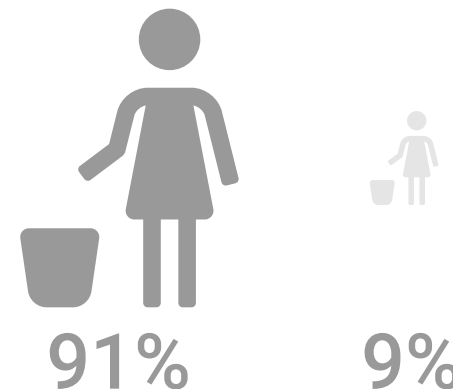
97%

97% of households are currently participating in Roadside Garbage Collection

Participation Rate: The percentage of households on a roadside collection route who set out garbage at least once in a consecutive four week period.

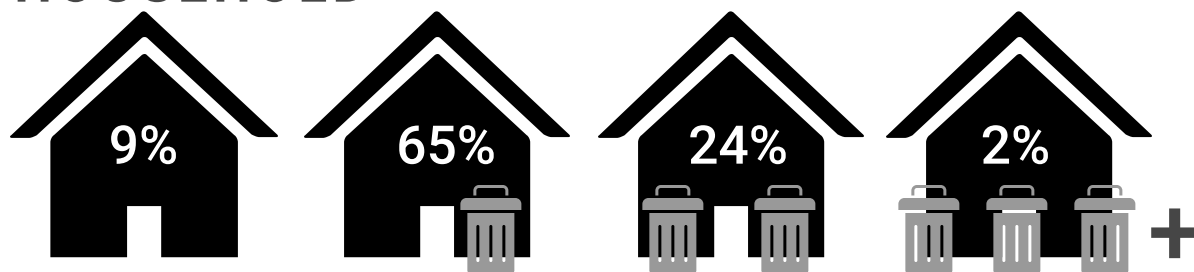
SET-OUT RATE

91% of households set out garbage on collection day



Set Out Rate: The percentage of households on a roadside collection route setting out garbage on the day of collection. As a percent, the set out rate is the number of households setting out garbage on a collection day divided by the total number of households available to set out material.

NUMBER OF GARBAGE CONTAINERS PER HOUSEHOLD



Households with no Garbage Containers

Households with 1 Garbage Container

Households with 2 Garbage Containers

Households with 3 or more Garbage Containers

KILOGRAMS OF GARBAGE DISPOSED PER HOUSEHOLD



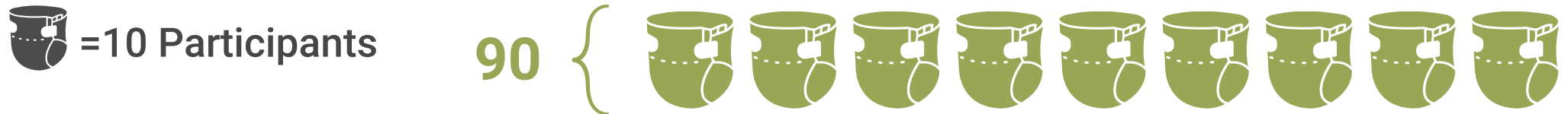
SPECIAL SUPPORT PROGRAMS

2018

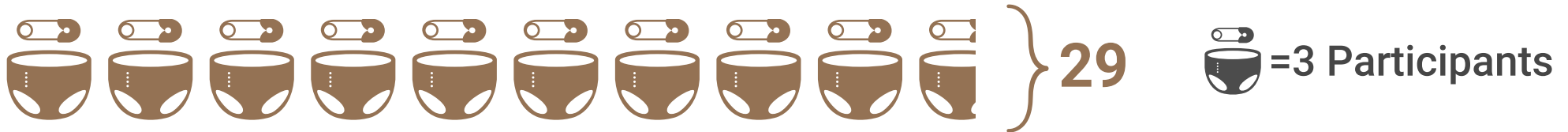
HOME VISITS AND FIELD INSPECTIONS



DIAPER WASTE SUPPORT PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS



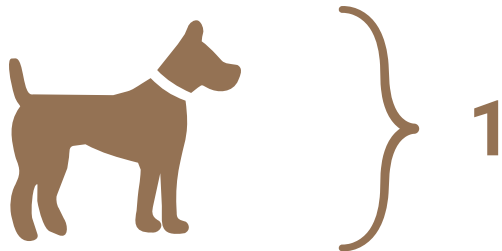
CLOTH DIAPER SUPPORT PROGRAM REBATES



MEDICAL CIRCUMSTANCE SUPPORT PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS



PET WASTE DIGESTER REBATES



PET WASTE EXEMPTION PROGRAM



SALES, DISTRIBUTIONS & SUBSCRIPTIONS 2018

WASTE WISE APP SUBSCRIBERS



1,421



=100 Subscribers

RESIDENTIAL BAG TAGS SOLD



5,435



=1000 Tags Sold

PROVISION OF BLUE BOXES & GREEN CARTS



10,844  =250 Blue Boxes

1,784  =100 Green Carts

BIG BLUES SOLD



1,885  =100 Big Blues