

REGIONALIZING GARBAGE COLLECTION

Frequently Asked Questions

Who controls garbage collection now?

Each local municipality currently controls garbage collection.

What does it mean to regionalize garbage collection?

Regionalization would move the control of garbage collection from the local municipal level up to the County of Essex.

How does the Essex Windsor Solid Waste Authority (EWSWA) fit in to regionalization?

The County of Essex is a 50% owner, with the City of Windsor, in the EWSWA. Currently, only garbage collection is controlled at the local level. All other waste programs are managed by the EWSWA on behalf of the County of Essex and the City of Windsor. If garbage collection is regionalized, the EWSWA would manage garbage collection on behalf of the County of Essex.

Why is regionalization being considered at this time?

Residents will be getting enhanced weekly organics collection services in 2025. To maximize the potential for cost savings on a new collection contract, local municipalities are being asked to transfer the service to the County of Essex so that organics and garbage collection can be tendered together and services for all County of Essex residents can be standardized.

Will it cost residents more to be part of a County-wide garbage collection contract?

No. Based on experience in other regions in the Province, combining the value of all seven local municipal contracts is anticipated to generate more competition and, over time, lower the total cost for everyone. A regional approach also allows a contractor to plan collection routes more efficiently, reducing the amount of time collection trucks are out on the road. The goal of regionalization is to reduce costs, improve efficiencies and support greener environmental practices.



Garbage collection is part of my local tax bill. If regionalization occurs, will I pay twice?

No. The cost of collection will be removed from your municipality's budget and moved to the County's. Each municipality will be charged for its use of the garbage collection service. As a resident, you will see waste collection as a charge on your annual tax bill as a charge from the County of Essex.

If regionalization occurs, will my garbage collection service change?

Each local municipality currently has its own garbage collection contract. Your service will remain unchanged until your municipality's contract ends. Your service will be enhanced with weekly organics and changes may be made to the timing of your garbage collection after that time. Local municipal contracts are set to expire as follows:

Amherstburg – March 31, 2027

Essex – May 1, 2024

Kingsville – December 31, 2026

Lakeshore – December 31, 2023

LaSalle – December 31, 2027 (with option to extend to 2029)

Leamington – December 31, 2026

Tecumseh – January 31, 2022 (with options to extend to 2027)

I live in a rural area; will I still get garbage collection services after regionalization?

If you receive garbage collection now, you will continue to receive garbage collection services after regionalization.

What changes may be made to my garbage collection in the future?

The Province has set targets for the level of organic material that must be separated from regular garbage. When the weekly organics (green bin) program is rolled out in your municipality, garbage collection will be recommended to change to every other week. When residents actively separate their organics and recyclables, there will be less regular garbage to collect weekly. To save on collection costs, garbage collection will be recommended to move to every other week.



Will bag limits or clear bag requirements be put in place?

Measures such as bag limits and clear bags would only be considered if organic separation targets aren't being met. A fulsome education campaign will be rolled out well ahead of the start of the organics program to ensure residents understand their roll in the success of the program.

Who will determine my service level if garbage is regionalized?

The County, in collaboration with the Regional Working Group, which includes representatives from each of the local municipalities and EWSWA, as the waste management experts, will recommend service levels that balance the needs of residents, legislative diversion requirements and affordability. These service levels will be incorporated into an RFP that will seek a service provider for the County to enter into a contract with. The Contract award must be approved by County Council, even though it is anticipated that EWSWA will manage any contract the County enters into.

What happens now?

In order to transfer a municipal service from one level of government to another, legislation requires a three-step process be executed. The first step is for County Council to pass a By-law to upload the responsibility from the local level to the regional level. The second and third steps require participation of the County's seven local municipalities. Each local municipality must vote on whether they approve the County By-law or not. In order for the County By-law to come into effect and the service to transfer, a majority of local municipalities need to approve the By-law and of those approving, they must represent a majority of the electors.

The three-step approval process is currently underway. If at least four of the seven local municipalities do not support the regionalization of garbage collection, it will remain at the local level.

