

[Previous Story](#)

[Next Story](#)

Article rank | 20 Sep 2014 | The Vancouver Sun | LARRY PYNN | VANCOUVER SUN

Metro fines trash haulers more than \$ 450,000 for banned recyclables 4

System of fines illegal, unscientific, unfair says one company. Haulers do their best to encourage customers to recycle

Metro Vancouver fined private and municipal trash haulers more than \$ 450,000 last year for having forbidden recyclables in their loads, documents obtained through access-to-information laws show.



JENELLE SCHNEIDER/PNG

A commercial truck dumps a load of garbage at a regional waste transfer facility in Coquitlam.

The surcharges are meant to be a deterrent to haulers dumping items for which there are recycling programs, including corrugated cardboard, yard trimmings and electronics. It is considered haulers' responsibility to deal with their customers to keep banned items out of the waste stream.

Documents released to The Vancouver Sun, over the objection of several haulers, show that Metro Vancouver issued \$ 383,369 in fines last year at regional waste facilities, and \$ 74,298 at the City of Vancouver's transfer station and landfill in Burns Bog in Delta.

Just eight large haulers were responsible for about \$ 315,000 or 82 per cent of the total surcharge fines levied by Metro against 100 companies and agencies involving both residential and commercial trash in 2013. The eight had violation rates of four to seven per cent.

Waste Management topped the list at \$ 82,437, followed by Smithrite Disposal at \$ 75,083; Northwest Waste \$ 38,596, BFI Canada (Progressive Waste) \$ 37,854, Super Save Disposal \$ 34,509, Maple Leaf Disposal \$ 17,891, City of Burnaby \$ 17,443, and Waste Control Services \$ 11,625.

Residential drop- offs, typically pickup trucks and vans, were responsible for \$ 22,511 in surcharges.

At City of Vancouver waste facilities, Smithrite Disposal topped the list at \$ 19,320, followed by Waste Management at \$ 16,733, and Super Save Disposal at \$ 10,506.

Ralph McRae, chairman of Northwest Waste, one of the companies slapped with the surcharges, argued Metro's fines "are calculated and imposed in a completely illegal and unscientific manner" and that the system has "no objective or fair method of determining compliance."

McRae said inspectors "eyeball" garbage from a distance and make a percentage calculation if there is a violation, adding that "because Metro controls the only local disposal facilities ... they can act as judge, jury and executioner, with impunity."

Northwest Waste disputed the system of fines several years ago without success, he said.

"We sent in the photos and our arguments against the penalties. Metro's response was to threaten to cut off our disposal privileges if we pressed our case."

McRae said Northwest works with its customers to reduce the amount of recyclables in the garbage but it's not an easy task.

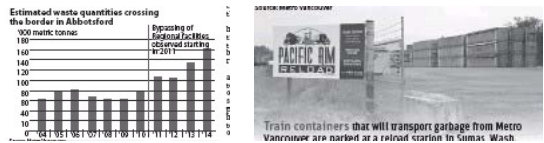
"Although we and our competitors are keenly motivated to encourage recycling, one of our trucks contains the contents of 50 or more customers when it dumps at one of Metro's regional facilities. It is impossible for us to fully inspect each closed bin before tipping it."

Paul Henderson, Metro Vancouver's general manager of solid waste services, said that photos are taken of all loads where a fine is levied, and copies supplied to haulers upon request. There were about 18 disputes from 2010 to 2012; about half the fines were reversed by a senior staff member.

He described the ban program "as one of the most comprehensive in North America with seven inspectors participating in the program and over 150,000 loads per year."

Metro Vancouver is working with the Waste Management Association of B. C. to improve the program, including an inspection program manual that details the process for waste haulers, and providing incentives to haulers for implementing source separation programs for commercial customers.

The Sun visited the Wastechmanaged Coquitlam waste transfer station on United Boulevard and accompanied Deane Hackett — an inspector with Metro Vancouver contractor, Southern Cross Holdings Ltd. — while she checked for banned items in loads dumped within the cavernous "tipping floor."



Crows flew over and strutted around for scraps while a bulldozer pushed the garbage (155,000 tonnes last year, mostly from the Tri- Cities) through a hopper into a compactor and into bales for delivery to the City of Vancouver landfill in Delta, the Cache Creek landfill, or the Burnaby waste- to- energy incinerator.

This article was shared by a user of PressReader - an online source of publications from around the world. PressReader contains copyrighted material, trademarks and other proprietary information. Receipt of this article should not be interpreted as grant of any licenses express or implied, to the intellectual property of PressReader or publishers of publications presented. PressReader - Connecting People Through News PressReader, 200-13111 Vanier Place, Richmond BC V6V 2J1, Canada Phone: +1 604 278 4604 © 2003-2014 NewspaperDirect Inc. dba PressReader. All rights reserved. Terms of Use: http://www.pressdisplay.com/pressdisplay/showlink.aspx?pageid=ins_terms Privacy Policy: http://www.pressdisplay.com/pressdisplay/showlink.aspx?pageid=ins_privacy