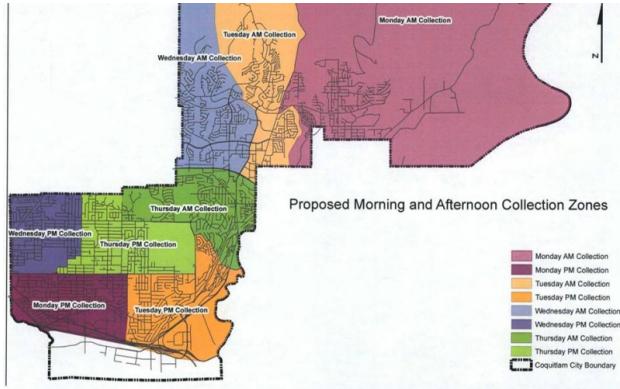


Changes planned for Coquitlam's garbage pickup

Gary McKenna / Tri-City News

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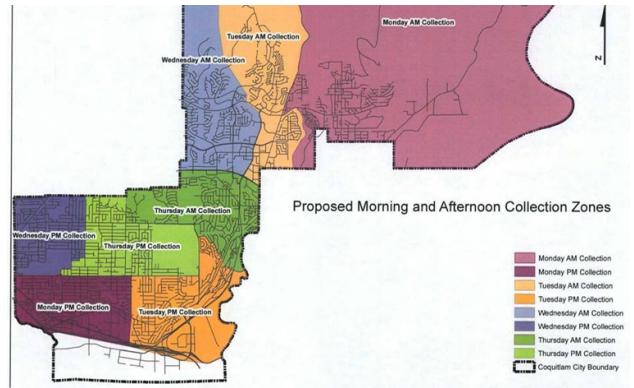
Proposed changes to the garbage collection schedule in Coquitlam.

Photograph By CITY OF COQUITLAM

Changes could be coming to Coquitlam's garbage collection schedule as part of the city's efforts to reduce conflicts with bears.

Under the current system, on pickup days, garbage, recycling and green waste bins must be brought to the curb by 7:30 a.m. but they are often not picked up for hours — sometimes as late as 6 or 7 p.m. — leaving food sources exposed to wildlife.

But a new proposal would guarantee collection by 1 p.m. for residents in neighbourhoods frequently visited by bears while residents where there are fewer animal conflicts would have their garbage picked up in the afternoon. That also means residents with afternoon pickup could bring their trash to the curb as late as 11 a.m., according to a staff report.



Proposed changes to the garbage collection schedule in Coquitlam. -
City of Coquitlam

"This is a very significant change," said Jozsef Dioszeghy, Coquitlam's general manager of engineering and public works. "The end result is that zones which are more frequently visited by bears, the garbage would be picked up earlier in the morning, not in the afternoon. As such, the exposure at curbside is limited."

Morning collections would take place in all areas of Burke Mountain, Westwood Plateau, Eagle Ridge, Ranch Park and Chineside. The rest of Coquitlam would be designated an afternoon zone, although the trucks would move in from north to south, ensuring that garbage is collected quicker in moderately bear-prone areas of Harbour Chines and around Mundy Park.

Dioszeghy expects the changes to be implemented as early as March 2018 and said his department will be working with communications staff to make residents aware of the new schedule.

Bylaw officers were busy enforcing wildlife/vector control regulations that prohibit solid waste from being brought to the curb before collection day. So far in 2017, 4,868 warnings have been issued along with 440 tickets.

Coun. Craig Hodge, who suggested the schedule change earlier this year, said while residents in the afternoon pickup zones could still put their waste out earlier if they choose, the new schedule would give them more flexibility.

"Hopefully, in those areas, we will reduce the number of fines for putting the cans out overnight," he said.

But Coun. Dennis Marsden told staff he was skeptical the schedule change would lead to a reduction in bear conflicts. The bears will adapt to the new timeframe, he said, adding: "Those bears are still going to be feasting on those cans."

gmckenna@tricitynews.com

@gmckennaTC

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