

Alternative to curbside collection

Waste system saves money, aids environment

By MIKE BEGGS
Special

Here's one alternative to expensive curb-side collection. Well-established in parts of Europe, the MOLOK "Deep Collection" solid waste management system has just hit Canada, with its promise of cheaper, more environmentally-friendly handling of waste — by creating dramatically longer emptying intervals.

Designed in Finland in 1989, MOLOK's molded, polyethylene containers are now patented and sold in 15 countries (including Canada and the U.S.) for the disposal of household, organic, recyclable and bio-medical waste products. They can be found in parks, zoos, housing areas, hospitals, harbors and roadside rest areas.

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Mississauga's Holly Christie, the national representative for MOLOK Oy, suggests this system has the potential to cut labor collection costs by 65 per cent.

"The vast distances in Canada, with its combination of city, rural and wide-open areas is the perfect market for MOLOK. The extended emptying intervals which MOLOK offers will save people a lot of money — while reducing wear and tear on vehicles, and fuel emissions," she comments.

With the Deep Collection system, two-thirds of the nine-foot-high refuse bin is kept underground.

And Christie explains that this height, coupled with the force of gravity and the sheer weight of the waste facilitates a natural compacting process (eliminating the need for machines).

"You can actually double the capacity in one of our bins. The longer it sits there, the more it holds," she says. "So, if you were emptying a 45-gallon drum every two weeks, now you can empty it twice a year.

Meanwhile, the cool temperature underground puts the waste into a dormant (or sleepy) state, so it doesn't break down. "It slows the activity of microbes — so you don't get the methane gases, the smell or the maggots," she adds.

"It can sit however long you want, and (because it's lidded), you don't get the rats.

Capacity doubles naturally

MOLOK offers bins holding 300, 1,500, 3,000 or 5,000 litres, starting at \$758. Several thousand are now in use in Finland, Belgium, Germany, France, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Portugal, South Africa, South Africa, Australia and the U.S.

Christie cites its success in a subdivision of Turku, Finland, where 10,000 people share 220 bins in 70 locations "and their emptying fees are now the lowest in the country."

Launched in Canada a few months back, MOLOK is target-



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ing the parks system as its first proving ground, with six units in operation in Cobourg's Victoria Park, three in Markham, and two in Kitchener.

Mississauga's Britannia Landfill Site has purchased six bins (two for organics, two for glass and two for paper).

Obstacles in Canada include the long-term contracts held by conventional waste haulers, the many levels of government overseeing waste removal, and public resistance to trying something new.

But with 14 per cent of Peel region's tax dollar currently going to waste disposal, Christie says it offers a strong potential for long-term savings.

"From a neighborhood point of view, you could have 10 or 12 houses sharing a system," she says. "It removes the waste out of your garage, you no longer have wildlife coming to your garage, there's no longer any smell, and you don't have to worry about collection day anymore."

She notes that people in Regina have been utilizing a similar system for the past decade.

For more information, contact MOLOK Oy at (905) 821-9430.