

Readers have green bin fixes



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Ottawans don't like the green bin program, and the city isn't doing a good job of convincing them to change their minds, Susan Sherring says. (Errol McGihon/Ottawa Sun file photo)

City council, hold the cash.

If you want to know why Ottawans aren't using their green bins, don't waste more tax dollars hiring a consultant to find out why.

Sun readers have plenty of reasons why their green bins remains empty.

"Its just plain silly and wasteful to be hiring yet more consultants to find out why people won't use their green bins when you already know the answers and you know that the answers won't change," wrote Ottawa resident Klaus Beltzner.

"Will this information make you change your minds to allow people to use plastic bags to bag their waste going into the green bin?"

Beltzner isn't alone with his angst, judging by the number of e-mails sent to the Sun following recent green bin columns.

Reader Rob Lamontagne is among that group.

"Why don't I use my green bin? I have written to council about it. Plastic compostable bin liners are the way to go. They are inexpensive and don't leak.

"The city is scratching their collective heads, wondering why residents aren't complying with the green bin program. They talk education. They need to listen! When a program that makes sense is implemented, I will comply," he wrote.

Others are just tired of being told what to do with their garbage — and all that entails.

"I believe the reason the green bin program is so unpopular is that it exceeds the limit of peoples' tolerance for intrusions into their personal lives.

"It is asking too much of citizens to sort every little thing!" wrote Sun reader Jay Hunt.

Maggots, odour and raccoons were also mentioned by many, including resident Tom Lockett.

“After spending the last two hours washing the maggots out of my garage, I finally got to sit down and read my Sun only to find an article about how great the green bins are. I have tried to use my bin and let me tell you it is not easy,” Lockett wrote, recounting how his Christmas turkey stayed frozen in the bin for months.

Lockett wrote biodegradable plastic bags would see a lot more people signing onto the program.

Resident David Hum says raccoons get into his green bins.

“I am surprised that the green bins were never properly tested. Perhaps they were same people who tested the Presto card,” he wrote.

Rob Arnett just isn’t buying into the program.

“You suggest that people get with it and use the green bin. With all due respect, I disagree. Many people, me included, rarely use the green bin for several good reasons, i.e. inconvenience & extra labour, smell, rodents, cost of paper storage bags,” he wrote.

Even those who use the green bin have issues with it, like Ruth Hunter-Zemanek.

“One cold week last winter, the paper green bin bag, froze to the side of the green bin. My husband had to use a tool to pry the bag loose from the side of the bin. In doing so, he broke the bag. When our neighbour encountered the same problem, he became so annoyed that he stopped using his green bin,” Hunter-Zemanek wrote.

Happily, at least one green bin resistant read the green bin columns with an open mind.

“Hi Susan, I don’t want to be quoted but I have been using mine to store hockey sticks and grass tools ... now I will use it properly to do my bit for another mismanaged city program. As you say, it’s silly to ignore it,” he wrote.

So how much is the city going to spend on this consultant, who is apparently being paid to go out into the community to find out why taxpayers aren’t using their green bin.

The city isn’t saying, just yet!

Here’s what city spokesman Barre Campbell had to say on that matter.

“Any research would be a component within the overall communication plan for the green bin. As the plan has not yet been completed, final costs have not been determined.”

Ca-ching!

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