

Illegal dumping a problem in Hastings Highlands

By Sarah Sobanski

Hastings Highlands bylaw enforcement officer Mike Priestley is planning a dump stake out to catch illegal dumpers.

The municipality has seen an increase in illegal dumping since the warm weather arrived. People are leaving their garbage outside dump gates and illegally dumping in the landfill.

'Wouldn't one be, just at the gates, littering, and across the gates, trespassing?' asked Deputy-mayor Gregg Roberts.

'Yes, absolutely,' replied Priestley at council's June 28 meeting.

Councillor Nancy Matheson noted that over the month there have been 150 instances of illegal dumping - more than half in North Baptiste.

'At one point in time I've got to be sitting down at North Baptiste to see if I can catch them,' said Priestley.

The bylaw enforcement officer said he was waiting to hear back from Crime Stoppers on how to proceed. It's hard to lay charges against someone without witnessing them doing it, even if the person is identified through their garbage.

Councillor Tracy Hagar suggested buying trail cameras for added security around the dumps.

'The thing with them is at night, even with infrared, that's a really dark area at night,' Priestley explained the cameras couldn't be counted on.

Most of the illegal dumping is happening at night.

'On the long weekend, between 7 p.m. and noon hour the following day, there were 72 bags.'

The fine for illegal dumping on municipal property, highways and/or sidewalks is \$200.